

## THURSDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2009

The Speaker, Rt. Hon. Peter Kenilorea took the Chair at 11.58 am.

Prayers.

### ATTENDANCE

At prayers, all were present with the exception of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Rural Development & Indigenous Affairs; the Minister for Justice & Legal Affairs; Fisheries & Marine Resources, and the Members for East Honiara, Mbaegu/Asifola; Temotu Pele; Central Honiara; Lau/Mbaelelea, and East Makira.

### **BILLS**

#### Bills – Second Reading

The Constitution (Political Parties Amendment) Bill 2009'

**Mr Speaker:** Honorable Members debate on the Second Reading of the Constitution Political Parties Amendment Bill 2009 will continue today. Members may speak on the general principles of the Bill. In so doing, I kindly remind Members as I always do to comply with the rules of debate set out in our Standing Orders. The floor is now open for debate.

I shall suspend the sitting until 2 pm this afternoon.

*Sitting suspended for lunch break at 12.00 pm*

*Parliament resumes at 2.03 pm*

**Hon. HILLY:** Thank you for giving me this time to contribute very briefly on the debate of the Constitution Political Parties Amendment Bill 2009.

The Bill before this honorable House is a very serious attempt by the CNURA Government in its endeavor to implement one of its very important policy objective, and that is to encourage the development of political parties in this country to bring stability to our parliament and government. I think this honorable objective is being shared by quite a lot of Members of this House in

their debate in this debate. Unfortunately, when they finally summed up they were not in favor of the Bill itself.

This bill and the bill following next are most talked and discussed bill in this present Parliament at this present government. It started off some 10 months ago and discussions about it started in Caucus, to Cabinet, went back to Caucus, went back to Cabinet, and I can still remember very well that in one occasion the Cabinet has had to stay very late into the night to look at this very important bill. What I am saying is that Caucus and Cabinet members have been given ample time to provide alternative suggestions in making the Bill more acceptable to everyone of us because I think the noble intention is very much supported by everybody who have been consulted both in Honiara and outside of Honiara.

The basis of these bills is the policy part of the present government. I also believe that this policy objective was also one of the policy objectives of the previous government. I therefore think it is a very good policy and the bills before this House are very simple bills to implement those policies.

We are yet to talk about the Bill proper, the Political Parties Bill 2009. The Constitutional Political Parties Amendment Bill is to provide the constitutional basis under which this Bill is going to be brought before Parliament and when enacted is in line with our Constitution.

The first five sections of the Bill talk about various fundamental rights. Just like the other fundamental rights we have in our Constitution, this one also gives provision that should we in Parliament or the country at large want to limit the rights in the situation of public safety, public order, we can bring legislation in Parliament to provide for them. This Constitutional Political Parties Amendment Bill, if it is read in the absence of the Constitution itself, we will have difficulty understanding it. What it actually says in the first five subsections as sections of this Bill is that should the legislation firstly affects the conscience part, the Bill, for the purposes of regulating the formation and operation of political parties, it should be okay or for member for the purpose of regulating the conduct of members of political parties should also be fine because it is brought in here in the form of legislation. The same also applies in Section 3, on the protection of freedom of expression. And the same also applies in Section 4, on the freedom of assembly and association and Section 5 is the protection of discrimination on the grounds of race.

Sir, when you look at the draft bill itself, there is no provision there that is trying to force any individuals to do something they do not want. But should there be any, this provision will cater for those provisions in the legislation. Section 6, this section amends section 33 of the Constitution, and this is on the appointment of the Prime Minister. And should the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker are not available during the election, the Clerk should be able to do that.

Of course, it talks about the provision for acting ministers and parliamentary secretaries' provisions.

Section 7 amends section 34 of the Constitution which provides for the tenure of ministers electing the prime minister as is the present situation. Our present situation is that we elect the Prime Minister as opposed to what is proposed in this Bill for appointment. The fourth provision where we are going to appoint the prime minister, we still maintain the present system.

Section 8 amends section 34 on how a prime minister is replaced. The last part of that amendment says that ministers still remain even if the prime minister is removed. Section 9 amends section 37 which gives assignment and any responsibilities that have not been assigned to remain with the prime minister. Section 10 is an amendment to section 39 to provide for oaths. Section 11 amends section 50 on the vacation of seats by Members. Section 12 amends section 16, and this is one of the very important sections in that we are now going to be able to properly establish the office of the leader of opposition and recognition of the position of the deputy leader of opposition. And for the first time we are going to have an assignment of responsibility to other members in the opposition. Perhaps we are going to call them shadow ministers. It also deletes the mention of the leader of independence. Section 14 is the establishment of the Commission and Section 15 is an amendment to Section 93. Again sections 15 and 16 are trying to tell us that no longer are we to recognize the existence of the leader of independent. Section 17 is a new schedule on how we choose our prime minister. The last section is the savings provision which says that the present leader of independent can continue to enjoy that office until the present parliament is dissolved. This is a very simple and straightforward. I will be very sorry if we delay the passage of these important constitutional changes.

In this honorable house, we may say why should the prime minister be appointed outside of parliament. That is a question raised by Members of this honorable house. The present situation that we choose our prime minister on the floor of this parliament reflects the nature of parliament when the present Constitution came into existence after 1976. The year 1976, as you know very well, 99 percent of Members of Parliament at that time were all individuals. And rightly so it was only proper that somebody among the Members of Parliament should be nominated and Members of Parliament soon be given the right to elect the prime minister.

This procedure is still practiced by one or two countries in the Commonwealth. But most countries of the Commonwealth have gone ahead. The bigger democracies in the Commonwealth have gone ahead where appointment of their prime ministers is done by parties outside the floors of Parliament. Therefore, I think the suggestion that comes before this honorable

house at this point in time through this bill is that we should move on. Let us do what some of our big democracies in the Commonwealth as it lessens our work of having to come to this honorable house and do it ballot by ballot trying to find a prime minister.

Why do people come together to form political parties? I am sure they come together because they believe on certain principles and on certain policies that if given the opportunity to take the government, they would be able to apply those policies to bring about betterment for the people they represent. I think time is over now for us having to go out during election time and talk with our people about our personal thinking. It is now time for us to go out to our people and sell the policies of parties because should that party wins the number and forms the government, it might be able to implement the policies. But suppose you go out and win the election as an individual and it so happens that you do not become part of the government, you are going to be isolated, and therefore our plans and thinking we told our people about will not be realized and seen by our people. Let us get some orderliness into our system so that our people understand that the way in going forward is that people come out with good policies, especially party policies if favored by people should be given the opportunity to take up the government so that they see the results.

Today when we come to form the government, it has been coalition all the time. And the first thing we tried to do is put together all the policies of the various parties together, and this is not easy. And maybe that is why sometimes we do not read the policy guidelines of coalition parties.

The tabling of this Bill in this Parliament is a result of the CNURA Government's policy in trying to improve the stability of government and parliament, but perhaps the best way is to establish and regulate political parties so that our people can come to the clubs and discuss their plans and be able to come up with what is best for our people in this country.

I read through the report of the Constitutional Review Committee. Yes, there are a lot of comments made. But I would say that most of the comments raised are very cosmetic in that it talks about the title of the Bill, the drafting style needs to be improved thus it should be defined a little bit more by the parliamentary secretariat and things like that. The substance of the Bill, I am sure, is still the core issue that is still before this honorable house that has not been touched properly and in most cases misunderstood.

I would like to call on us to give this Bill a chance. If there are concerns and misunderstandings or misinterpretations, let us look at those at the committee stage where questions asked will be answered. If we are going to dispose of this Bill by throwing it out of the window, we are not only going to get the integrity bill passed but the office of the deputy leader of opposition will

never be established. This is a very important drawback if we want to throw this Bill out of this House at this point in time. And so I am calling on every member of this House to give this Bill a chance and let us discuss this in the committee. Thank you and I support the Bill.

**Mr. OLAVAE:** Thank you Mr. Speaker for availing me this great opportunity to contribute towards this constitutional amendment bill. Indeed I am delighted to be given this great opportunity to say my bit on the bill now in discussion as other MPs have done.

All the important areas for amendment in this bill were already clarified by the Prime Minister during his introduction of this bill last week. Also other MPs, both in the Government side and the Opposition MPs have also echoed their bit as well. We have track records of the last 30 years on how this political system has been making MPs vulnerable to jump from one political party grouping to another like yoyos.

Since we obtained independence we have all the reasons as to why we should support this Bill. Why I am supporting this Bill is because the CNURA Government has put in place economic reforms and political reforms unlike successive governments who have not made any economic reforms. What has happened in the last 30 years is that there is corruption at the political level that voters face in the past because of the absence of economic reform. When our people do not have the purchasing power, politicians will capitalize on this and use money they get out of the government system to get favor from the voters. But if we have a better economic reform in the future we will avoid this political stupidity.

This Bill will only assist MPs who are under political parties to organize themselves and to control MPs not to change allegiance to another political grouping. One reform under the CNURA Government policy that has been implemented already is the rural development policy. Other ingredients as well that the CNURA Government has remunerated MPs are the housing allowance to its backbenchers who are chairmen of state owned entities and statutory bodies. Those are the changes CNURA has made when it came into power. All those changes and remuneration packages that other MPs, especially backbenchers and Ministers have been enjoying are part and parcel searching for political stability that was not taken on board in successive government policies. That is why I do not fear supporting this Bill. This Bill is in the right direction after 30 years of our independence.

What I want to raise here is to take on board what our opposition MPs have raised. This is a CNURA Government policy that went through the White Paper, it went through the Cabinet and Caucus and all of you unanimously

supported this Bill with no remorse. I know that all of you on the government side will support this bill after further consultations. I know backbenchers are not happy maybe because of something that was agreed upon during their deliberation at the caucus level maybe was not taken on board. That I do not know. I do not have any problem with this Bill but I just do not understand why some of the backbenchers did not support this Bill and that is why they signed.

For me, I support this Bill but due to the fact that most backbenchers and some of the opposition MPs have opposed this Bill, I will leave it up to them to decide on it. Let the end justifies its means. For me, I am supporting this Bill because this political bill is just similar to the current system. That is how I see it, there is not much difference to it. It will not make any formidable difference to our economic reform. The economic reform is there. Under the policy of the CNURA Government we have benefited. Successive governments' policies have not had any positive impact on the rural economy but this Government under its recovery process has done formidable to the rural macro economics. That is why I leave it up to the House to decide on this Bill but I am in support of this Bill and thank you.

**Mr. ZAMA:** I will be very brief in my contribution towards this Bill. At the outset I would like to thank the honorable Prime Minister for moving this Bill. I also thank those who have spoken in support of the Bill and for the bigger number who have spoken against the Bill.

I came in a little bit confused because I was very focused my intention contribute was very clear because I believe in political reform, I believe in stronger political parties and the development of political parties after 30 years of independence and that we need more political stability and we need to root out corruption, if we ever care.

After listening to those who have contributed to this Bill, the direction we are going is very clear because my Committee is supposed to meet at 2pm to look into the budget but this sitting has been dragging on. This Bill, in my view, is unconstitutional. I would rather use the word stupid. It is a funny unconstitutional bill sponsored by a government, in my view, that is self centered and moved by a Prime Minister who is politically insensitive, blind and deaf to listen to the wishes and calls of his backbenchers and Ministers. Before we even came to debate this bill, before the Prime Minister even moved this Bill, I have seen a list that has been circulated, signed by members of the ruling government. I have heard government ministers talking openly about their reservation and about their position on this Bill. That is a fact. We have been dragging this debate since yesterday and this morning because we are confused. The Prime Minister is confused because he has lost direction, he has lost

command, and has lost control of his own bill, of his own ministers and of his own backbenchers. That is the bottom line and the fact of the whole issue.

I was confused yesterday too when the Prime Minister in waiting had to sum up. I thought the Prime Minister has already summed up his debate yesterday, but I only realized that it was only the Minister for Education doing a very good summary, regardless of how lengthy that speech was, I have already made up my mind. My decision and nothing of that moved me because I have decided on the bill already.

The Prime Minister has also gone on to say that there is wider consultation on this Bill in Honiara and in the provinces. Unfortunately, if according to the Prime Minister wider consultation means going down to the provincial centers, then that is not wide enough, and that is the problem we have. We are misleading Parliament and misleading people. I think the Prime Minister, the Attorney General and the officials that have been backing up this Bill need to do a little bit more to improve their communication skills in terms of how much they would want to educate the people of Solomon Islands.

Mr Speaker, this is a copy of the constitution of Solomon Islands and this is the people's constitution; this is the people's constitution. I also have here a bill and this bill proposes to amend certain sections of the people's Constitution. I have had, over the last few days, consultations with my council of elders of Tetepare and what came out very clearly and strongly from my people, from the highest council in the constituency is for me not to support this Bill. That was what they were telling me. I tell you that just before coming into Parliament we continued to have dialogue and communicating with each. That is the clear conclusion and recommendation my people gave me.

If the Prime Minister believes this Bill is going to decide on who is going to come back to Parliament in next year's election, my people said that that is not true. If that is what the Prime Minister believes then I told my council of elders on Tetepare to vote me out because I am not going to support this Bill. I find it very difficult, although I am a strong believer in political reform and strong political parties in order for us to have stability and to eradicate corruption and instability in politics and not just in politics but in every day walks of life, the very sections this Bill intends to amend makes it more difficult, very difficult for me to even want to read this. That is what makes it really hard, it is very hard.

I feel sorry for a former prime minister and now the Minister for Trade and Commerce, being a former prime minister who has been in politics for almost 30 years has not read the Constitution. And my colleague MP for South Vella has not read the Constitution, he has not even read this Bill and he has not even read the report by the Constitutional Review Committee. He has not read all of those reports. Even a lot of the Ministers have not even read these reports

because there are very good recommendations at the back of the report. They are very good recommendations cautioning Parliament to slow down and to have more consultations. That is the message that is coming out from the committee, and coming out from the wisdom of those opposing this Bill on the floor of Parliament. All we are saying here is to take this Bill back to the people, do more research and more communication. There is a need for wider consultation in terms of the very sections that will impinge on your freedom, like section 11 which talks about the protection of the freedom of conscience, section 12 talks about the protection of freedom expression and section 13 is on the protection of freedom of assembly and association. Honestly, I find it quite difficult to even accept what is in this Bill and even to get those amendments into the people's constitution.

What will transpire out of this Bill is that we will be setting two new sets of rules for people; one constitution or one set of rules for other people who are not in politics and another set of rules for people who would be running for political offices. Is that not going to be ultra wise to section 15 of the Constitution which talks about protection from discrimination on grounds of race and other things? All of us as custodians of the people's constitution have the responsibility and the duty to protect the rights of our people. It is our responsibility as leaders, as legislators to protect the rights of our people because to do otherwise is putting a vote of no confidence in ourselves as leaders not to protect them. Therefore, I find it very difficult.

Ministers did not talk about this because they are fearful because they have been warned that if they talk against this bill they will be on the firing line. Backbenchers have openly revolted because they have nothing to lose and they are speaking out their minds and they are speaking out of the context of section 12 because of their freedom of conscience, the freedom to freely express themselves on the floor of Parliament, and that is what we ought to be doing here, this is Parliament, the legislature, and not the executive.

Yesterday or the other day, the MP for East Are Are spoke on this Bill and it would seem to me that he has not read this report too. He did not even read the Constitution nor the Bill and the Committee's report and so he was blindly supporting it. The same is with my colleague for South Vella who just supports. No wonder they are sitting together because they must be whispering to each other. But I feel sorry for the Prime Minister that he should have listened to the backbenchers and the Ministers and humbly put this Bill to the vote. Do not withdraw it but let us vote on it so that we fail it so that you take it back and do it properly Prime Minister. We support the intention; we support the policy but not the bill. That is the difference. We need to differentiate between government



policy and a bill, a bill that is unconstitutional and that is why I am not supporting this Bill.

I do not need to bore you but because we have gone over time, going over time in as far as taking my Committee's time. We need to quickly get this Bill through and vote it out because if we pass this bill we are doing injustice, we will be doing injustice to the people of this country, we will be doing injustice to aspiring politicians. That is the reality and we will be responsible as legislators by deliberately passing an unconstitutional bill.

I am pretty sure the Prime Minister is taking note, and not to just take note, but take note to either withdraw it or allow this to go through the vote and let it fail and do justice. We believe in political stability, we believe in our efforts to weed out corruption but we need to be collective in our efforts and in our conscience under section 11 of the Constitution to be free minded, open in our thinking, in the way we do things and not to be politically locked up under this Bill.

I humbly plead to the Prime Minister to take on board the views that we have genuinely and honestly expressed on the floor of Parliament. The best and honorable thing the Prime Minister and the CNURA Government can do is to withdraw the bill or maybe take it back to the people, take it back to the drawing board for more consultation, wider consultations so that we do away with the sections we do not agree on or maybe look at the whole Bill again. That is the whole intention why we are speaking our minds here. With those remarks, Mr. Speaker, I oppose the Bill.

**Mr. Oti:** I would like to seek your indulgence invoking my right under Standing Order 35(1) to move a question without notice that the debate on the question which you put before the House be adjourned.

**Mr Speaker:** A motion has been raised under SO 35(1). For the understanding of the honorable House 35(1), the adjournment will only be to the next sitting day. And of course, another point under 35(1) is that it needs no debate as long as it is raised by any honorable Member like it has already been done by the honorable Member for Temotu Nende, the Speaker can now put the question.

**Hon. Sogavare:** I just want to seek your ruling on the provisions of Standing Orders 35(3), and I rise to place an alternative position on that matter and I would like to beg that debate on that motion be allowed to continue.

**Mr Speaker:** Yes, I will put the question first then when it is negative we will continue to have the debate.

The point raised by the honorable Member for Temotu Nende is that the debate under SO 35(1), the current debate be adjourned. And as I said, the adjournment is to the next sitting day, which is tomorrow. I will now put the question.

*The motion was not passed*

**Mr Speaker:** We will then continue under Part 3 of Standing Order 35. The debate continues.

**Mr. Oti:** Thank you for allowing me to contribute to the debate on the motion moved by the Prime Minister in regards to the Constitutional Political Parties Amendment Bill 2009. I too would like to congratulate the present government, not the CNURA Government, but the government of Solomon Islands for this very important Bill, the intentions of which have been highlighted and put across by the Prime Minister himself and many of those who have contributed to the debate.

Indeed, as the Minister for Education who went at length yesterday trying to lecture Parliament on the background, history and why we need to do this now, I really thank him for reminding me back about the classes that I think he also attended which I also attended some 30 years ago. Unfortunately, it still puzzles some of us, and I think the Member for Rendova/Tetepare has alluded to previously before me, regarding the length of time it has taken us to debate this Bill is not usual. The number of speakers that have spoken in terms of the timing compared to the time we have waited, I think the time of waiting is longer than the time you are putting together the minutes of everyone who have debated this motion. It has been protracted, not because of the number of minutes or hours that Members speak but the number of minutes and hours of waiting time as to why this is delayed. That sends some signals to some of us.

But I was just passing through this afternoon, in fact, this morning outside the Chamber and a journalist asked me, "what is the meaning of this, are things falling apart and then I said, yes, Chinua Achebe, our literature book when we were in form one or form three in the 1970's says, and so I said to him that that is what Chinua Achebe said in that book that things are falling apart. In fact, it is so important a bill and yet the effort and the time we have given to it and the seriousness we placed on it before it even comes to this House reflects, and I am saying un-preparedness but perhaps lack of appropriate preparedness by the government to bring this important Bill to this Parliament. This Bill does not belong to the government, neither does it belong to Parliament per se. It is a bill to amend the constitution and so it belongs to the people of Solomon Islands,

hence the consultations that have been mentioned in the Prime Minister's speech and that have been variously made reference to by other Members who have spoken are important. Unfortunately, if that is the cornerstone of the people's constitution, I can see one part of the statement the Prime Minister made that of all those provinces that have been consulted, Mr. Prime Minister you correct me, Temotu Province was never consulted, never, and not even mentioned here, and so do you expect the Member for Nende to support this Bill? Who does the Constitution belong to? Does it belong to only you yourselves? Tell me and those of you who conducted the consultations, does this constitution belong to you yourselves? Where are the people of Temotu in this instance and do you think I am going to support it? No, Mr. Speaker! I feel sorry for my colleague who is drawn into this, the Member for Vattu. And I feel sorry for the Member for Pele who was dragged here yesterday. You did not consult us. Is this our constitution? No, and I am not going to support this motion even though it addresses very, very important issues, but you left us out the consultations I am not going to buy it, and take that from me Mr. Prime Minister, it is not personal; it is the fundamental right of the people of this country to be consulted on what belongs to them.

There are other issues regarding references made to sections 11, 12, 13, 14 & 15 of the Constitution that give exceptions that now your rights are going to be controlled by the amendments in the Constitution of those particular sections. But if you read along those sections it does not end there per se. Every section of the constitution I made reference to - 11,12,13 & 15, at the end of each chapter you will see it says, "except so far as that provision or as the case may be the thing done under authority therefore is not to be reasonably justifiable in a democratic society". You quantify to me if all those amendments qualify reasonably justifiable in every democratic society - sections 11, 12, 13, 14 & 15? Can you quantify to me that those amendments to those fundamental rights under Chapter 2 of the Constitution qualifies, has it been quantifiably put under the microscope of what is reasonably justifiable in a democratic society? I need to be satisfied that you are restricting my rights. What about my right of conscience? I exercise my right of conscience as a Member of Parliament through my vote. Am I going to tie myself outside by the political party I belong to, and come and restrict my right to vote the way I want to vote here on the floor of parliament? In fact, if there is such a provision in the constitution, the backbenchers, those who have spoken will not be speaking the way they do now. The way they have expressed themselves is because of that right. If you impede this right they will not, none of them will dissent to this because they are tied. Is that what we want? Is that reasonably justifiable in a democratic society? I question that.

Maybe lawyers from the AG's office will clarify this later but it is so critical that this is not a small matter. There is no monetary tag to it. It is to do with the future of this country. Of course, the other provisions, but my concern is the elements of my rights as an individual in whatever capacity and calling that I belong to. What about my privilege as a Member of Parliament? We just forget in Parliament Paper No. 19 of 2009 on the Special Select Committee's Report on the privileges and immunities of Parliament, if you look inside that report, which is also passed by this house, it says there, and the same professor who came and run the workshop here is quoted in that report saying that "freedom of speech is the real heart and core of parliamentary privilege". The same parliament and we too are also using the same book. Is our memory short, like the Minister for Education has stated? Also, all these are governed under Article 9 of the Bill of Rights, which is basically what is inside Chapter 2 of our constitution; the fundamental right of every individual person.

I am concentrating more on this because everything hinges on my rights as an individual and the rights of every citizen of this country. Of course, it can be regulated, only to the extent that it is reasonably justifiable in a democratic society. You give me that and I will be satisfied with it. But that will still not buy my vote because you have not consulted my people of Temotu Province, even the Temotu Provincial Government. Why did I not sight the name of Temotu Province, a visit to Lata in the Prime Minister's speech?

Perhaps on a procedural matter, the way we are going is trying to avoid this bill being voted on in Parliament. No, we have to show that the parliament of Solomon Islands is alive that people still can vote according to their consciences. I hope you read the intention of my moving the motion under Standing Order 35(1) and 35(3) that once the motion is negated and is gone you cannot move another motion to adjourn the debate on the motion. It must go through and get voted on. I made that point because that is the intention of my moving that motion under Standing Order 35 (1). And therefore the only way, the honorable way and the responsible way the people of this country have given to this parliament is that however tough a decision is you make it on the floor of parliament and face the people and explain it to them why. There is nothing to be fearful about. Take it honorably, take it reasonably and responsibly to show that we mean what we are. Yes, you might err in process and procedure and there are ways of correcting this.

May be referring this matter to the Committee is an option under Standing Order 49(1). But Standing Order 49(1) can only be invoked if this Bill passes second reading. It can only be referred by another motion by a member to a committee, not the committee stage of parliament but a separate committee, perhaps the Constitutional Review Committee if it passes the second reading. If

it does not satisfy the provision of Standing Order 48(7) then you cannot invoke 49(1) and so the only way to do is it shows that we should make sure that what we bring to Parliament are properly done. Because once they come on the floor of Parliament the procedures are so explicit because there is very limited maneuverability in here. That is the problem. There is protection that parliamentary proceedings, as has been mentioned yesterday, are in order and we cannot have officials telling the government and telling the Ministers what to do and how to do it. No, in Parliament nobody tells you what to do, it is only this green book that tells you what to do, what time to do it, how to do it and so on. It does not go along with any one's thinking inside this place.

Sorry that I got carried away with the non consultation process but it is so dear to my heart. You people come from bigger provinces. We, geographically, are already isolated and the moment you reflect this does not auger well for us. We feel that we are second class citizens of this country by this very essence. The pinch it has on us is not felt by you, and that is why it is very, very difficult, absolutely difficult for me to support this Bill in that matter alone. And I feel sorry for my colleague, the Minister for Health, the Member for Vattu to be like that, against his conscience, against the feeling that his people have that right now you are only there as a rubberstamp. It is not it. But he will need to explain that this is Cabinet collectively responsibility as a defense. And that is why it must be done first because when you come in here you are collectively responsible, and you cannot go down and say something else, like my colleague the Minister for Environment whom both of us are very close, I told him to help the process to move properly.

As I said this is now going to go before Parliament for second reading and for voting in second reading. Once it is passed we will go to the suggestion that has been suggested by the government, I understand, to refer it but only to extent that it passes its second reading. Otherwise it is an important issue on what is our opening, what is our way forward? This matter cannot be like this. Any governments, this present government and any future government that comes in must address this issue; they must address it. So the fact that we are not going to get it through with now does not mean that that is its end. No, it must be made a policy of this country that a mechanism must be put in place to regulate the behavior of Members of Parliament or politicians or those who seek to aspire to public offices. This is so critical.

As has been mentioned can we legislate for the conscience of human beings, which some Member's are purporting to read into the intentions of the bill but that is the extent to which it is going or maybe it is not. Perhaps we have misread it. Be that as it may, we think that for now this matter cannot be laid to rest but it must be addressed. The only understanding we have to get is that

whilst in democracies that thrive and the rule of law and everything that has been said works normally, while they have achieved this through the evolutionary process, we are trying to short cut the system by legislating. Whether that will work, we have yet to know. Can we try but do not forget that there are other issues that we need to address. For example, the other bill, the Registration and Administration of Political Parties Bill, that in itself is a start, it is a good one but it should not be tied to this constitutional reform. Let us develop the political party system first, let us set up the administrative structures for political parties and let us evolve the political parties so that they keep to it. We develop the parties first before they are fit into this process we are trying to put through the Constitution now. Otherwise it will not work as in the debate on the White Paper earlier on this year I made a statement on the registration and development of political parties, I said that where are the political parties, where are they. They are nonexistent. In fact, they should be established first, they should be registered first, the basis for political parties have to be correct.

As other colleagues have said, political parties should start from the bottom, from the village, from the community level before coming up to us up here. Otherwise we will be legislating for the formation and establishment of political parties that makes sense to us at this level but has no direct bearing and meaningful presence at the rural level. Political parties, first of all, are also not our custom too. The Minister for Police and National Security will go to the elections next year and talks about the CNURA political party. The people will say what is that, because we only know you, we do not know about that political party. And that is something we have to break first, which means that this process, whilst you can legislate for it, let us also allow it to evolve through time, maybe the next 10, 15, 20 years before it can be rightly understood. What is the hurry about? We do it now not for us but we do it for the future generation of politicians. That is what we have to do. We have to be looking into the future. We make decisions now not that it would immediately have effect on us. Some of these changes we are making it for the future, and one of this is the process of political parties development, governance by political parties, governance formed by political parties, voters voting on political parties because of policies. For the next two or three elections I can tell you that political party manifests those policies will still not make any meaningful impact on the behavior and the voting of voters.

My view on this is for the long term and not for the immediate term. If we do not pass it now, there is no hurry, this is not for today, not for tomorrow, maybe for the day after.

As I have said my objections might not be fundamental but real on the issue of consultation. If you are going to refer it to a special select committee, let

that committee do the job for us. Or as an alternative, why do we not give this responsibility to the constitutional reform process that is now taking place in that development, which is another policy of the government, in the federal constitution that is now being developed. Why is this not off loaded to them? There is already a body in existence. The structure that the government itself has created has reached the community, the provinces and the village level already and so why do you not give this responsibility to that structure instead of adding another task to us, so that we shoot two birds with one stone. You amend it now and another constitution once it comes in, and if you are serious with it repeals the existing one, everything out, what would you have achieved? That is another option. Take this one, offload it to the Constitution Review Committee on the federal constitution and let them for the future of this country as we are now developing towards this system. That is, of course, if we are serious about state government, the federal system. We have to be clear on that. If it is going to go out the window the next day then, of course, I accept it that we have to do it now. That is another option that the Government will have to think about in this instance.

With those few comments, however erratic they might have been, irrational maybe but I have spoken my mind. With those remarks I totally oppose this Bill in its entirety. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker:** Honorable Members, firstly just a point of clarification which referred to an important point raised by the Honorable Member who has just sat in referring to Part 3 of Standing Order 35 that once the adjournment sought is negative, no further adjournment would be sought. But with all due respect to the Honorable Member, he finished short of the complete sentence which says, "except for a Minister". A Minister is therefore entitled to move an adjournment which I understand the Hon Prime Minister wishes to do now.

**Hon SIKUA:** Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 35, I move that the debate on the Constitution Political Parties Amendment Bill 2009 be adjourned until the 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010.

Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to move this motion. The reason causing me to move this motion for adjournment of debate is that having listened attentively to the debate in this House thus far, since I moved the Second Reading on the 20<sup>th</sup> of this month, it is apparent that the noble intention or object of the Bill is not objected to. In fact there is common consensus for a sound political reform for political stability in our beloved country, Solomon Islands. That augers well with the wishes of our people.

The reservation I seem to hear however relate to the scheme set out in the Bill to achieve that very object. Hence, there have been calls by my Honorable colleagues on the opposition side and of course members of the government backbench for withdrawal of the Bill. I do understand that the call for the withdrawal is not to kill the noble intention but rather to give opportunity for further consultation and to allow for further scrutiny of the Bill.

Rather than agreeing to the withdrawal of the Bill, I am amenable to adjournment of the debate to give my colleagues a further opportunity to scrutinize the Bill and to suggest to my Cabinet the kind of improvement they wish to propose. In my next motion I will move that a special select committee be established to consider the various debates thus far and report to me before the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2010. It is my hope that you will agree to my suggestion for the composition of the special select committee to comprise members of the Constitution Review Committee, members to be nominated by the CNURA Government, members to be nominated by the official Opposition and members to be nominated by the Independent group. Of course, like I said, Mr Speaker, subject to your approval and the exercise of your power to appoint members of Special Select Committees. The composition of the Committee ensures bipartisan approach for resolution of the issues raised in the debates thus far.

The report presented to me will be considered by Cabinet who will respond to any recommendations made by the Special Select Committee. The report and the response of Cabinet will be laid before this Honorable House, this Parliament and it is hoped that such a bipartisan approach will assist Parliament to resolve fully the contentious issues raised in the debates thus far or at least the involvement and bipartisan composition of the Special Select Committee and the views that will be expressed will at least narrow the gap between the views for and against the Bill.

This Parliament had adopted a bipartisan approach on this political reform when it debated the White Paper and, of course, our involvement in the seminar that we have here in this Honorable Chamber. Now that the final product is available, and that is the Bill before us, I am willing to concur that another bipartisan dialogue and consultation should occur before a vote on the motion for Second Reading is taken. I have consulted the backbenchers in my government and members of my Cabinet and they are agreeable to this bipartisan support. Contrary to what the Member for Tetepare has said, I do not lose control of my government, I do not lose control of my backbenchers and my Ministers rather I have been consulting them and with their agreement this bipartisan approach is being adopted.

In conclusion the motion meets with the demand that has been expressed throughout by all Members for further consultation, further dialogue and



thrashing out of what needs to be looked at so that we can come to a common stand and agreement on this Bill. We are prepared to exercise patience and we are willing to listen and therefore this motion.

With these few remarks, I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker:** Honorable Members, the honorable Prime Minister has moved to the Second Reading debate be adjourned to 16<sup>th</sup> March next year. I will allow comments on this motion before I put the question. However, before opening the floor for comments I wish to advise Members that the motion is in order. I realize that it would be the first time we seek to adjourn a debate to a specified date in another meeting. Since 2008 we have allowed bills to be introduced in one meeting but enacted in another meeting. By way of example I cite the Civil Aviation Bill 2008 and two bills relating to the Company Law.

Members may also recall that on the 9<sup>th</sup> April 2009 at the conclusion of the 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting I made a ruling that adjournment sine die does not mean the outstanding business fall off the business papers. Such business remains on notice and can be disposed of in the next meeting. On that basis I advised that if the Second Reading the debate of this particular bill is adjourned, it can be resumed on the date specified and even if Parliament adjourns sine die at the end of this meeting, that would not strike out the debate. That said I will now allow comments from Members of Parliament. I simply said comments because under Order 35 I should simply have put the question after the adjournment point has been raised, but I will allow comments, if anyone wishes to make one or two comments?

**Hon. GUKUNA:** Just a very brief comment on this motion. I would like to thank the Prime Minister for moving this motion here.

My only small comment is that the Bill was moved basically because the backbench insisted that there must be some changes. This points to some problem of discussions at the government level. There is lack of frank speaking, lack of talking straight, lack of speaking their minds, talking behind our backs, and that is why this Bill ended up this way. Therefore, those of you who are complaining now, I am asking you to please talk properly in our discussions. Do not just come to talk, talk and just sleep. We will not achieve anything good from such talking. If you are concerned about this Bill, please, you turn up during our discussions and when you talk, be frank and talks straight. Do not talk crookedly and do not tell lies and then go outside and say something different. That is the problem with this Bill.

Since time is given to accommodate your concerns, please make every effort to turn up because I think you really timed this well, you hijacked this bill

when it matters. If you have talked straight all along when we have been talking about this bill, if you had spoken your minds and speak like a man, we would not have a problem like we have with this Bill. That is my short comment.

**Hon. SOGAVARE:** Thank you for allowing me to make some comments and I am sure that other Members should be allowed to make comments too. I was going to ask you to clarify, but you did clarify the adjournment to 16<sup>th</sup> March and so we take that.

The thinking behind this motion to adjourn the debate on this bill to 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010, and the reason is, as the Prime Minister has mentioned to us, is to take up the concerns that have been raised here, and now we have heard what the Minister of Tourism has said by challenging backbenchers or to talk straight and to attend meetings and to tell their minds.

We have been hearing different stories, first of all, in addressing the point the Minister of Tourism has raised, and I know that you have attended Caucus meetings and even in Cabinet people were actually threatened on the floor of Cabinet that if you vote against this bill, you vote at your own risk. That is what we heard. Whether you like it or not this bill will go through, those kinds of statements and so even Cabinet Ministers are not feeling comfortable to fully express their thinking on this Bill.

Talking about nationwide consultations, okay there was call for more consultations, the consultations happened, with the exception of a few provinces that the Committee did not go to, but there were radio programs that the Prime Minister's Office has run asking people and explaining the various sections of the Bill and then there were talkback shows of people expressing their views. And there are prominent people coming forward with suggestions. We held a seminar here, we were asked to make submissions and we did, but they were not taken up. What guarantee is there that by doing this we will go down the path the Prime Minister is now suggesting that the serious views expressed here will be taken up? These are the very sections that we have addressed in the submissions we submitted to the government for its consideration, but the government did not take our concerns up. The Bill just came exactly the way it was, and in fact, some more serious clauses were added on, like adding on section 11 of the Constitution addressing the freedom of conscience. The seriousness of the government to take on any more input is something that will continue to float there. Thousands of dollars of public funds have been used for this process, but you have not even taken up the concerns that were raised seriously.

What I am saying here is that what is presented before Parliament now is the final version of the bill after these consultations. In other words, we resubmit

this on the floor of Parliament by way of debate as presented by the Leader of the Opposition, the same sections and yet you have not taken them into consideration. And now they are outlining the very clauses they said they are going to look at again. I doubt that.

What I am saying is what is now presented before Parliament is the version the government, both the executive that is cabinet and the caucus or the government bench have said that must come before Parliament now and Parliament must make a decision on. I think to do justice to this process that we have been doing for months, Parliament must now be given the opportunity to pass a verdict on the work they have been doing which ended up producing this bill that is now before Parliament. Because this side of the House, as we said still maintains to hold the position we have told you about that the sections to do with fundamental right must be completely removed. Section 34(a), must go, the new Schedule 2 must go, and so I do not know how we are going to change the mind of this side of the house if the same thing is brought back again on March. And if the bill is still the same when it comes back in March, then certainly it will receive the same verdict from this side of the house.

What I am saying now is that Parliament should now be given the opportunity to pass a verdict on the product of the work of the taskforce and the government with all the consultations it has made, and the CRC has produced its report. With due respect to the Prime Minister and the motion that he moved, the government bench is full there, of course, we know the fate of any objection to this motion, but I would like to oppose the motion that the Prime Minister has moved. Allow the Bill to be voted on and then we can clearly know Parliament's thinking. There is no harm in redoing it all over again. I know that under the process there is enough suggested, we probably have to re-notice the bill again, because it will come in whatever form, and so it depends on what kind alterations we do to it and so it is not going to make any difference to put it to vote now and allow Parliament to pass a verdict on it and then we move from there.

With due respect, I oppose the request made by the Prime Minister and thank you.

**Mr. KENGAVA:** I would also like to contribute to the motion. First of all, in my view, I think the adjournment request by the Prime Minister is for a good reason because during the debate in the past three days we have called for more consultations on the bill. I think the Prime Minister has done the right thing by allowing a bipartisan approach to the Bill for more consultations and then we can look at it again.

I think it also gives time to us, those of us who feel very strongly we have not consulted our own people in the constituencies. May be during the Christmas break you can go back and consult your people, like the MP for Vona Vona has said he did not hear what his people think about the Bill and so may be during the Christmas break he will have the time to consult his people, and the same for all of us. I think it is a good intention to give us time to consult our people before the next Parliament in 2010.

Secondly, I think the Government is trying to maintain the solidarity of the government in the house because by listening to what is happening, I personally feel this Bill has suddenly become like a motion of no confidence on the government. I think the Prime Ministers has done the right thing by deferring the debate so that the government can talk more with the backbenchers so that backbenchers can make up their mind whether to join the opposition or be with the government.

I support the adjournment motion moved by the Prime Minister, most importantly to give us time to consult with our people, and also as suggested may be a select committee or a bipartisan committee is established to look further into this so that we deliver something to the people, the wishes of the people. It is not good to end it like this and throw it away. Thank you.

**Mr. BOYERS:** I will make just make a few comments. I would like to say that I did not appreciate the comments made by the Member for Renbel that it was backbenchers that stirred up this problem. Such a statement on this floor of Parliament really derailed us when we were just trying to represent our conscience on our position, especially I, as one of the prominent backbenchers, since day one has made my position very clear in the newspaper, in the Bills Committee, in caucus and so forth. I have been very clear, very straight and very honest. That is why backbenchers have asked me to talk on their behalf because I am straightforward, I talk straight and I meant exactly what I said. So to stir it up after the Prime Minister has moved an adjournment process by standing up straightaway to attack us and discredit us is asking us not to support this motion. Do you want us not to support this motion? I can tell you that what is this? What is this vote for? Is it only the majority, 26? Count yourselves.

Firstly I should demand an apology after all the attacks I have had in the newspaper in the last two weeks saying that the person who does not support this bill is a corrupt person. That is a disgrace, and it is also a disgrace for me having to stand up and talk like this when I am a backbencher of the government trying to support my Prime Minister. The reason why the consultation process has failed is because we have talked and talked but we have never been listened to. The process has been driven by officials. This is not our bill. Where is our

ownership inside this Bill? You are mixing and twisting it up. No, just do what we say to you. We are elected leaders to be responsible, intelligent and to pass responsible bills on the floor of this Parliament. I will not be dictated to, if it is against my conscience. That is one of the fundamental positions I was clear about this that this Bill gives an exception to political parties to overrule the freedom of conscience in our Constitution making political parties more powerful than Parliament. Read it properly. This is an issue and someone somewhere along the line is going to shake my hand and say a job well done. This is a very important issue. We are not passing a bill for the sake of the government but we are passing a bill for the sake of the future of the people, as mentioned in the Prime Minister's speech. We have to make sure we are responsible in our watch. If we do not come back in the next term that is fine, but we do not want to be the people that makes a mistake for the future of our people. Do not blind the people by saying this is what we have come up with and this is what it means. We have a lot of prominent people including yourself, Mr. Speaker, including prominent lawyers, educated elites saying this Bill is a flaw and so let us work together to fix it. But this goes in here and comes out the other side.

I feel very committed today and I feel very proud of my contribution. I do not feel happy about the criticisms that I have been getting but that is the job of a leader; take it on the chin. But make sure when you are in power, do the right thing. That is the important thing. So do not accuse someone on this floor of Parliament when we are trying to make it better. We are not trying to defeat it but if we are forced to, we will.

I appreciate the bipartisan position that we have enjoyed over the last three days of the fluidity that we have been able to communicate, the respect for individuals and their concerns. I would like to thank the Prime Minister for taking it into consideration. However, I feel very upset that this Bill was put before this Parliament without due proper process. I am sorry that many people have not listened nor read the recommendations of the Constitution Review Committee, which is an oversight committee for this Parliament and for this Bill. And I will stand by what it says that the first wider consultation should be done on the Bill to obtain meaningful and more insights into the practical issues of the Bill. And that is what we are talking about in these amendments; the practical application of it, the vision of how it will work and the vision of how it will create an elitism process with party politics that override our fundamental rights in this country represented in the Constitution. It is a very important thing that we as leaders, as 50 Members of Parliament put our heads together on this. Unfortunately, today has proved that consultations have not been wide enough. There has not been enough inclusiveness. There has been not enough bipartisan

process in absorbing, taking on and putting it into a manifested where we can enjoy and say to our country we are more responsible, we are going through this political reform, let us move into parties. But the lack of wisdom in bringing these two separate bills locked into each other creates more dilemmas and more questions to us is, what is the conspiracy in this. Get rid of the doubt and get rid of the fear. Create confidence and then you will find a unified process that our people can enjoy in future. Unless everyone forgets that the poor old backbenchers have to be the frontline for Ministers, and that makes it even worse because it turns me into more as a victim than anything.

I suggest when we get up and promote a process, let us not try and destroy it. Because if I am given the chance today I will vote against this so that we start afresh and get it done and get it done rightly. But then again as the Member of North West Chouseul has said it is turning into a motion of no confidence, so that puts me into another position of responsibility saying I am going to have to vote for the Prime Minister if that is the case.

This brings me to the next question that if we move this process of adjournment to next year, the process of the next motion, how is it going to affect the outcome of the bill when it is re-debated next year. Are only certain positions going to be reviewed? It is just a review, to consider, to examine and to make a report. Are those going to be listened to and taken on board? There is an old saying, "once beaten twice shy". I want to question myself whether we are really honest on this. Are we really going for a review or just playing to make sure it does not fail? In the meantime we are just building public pressure to force such and such a people.

The Minister of Education speech started to suggest that we if do not do it, this town is going to burn next year. Is my house going to be burned too? This is an irresponsible process that a person who does not want to support the bill is corrupt. Irresponsible processes, personalizing outside, throwing it onto the floor of Parliament making us like subjective to a process that is run and driven by officials, and that is why I am sorry for the Prime Minister that he has good intentions, he is a good man trying to do the right thing but being led and say even if it is like this just do it. That is what makes me upset and some of us upset that we wonder why we are in Parliament, are we that unless.

I think we all need to take the blame, but we all need to be proactive in making sure we have a constructive and proactive outcome. The people of this country need to know that we are being responsible and we are going to pass a bill before the end of this term, and that it is going to reflect political reform and we are going into the party process, which I never objected to. But let us not be confused between the two bills. One is a fundamental move within our Constitution and the other one is a regulatory process. I have no problem with

the political parties bill, but it is this amendment that we are talking about here on this floor. Unfortunately they are both locked in together, and that is why in debate we have actually canvassed both.

I appreciate that if people start throwing fingers at each other, they need to understand and put themselves in someone else's shoes in a lower position than what they are in. I would like to say that today both Ministers and backbenchers have an understanding as the Prime Minister said and so it is irresponsible after the Prime Minister came out and said something in a unifying manner and someone in the ministerial bench comes out and starts throwing mud at me. Some Members of Parliament would like to ask others to represent them; please respect that, and that is a difficult responsibility. Even when people sign things and then turn around and say something else makes me upset too. I feel sorry for the Member for North West Choseul when he was hammered by the press for wrong reporting, false reporting. Even myself in the editor's note on the paper the other day, attacked me over something after I made my contribution. What is the intention? I would like to see more professional reporting by the media in this country. If they are going to interview people on this constitutional amendment, please make sure you have political journalists that understand the Bill. When journalists came to me asking me to comment on the Bill, I told them that before they ask me question on my position on the bill since I am a Parliament Member, I asked them the question whether they understand the constitutional amendment bill and what is inside and they said no. This makes me wonder how many more people in this country do not understand it because even the media do not understand this. But we are getting told that it is the will and consciousness of the people. I hope it is not getting testing that well.

I suppose I have said enough, because I did not intend to talk this long but I believe in the process of moving forward. As I said someone is going to hit me on the back of the head for not failing this today. It is irresponsible for the government to move a motion without the numbers, and I am happy to see people coming in. Now that I have given the Government enough time to get their Members in, my colleagues I support the motion. Thank you.

**Mr OTI:** First on a procedural issue, and that is in the event of this process we are going through, which you clarified earlier on the application of Standing Order 35(1) where you mentioned that that provision applies to the adjournment of debate to the next sitting day. I thought I heard you said that. So the now reference to that motion, to the adjournment of the debate to a specific date, what order is applied in that regard, because of your earlier clarification of my motion that it is to the next sitting day.

On the motion by the Prime Minister on what...

**Mr Speaker:** Could I just clarify that? The order that we normally use is Order 9.

**Mr. Oti:** Thank you for that clarification. On the motion proper by the Prime Minister, the terms of reference as has been put to Parliament for its consideration in this motion is basically by invoking Standing Order 73, and as I mentioned earlier in my debate that there were various options, and one was if the Bill was passed then we could invoke Standing Order 49 through another motion, refer it to the Standing Committee which is the Constitutional Review Committee. At this instance, the other option that is taken by the Prime Minister here is Order 73 to refer it to a special select committee which will report directly to the Prime Minister. Such is basically something that the Constitution Review Committee can look into but because we are now in the process there is no where we can factor this into the Standing Order processes of Parliament unless we use Standing Order 49, which is impossible at this stage. Hence, the restriction in what I would see as a restriction on the Special Select Committee because it is only to consider the various debates or issues of debate regarding those particular sections, which the Leader of Opposition and a lot of them, in fact, all of them are issues we have already made submissions to the special taskforce about already.

The membership of this Special Select Committee, according to Order 73 is either bipartisan within Parliament or outside of Parliament as appointed by you is a decision of the Speaker. And consider the various debates, and (b) examine the report. In fact, ..

**Hon Sikua:** Point of order. That is the next motion.

**Mr Speaker:** Yes, I think we are already discussing another motion. Could we just deal with the adjournment of the debate? I think the Prime Minister will move the particular motion you are now speaking to now. He is yet to move that motion.

**Mr. Oti:** Thank you but I do not think I will have time to speak on the next motion, and that is why I am talking to it now. Thank you for the clarification Prime Minister and Mr. Speaker, but I think in essence, perhaps I will elaborate on those further. But for the time being the issue that I raised is important for us to know the process we are going through now. On that note, thank you and I



will make those comments when we come to the motion proper which means that I will have to stay and listen to that motion. Thank you.

**Mr. ZAMA:** Before I put in my brief comment, if this sitting of Parliament is televised the people of Solomon Islands are seeing two things. Firstly, they are seeing a very vibrant and democratic Parliament in Solomon Islands, and secondly their own government falling in disarray and a Prime Minister completely losing control of his Ministers and backbenchers and a bunch of confused leaders.

I do not know why the Prime Minister has to move this Motion, quite honestly and frankly, especially when Ministers are now openly revolting against Ministers and members of their own backbench.

What we have been debating over the last few days is very clear, is very clear, and the motion moved by the Prime Minister is to consider the various debates by Members. I cannot see any place for those considerations. Where will they fit inside in this Bill? Because according to the MP for Tetepare what we would really want to see is for this Bill to be debated and defeated on the floor of Parliament, and if there is going to be a new recommendation it has to come in the form of a new Bill. That is the issue and with that I oppose.

**Hon HAOMAE:** I shall be very brief in debating this important motion moved by the Prime Minister. I am inclined to go with the Member for North West Choiseul in supporting the motion. I think it is unreasonable for the respected Leader of the Opposition to make a statement that the process should be terminated now, which is also implied by the Member who has just spoken and has gone out now.

The issue now is not the issues he is trying to tell us about the solidarity of the government or not. The issue is that we have heard from the floor of Parliament that there needs to be further consultation. It is only healthy that they speed up. It is within the ambit of the Standing Orders, the procedures of Parliament and you have agreed to the motion that it is in order, and so I do not see the reason why my friend, the Leader of Opposition and the Member of Parliament for Tetepare to insist on a vote now. To me, that implied different agenda or different thinking.

The members of the government backbench have implied they were not adequately consulted and that the Bill it was suggested was driven by officials. So the Special Select Committee is the subject of another motion, in view of the adjournment motion moved by the Prime Minister, would be the proper forum for which such consultations will be made. As the Member for North West Choiseul has said, let us take Christmas off and consult our people, although I

tend to think that consultations should have limits also because if overstretched can create what is called paralysis of analysis. I have been voted by chiefs and people of Small Malaita, who have given me the mandate to make judgments on national issues before Parliament on their behalf. But it is very healthy to go back and consult our people again. In view of the process and the varying views, divergence of views on this Bill it is only healthy, proper and fitting that we should go back to the consultation table. We should not speculate on what the outcome of those consultations would be. Let them take on their process. The motion moved by the Prime Minister is in order that there needs to be more consultation on this bill, and there is nothing wrong with that. I think that is the healthy thing to do. On that basis I support the motion and thank you.

**Mr TOSIKA:** Thank you for allowing me time to contribute very briefly on this motion. In fact this is the second time this Bill comes in. The first one was No. 3 Bill 2009 addressing the same issue and we now have this No. 24 of 29 Bill, the second one is amending the No.3 in which a very substantive amendment is done on it, in fact, it is a new Bill altogether. It looks like this Bill will change the various areas in the Constitution and maybe make a substantive change on the Bill itself. That is the point I am asking. Also to clarify the thinking of outsiders, this is what we are here for, we, politicians who are elected by you, to make good decisions and make good laws to help our country.

Today we are seeing, as rightly stated, a vibrant Parliament which is an indication of the rights of conscience, the right of expression, the freedom of association and freedom from discrimination. That is what we are exercising now. That is our fear of this change to the Constitution that if this bill is passed these rights will be tampered with or affected. This is exactly why we are trying to put it right. Most of us on this side want the bill, but we want it to be done properly so that it does not affect our rights and freedom. That is our main concern.

I think a person in his right mind who does not think well will not support this Bill if it comes in its right form, especially the kind of thinking that a person who resigns from a party will lose his seat. That kind of thing is affecting the rights of a person. These are the kind of things we see as not right.

But I thank the Prime Minister and the Government. This is what the Constitution is for, so that those in the backbench and other people inside the government could speak their minds and exercise their beliefs so that we put right the things we bring in here and trying to debate and pass. That is actually what the Constitution is there for.

I thank the Government for moving this motion to adjourn the Second Reading to a later date in March on the basis that we want to see this Bill to

change and address the issues we are raising in here so that everyone of us says yes to it. If you do not change it according to what we are discussing here, then it will still be a no. With that I support the motion.

**Mr BOSETO:** The motion is to ask a Special Select Committee. First, I think it is within the recommendation of the Constitution Review Committee, No 1 which says, "Wider consultation should be done on the Bill to obtain meaningful and more insights on the practical issues of the bill. Whether my South Choiseul Constituency has been preparing or not, but I think we have been preparing for the federal system. You can remember that we were given \$20,000 each Member to conduct consultations with our people. What I am saying here is if we are going to have wider consultation in order to find out more insights on the practical implication of the Bill, we need time and finance. Therefore, I find it impossible just to be given a short time until 16<sup>th</sup> March. That is not going to be practical as that is not long enough. You have to budget perhaps \$20,000 per Member to do that so that consultation is not just at a level here in Honiara and even the province, but to go down to the grassroots. Therefore, I find it impossible supporting the motion.

**Mr. HUNIEHU:** I would like to speak in support of this motion moved by the honorable Prime Minister. We must remind ourselves that this is a Melanesian Parliament and when we are in disagreement over an issue then of course we can arrive at some consensus, and also might I add that this is what parliamentary democracy is all about. The Prime Minister has made up his mind on the importance of this particular Bill that it is a political reform of this present government. I believe that members of the Opposition and some members of the Caucus are not comfortable with this Bill, and so with the surging questions that they have asked and the technical issues they have raised on the floor of Parliament, made it possible for the Prime Minister to move this motion.

Now, it is surprising to me that consultation seems to be everyone's excuse. When I heard them spoke on the Bill, they appear to me as if they are all lawyers. The job of MPs is to consult his own people. The committee the Prime Minister appointed to do this consultation is only a committee but the primary role of Members of Parliament is to consult our people. But because all of us are businessmen living here in Honiara and so we do not want to go to our constituencies. That is the problem. I do not see consultation as an issue. The MP for Temotu Nende could have flown to Temotu and do the consultation himself. He, himself, when explaining the legal issues...

**Mr. Oti:** Point of order. Before the MP for East Are Are is taken overboard by his comments, perhaps allow me to make some clarifications. I do not live in Honiara because of business or something like that. Since June we were appointed under a Special Select Committee inquiry into hospital service where we work full time and there is no time for us to visit our constituencies. That alone is clear on my part that I do not have time to do the consultations. The question I raised about consultation today was the committee; the taskforce that has done consultation did not reach my constituency. If I was required to, of course, that is a different matter. The consultation I was making reference to was the consultation undertaken by the taskforce that visited the constituency, let alone our province, let alone the provincial executive that comes every time to Honiara, but there was no time taken, and that is why I raised that. For me personally, the engagement by the Special Select Committee on the inquiry into the services at the Referral Hospital did not permit some of us to reach the constituency. I hope the MP for East Are Are has his bearings right. Thank you.

**Mr. Huniehu:** Thank you. Actually, I did not mention any names when I said the businessmen. I am just making a general comment. But I appreciate the work that the MP for Temotu Nende and his Special Select Committee are doing. I think they are doing a very good job, which was not questioned by me.

What I was saying is that if more consultation is needed then we Members of Parliament have to take some of these on our own shoulders. When we voted for the Prime Minister we did not consult our people. This means when we were voted into this Parliament, we have been entrusted by people to do the right things on their behalf. I think that is the intention of the Constitution. But as I have said, the Prime Minister has done the right thing. He saw that this Bill in particular has divided us, of course, it has divided us because some of us backbenchers did not support this Bill or we have expressed our concerns on this bill. But the consensus that all of us arrived at is that the concept of the Bill is okay but it is some of the technicalities of the Bill that needs to be re-looked at.

I only hope that when the select committee is appointed, and it does its work and comes up with recommendations those who expressed reservation will support it in March. I hope that we are not playing politics on such an important bill because the election is very near.

As of today, the Opposition has gained mark and that is the work of the opposition; the elections are next year and that is why the MP for Rendova was jumping up and down because he could see that they are gaining some support from some Members on this side of the House.

The view that a vote must be taken now, passed or not passed, is his own view and not the view of the CNURA Government because we would like to

mitigate, we would like to negotiate our way through and have an important bill passed because the government respects the honorable views of the honorable Members of Parliament who have requested for more consultation. But for me I support this Bill because it is a bill and it is amendable. With those few remarks I support the motion.

**Sir, KEMAKEZA:** I thank the Prime Minister for moving this very, very important motion for further consultation, and perhaps I am also a party to those suggestions.

I stand up because the Member for East Are Are prompted me to stand up. In fact, I did not want to stand up but what made me to stand up are the two words he stated that some of us opposed this Bill because we wanted to play politics. No, no, and he said that about himself. In fact, the Member for East Are Are supported the Bill but now he has decided not to support the Bill again. If you had listened to his contribution, the technicality part of it, it seems to imply he is not in support of it. But yesterday he supports the Bill, and so we find a person who is also confused himself. No, for sure, I am serious about that, but he is my personal friend. That is the point about the Member for East Are Are. He even signed the list indicating his support for the Bill. And so I find him to be a confused man.

I would like to clarify my position like this. I opposed this Bill so that it is tidied it up. And that is exactly what is this motion is meant to be. I think it is on this part that those of us who are the backbenchers of the government and my respectable Ministers of the Crown, I also agree to further consultations. That was a decision that came out from the Caucus yesterday, and so I respect the Prime Minister to do further consultations.

One thing we seem to forget is our responsibility as Members of Parliament, and there are only two. The first one is that we are legislators or law makers, and the laws we bring in here to be passed, we must make sure they are good for our people. That is the reservation for some of us. Secondly, we are policy makers, no more no less and not a businessman like the Member for East Are Are stated, which is himself who is a businessman. No, we are not here to be accountants, we are not here to look after the RCDF, the livelihood and all these funds. But I congratulate the government then of the Member for East Choiseul, the Leader of the Opposition now for creating the CDO's so that they do all these work. Otherwise half of us Members of Parliament will go to the place where I have just come out from, because of the accountability and the transparency of these public funds. Our work is not to look after the RCDF and all these funds we are putting in place. No, we are here as policy makers and also as law makers of this country, let alone some other side line issues.

Therefore, for the Member for East Are Are to label the Member of Savo/Russells as politicking because he opposed the Bill is not the point. I have revealed my position on this Bill. I have cleared my position both in Caucus and on the floor of this Parliament about it. But just for the information of the Member for East Are Are, I have just returned on Monday morning after consulting my people about this Bill. The Member for East Are Are has not been to his constituency for the last three years. I am honest because people of East Are Are are also intermarrying with my people. I also have a lot of East Are Are people in my house.

**Mr. Huniehu:** Point of order. When I made that statement today I did not imply anybody. I did not imply the MP for Savo/Russells, I did not mention that constituency in my remarks and so he is free.

**Sir, Kemakeza:** I agree with the Member for East Are Are because according to the standing orders it is forbidden to mention names. But the fact that those who opposed the Bill includes the Member for Savo/Russells, and so I cannot rule off the fact that I am also implied in his statement. It is forbidden in our Standing Orders to mention names and that is why our names were not mentioned by him. I respect my colleague for that. However, that is not the point but the point is I support the motion moved by the honorable Prime Minister. Thank you.

**Mr. WAIPORA:** I have only three points to make on this special motion. First of all, I would like to say that I am happy that what I have seen in July 2008 is happening right now. During the motion of no confidence I mentioned all these things that are happening now. About 14 months ago I have seen these things and now it is happening. I am very happy to see that what I have said 14 months ago are happening. Thank you.

The bipartisan committee that is going to be established will have to re-look at this Bill.

**Mr Speaker:** Point of order. It is now 4.30pm and the honorable Prime Minister may facilitate for us to continue.

**Hon. Sikua:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and my sincere apologies. It is now 4:30pm and I can see a few more Members wanting to speak to the motion and so I seek your consent to move a suspension of Standing Order 10 in accordance with Standing Order 81.

*Standing Order 10 suspended under Standing Order 81 to permit the continuation of business after 4.30pm*

**Mr. Waipora:** My point about the bipartisan committee to re-look at the Bill, I hope that now it will really be bipartisan because all along it is only the SSPM who is doing all the things. For those of us in the Opposition we are politicians from the Opposition backbench. I would have thought that bipartisan means politicians to politicians who have officers working for them. In my own interpretation it would seem to me that the Member for West Honiara and myself should be the boss of this committee because we are politicians, we are talking about the policy of the government and not the SSPM. That is why this Bill has gone wrong. That is why they are forcing this Bill on us. This Bill is being forced by the SSPM on Members. Sir, I went with the SSPM to Papua New Guinea and I tried to tell him things but he seemed to override everything. That is why he is demeaning the government, and do not hide it.

I am also a member of the Constitution Review Committee and we were talking about the experiences we have but he twisted everything. And if I were the Prime Minister I would have sacked the SSPM because you do not know but he is brainwashing all of you. That is why we are arguing over this bill. I want to speak out my mind right now. I want this bipartisan to be really bipartisan. Leaders should be the head of this committee that is going to be formed and then we have officers to work for us. Not like what they did for the two of us, myself and the Member for West Honiara. It must be a really bipartisan committee.

I also led a bipartisan group too, I took them to Marau or Balasuna. I took all the Cabinet Ministers, backbenchers and Opposition people and we went to fix the people of Guadalcanal. We did not send officers. I selected leaders, the people who are mandated by the people of this country to do the work and implement the policies of the government. That is the point I want to raise here.

The Constitution Review Committee led by the Honorable Member for Central Guadalcanal who is our chairman, whether we will come up with new points or whether our recommendations will remain. Because of that, following that, is the adjournment on this Bill going to be in a different form? What about if we come up with a different bill all together, will it be the same as this bill that we are now adjourning its debate? Otherwise it comes in different wordings and sections. My interpretation of this is that if the debate on this Bill is adjourned does it mean that it will be this bill that is going to be debated on March 16<sup>th</sup>? That is what I want to know. This is the Constitution Political Parties Amendment Bill 2009 and so will these sections be like this and this? What if we come back with a new form all together, how is the adjournment of this particular Bill? That is the point I want to get clarification from the Prime

Minister on. Because I wonder if we can give that motion a different wording otherwise we come and all of a sudden we come with different recommendations and the sections are different, so that instead of section 4 it will be section 6 and may be its wordings and meanings are going to be different. That is the point I stood up to question. It is a technical question for the legal boys to clear for us. But I have this concern and that is why I am going to oppose this motion. In case it is not this bill that we are going to debate on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March, but a different bill. With that in mind I do not support this motion, but we must continue to debate this Bill. Thank you.

**Hon. TOZAKA:** Thank you for allowing me to contribute to this motion. I want to also join other colleagues on this side of the House to support this motion moved by the Prime Minister. I think it is a straightforward motion. The Prime Minister in moving the motion said that this side of the House is prepared to listen and is prepared to accommodate, which are virtues reflecting our Westminster government system which is based on consultation. Here, I am very supportive of the Prime Minister in coming with this line of approach to deal with this particular Bill, which is quite complicated, and we require time to consult each other before we can come to a decision.

In supporting this motion I think I am duty bound to stand also as the Minister for Public Service to defend the officials. I have been sitting down and listened quite attentively to the debates that have been going on and I was quite concerned and about allegations made against our officials in carrying out their responsibility as public officers as obedient servants of the government. We should know the role of the public officers and the role of politicians. The role of public servants is just to implement the policies of the government of the day. They are answerable to their political leaders and they do their work as directed by the government of the day. What I heard from MPs talking about officials is that they seem to do their work on their own, not listening to directions or instructions. I think this Bill has gone through the normal process of the government system where it went through the Caucus, and it went through Cabinet. Yes, some people are bound not to agree with this Bill but it has gone through the system and the decision was made collectively hence it was brought here to be passed.

I just want to correct some of us who have made allegations against officials including the Honorable Attorney General's Chamber and also the Office of the Prime Minister and also our Public Service who do not have the right to stand here on the floor of Parliament to defend themselves. They are only responsible to us. And the amount of work they have contributed towards this Bill is enormous, it is very huge. I really admire their work because they



work and some of them worked over time without receiving overtime for the work they were doing. I think we must be extra cautious when we refer to our public officers because they are doing a very good job trying their best in implementing government policies. This is why we have this testimony to this House on the amount of bills we have passed in this House, and also this is Bill is one of the testimonies. It is a complicated and a new bill, however, they managed to make it in time for Parliament. I would like to just cautious us when we talk about our public officers because they need support at this very time when we have problems and difficulties in our public service. The public officers need our assistance, need our support, they need our encouragement, and not discouragement. That is one point I would like to make to this House in relation to our Public Service.

With those comments, once again I think this is the right move by the government that we support this motion to give us ample time to go through the process of consultation and nothing is wrong about it. We came up with some points we are not happy about which will be put back into the process and then we will come back again to this House to debate it. With those comments, thank you.

**Mr Oti:** Point of order. I just want you to make your ruling that when I stood up today, I am not speaking a second time, but when I stood up today I sought clarification on a matter of procedure, and inadvertently I wrongly went straight into trying to contribute to something, which is not yet tabled and therefore in that instance I have not really made any contribution to this motion moved by the Prime Minister. And so I want to speak on this motion.

**Mr Speaker:** Please continue.

**Mr Oti:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, your ruling is final than those talking from the other side. Thank you, and I thank the Prime Minister for the motion.

Now that I have seen the notice of the motion yet to come, which I was trying to preempt my contribution on, I have difficulty supporting this motion because unfortunately, I do not know whether this is deliberate or an oversight but I would like to support the position put forward by the Member for West Makira that in the event, because this is a postponement or adjournment of the second reading of the bill as we currently have. How about if this bill comes back and is totally different, it is no longer a continuation of the debate on this present bill but a new bill altogether, but I can see the rationale that in fact it probably would be the same bill because already the government is proposing the same bill to come back again, hence the terms of reference for this. Therefore,

you have not really addressed the issue that we come across. Substantive changes might result in a different bill altogether. The same issue, the substance would have changed so substantively that we probably would re-notice it, hence this motion will fall out of context if that happens. That is the concern that some of us are having and that is why we have difficulty supporting the motion as currently moved by the Prime Minister. Thank you.

**Mr NUIASI:** Thank you for allowing me to briefly talk on the special adjournment motion moved by the Prime Minister. I think the Prime Minister being a leader saw it fitting in adjourning the debate on this constitutional amendment to be debated on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March next year.

As a member of the backbench I am not influenced nor follow somebody's decision. In fact when I made up my mind to vote against the constitutional amendment, it was the fundamental rights that have been amended in the constitution were the concern made by me, to make my mind not to support this Bill when it was put before parliament today.

Since this special adjournment is now moved, I agree with the way the Prime Minister is handling the issue now. However, the only concern and the only statement I will be putting across is that as long as changes are made in line with what we suggested or what I think then I am with the government in voting for this Bill. The Bill in itself is a very sensitive bill. I do not oppose the Political Parties Bill because it is a bill that can easily pass through Parliament, but the constitutional amendments are what I am more concerned about, and that is why when the Minister for Tourism say that we hijacked the Bill I do not think he actually consulted us when he made those statements and trying to accuse us, the backbenchers. I think we, the backbenchers are here to see that whatever legislations we pass in this honorable chamber are conducive and does not affect our people in the rural areas.

I have been to my constituency just recently trying to explain this Bill to the people and a lot of my people of West Are Are just do not understand or have no knowledge about this Political Parties Bill. This is because many of my people at home do have radios but they only turn those radios on when music is played because they are people from the rural areas and when they go to places like gardening and so forth they would want to relax and so the only relaxation they get from the radio is through music. Therefore, with this special adjournment I am looking forward to the constitutional amendments to be put right before I will support the Government in its endeavor.

**Hon. MAELANGA:** Thank you very much. I would just like to contribute briefly to the motion moved by the Prime Minister. I see the Prime Minister

having wisdom in moving this motion and I thank the Prime Minister for moving this motion.

I think it is very clear here that there will be a select committee appointed to look into this issue, I mean the bill, the Constitutional Political Parties Amendment Bill and so I see no reason why we should still comment on this Bill. I would like to say here that it will be fair enough if the Prime Minister moves this motion because this is the time that both groups within Parliament; the independent group and the opposition, the Government with its backbenchers to put their minds and thinking together on the amendments of the Constitution so that we all come up with something that we all agree upon and then bring this bill back into Parliament on the 16<sup>th</sup> March for the Second Reading debate. I think it is good that the Prime Minister moved this motion for more time. Listening to other speakers mentioned that there is not enough time and so I think it is good that this motion was moved today by the Prime Minister so that more consultation is held in some of our constituencies so that our people are made to be aware of Constitution Political Parties Amendment Bill so that we could explain this Bill to them. We have also heard from other speakers saying the taskforce has never visited their constituencies, and so it is good that the debate has been adjourned. That is why I said that the Prime Minister has wisdom by listening to the speakers who have contributed to the debate on the Bill. Therefore, I stand to support my Prime Minister for moving this motion and thank you.

**Mr TANEKO:** I thank the Prime Minister for this motion on the adjournment of the debate of this Bill so that the various debates made can be considered.

Listening to the debates that have been going on for the past two days, I just want to clear myself that I am one of the backbenchers with a clear conscience who did not support this Bill in the first place because I am also a member of the Bills Committee, but I can say here that now the spirit has spoken. The spirit has now spoken to this House. Sometimes I wonder by all the debates that we made in here when the Day of Judgment day comes, this House should be speaking nothing but the truth. We have to remind ourselves that this is the highest authority, the supreme law, the Constitution; the Constitution is the supreme law of this land. This small book here we are saying is for the benefit of the nation of Solomon Islands. They have to own it; they have to have ownership of it. Whatever we legislate and pass in this House belongs to people of Solomon Islands and has to benefit Solomon Islanders.

The question here is, have we legislated our own cultures to fit and tailored to suit our people? That is my question. I have been very quiet for the last two days. But now Mr. Prime Minister I say thank you that the spirit has

spoken because we are not prepared. Now we can go for more consultation, get those professional people again, the lawyers in our country to elaborate more, brainstorm and bring a law that is tailored for our nation. This is the House that legislates and the legislative body that will pass the law.

I have a question to ask about this book. There are 145 sections in this book, and the question I want to ask here is out of the 145 sections, how many of those sections are our people well versed with since this law was implemented at independence in 1978? That is the question we should be asking because this is the highest supreme body that passes, and legislates law tailored for the peace and good governance of this nation. This is a law for the benefit of our people.

Solomon Islands is a Christian country, about 90% we can say a Christian country and this is their supreme law. The Bible says in Romans 8:v32 that when you know the truth, the truth will set you free. This is a supreme law. May I suggest another one here, and this is just wisdom from the border line, Shortlands whom I represent my people. I want to straighten my good governance that when we talk about grass hopping, this is my second term and when I came in I stay at my home and nobody lobbied me. I stay at my home and not in hotels to make my decision which government to join. I want to say this on behalf of my people that I stay at my own house and make my own decision on which government to follow. I want to put that right as well.

I am happy with this Bill. The intention of it is very good. The main objective and reason of the Bill is to bring about political stability in strengthening the political party system in our country. That is why I want to thank the Prime Minister for bringing this Bill so that more consultation is done because Chapter 2 of the Constitution is very important. If you look at section 11 of the Constitution, our culture of our tribes in our villages is very important. But in this House that we come into, from the beginning of this legislative body we are separate from the beginning before we even come into this House to make our laws. We were separated or different from outside and so the conscience is already made in here. When you are on the government side you have to support the Bill because you are on the government and so this is contradicting your conscience. This is a big issue; the freedom of expression. Also, the protection of the freedom of assembly and association is what we are going to see. I want to say here very briefly that I heard a lot of debates and I humbled myself and listened but I want to say here is that the right spirit has finally came in now for our nation because the law that we are going to pass is going to benefit our people of the Solomon Islands; the ownership that will benefit and protect their rights so that they enjoy this nation through whatever laws we pass in here. It is the legacy that we will put, otherwise we pass a piece of law and we go out and at the end of the day we do not enjoy abiding with the

law. I want to say here through this small contribution that I am happy with this adjournment.

Before I sit down, we can pass all the reforms we want in this House but if we are not transformed or changed ourselves then we will never change our nation. All of us have to be transformed. We have to have good minds and we have to have a peace of mind. We have to be united in oneness, we have to unite our hearts. So you can pass all the laws but if you do not transform so that we are one Solomon Islander, you will never change Solomon Islands. You will never change it. This is just a general comment because we are leaders and I have to talk. We can pass all the laws we want but if we are not transformed, if we do not change our characters and attitudes, the reforms will not be beneficial to us. This is a good law and that is why I said from the beginning when I asked the question that how many of those 145 sections of the Constitution do Solomon Islanders know.

Before I sit down I suggest that the Minister for Education takes note that I want the Constitution to be distributed to all schools in the country and teachers have to teach them to their students clause by clause, section by section so that the peace can reign in our country. The Constitution is just like the Holy Scripture or the Bible to the nations of Solomon Islands. It is not an ordinary book. It is not something that we pass in here and laugh about it, which I normally heard us joking about it which scares me. This is the highest authority and one day we are going to be judge on the laws that we pass in this house. It does not end here. This is just like the holy book, this is the law of the Solomon Islands; this is for the benefit and for the peace of the nation of Solomon Islands.

I want the Minister for Education to duplicate copies of the Constitution to be distributed all schools in the country, so that they know about the Constitution, so that they know about their rights, so that they respect other races, so that they respect other languages, so that they respect other religions so that we do not fight against each other because they do not know their laws and so they criticize each other. There is only one God, not 20 gods or 50 gods but only one. I am going to be the last speaker, do not allow anyone else to speak. Yes, I am preaching to you people. This is the truth because only the truth will set us free that there is only one God. The Constitution says that we have to respect other religions but Solomon Islanders do not respect each other but criticize each other, one church criticizing the other church. No, we should not be like that. There is only one God, and we even have not seen heaven, we just see it by faith. All of us in here are going to be judged one day from the highest supreme body. When they take the coffin out in here, the question is, are we really leaders of this nation of Solomon Islands. Do we pass laws that will benefit this nation, my children and my grand children? Or I am just joking

about it in there and laugh about it and I pass legislations that do not benefit this nation because I want to politicize and I want to make that man happy, that man on the opposition side to be happy or the Prime Minister to be happy. The Bible says that we have to please God first before men. Do you still want to hear it? Paul says in Colossians Chapter 3:17-23, we have to please God, not men. So whatever we pass in here make sure we are making the right decision to benefit our beneficiaries, the Solomon Islands citizens. Whether you are black or white or yellow, as long as you are born in Solomon Island or comes into Solomon Islands to enjoy this nation, under the Constitution we must abide with the Constitution. This is a nice book but we have to abide with it. That is all I want to say on this motion. Mr Prime Minister, I salute you for this motion because the spirit speaks to you that we need to consult more, we need to look at it further because a very important and serious clause is Chapter 2 of the Constitution. We have to be serious about it, we have to look at it and tailor it so that it suit us, so that we can enjoy it so that when we go out of this House the law that we have passed can be enjoyed peacefully by us when we sit down. Otherwise when we are old, and we hear that our children or our grand children suffer from what we have passed in this House now. Thank you and I support the motion.

**Hon. SOALAOI:** Thank you for allowing me to contribute. I will be very brief in support of the motion. I am standing up to make an appeal for colleague Members who think otherwise. I am saying this because if we do away with this Bill, when is it going to come back in if this Parliament is dissolved and people just forget about it. I believe political stability is the desire of every one of us in here. It is our desire. If we talk about its formation and whatever structure we came in that we do not want this structure, but I believe the desire for political stability is common to all of us here in this chamber.

I must thank the Prime Minister for coming up with this motion to establish a special Select Committee under Standing Order 73, which I tend to believe is the way forward. Any other ways would be just an effort to do away with this desire of attaining political stability. I believe by deferring debate on this would allow all of us to come to an understanding.

If we continue to be divided in this chamber, our people will be divided as well. If you want this nation to be united I think it has to start with us in here. I am sorry to say that not all of us are in the Chamber right now. I must make this appeal to all of us to see this motion as a way forward for us to finally come to a point where we all agree that this is the right form we want because we all desire to have political stability.

To those colleagues who opposed the bill and also decided to oppose this motion, what is the alternative you are going to offer to us? I must thank the honorable Leader of Independent for his understanding. If we do not have an understanding right now during the debate of this motion where are we going from here? I believe the way forward is to agree with the Prime Minister for the establishment of the Special Select Committee under Sanding Order 73.

I think the events of the past, of our political history has taught us a lot of lessons that we should learn from. I do not know how many more events like the 2006 riot do we want? I think that is the least we want to see happen in our country. We do not want to see such events repeated in our country. I believe that regardless of the differences we have now in the chamber regarding the Bill, this motion should be the way forward for all Members of Parliament regardless whether you are in government, opposition or independent.

Like I said, it is my desire as a leader to make sure there is political security in this nation. And I know it is true for all of us here, nobody can deny it. We only argue about the form it is brought in. And you know, as loyal Ministers we have been accused as rubberstamps. But I am not a rubber but I am a human being. As my colleague for Temotu Nende has said, I am sorry to say this, but my answer to that would be that I am a loyal Minister of the crown and I cannot allow myself to be a rubberstamp. And I thank him for coming in whilst I am making the point.

Let me give us some wisdom from the East because my colleague from Shortlands has already spoken. I believe that we need to move on and I am appealing for the understanding of the opposition group. I think we are starting to be confused. It is no secret and our people have already said it. During our break today I went down town and people were telling me that we are confused and we better put a stop to this because if the head is confused then this country will go nowhere. We need unity in this chamber in order for our country to be united. I am making this appeal on behalf of our people. We better come to some understanding on a way forward. I think the Prime Minister has done the right thing by moving this motion. I will continue to support consultations like this.

Just to clarify a few things the Member for South Choiseul has said, in case our people might be confused. The \$20,000 for consultation was given in the time of the last Parliament. I am saying this otherwise some people think we were given this amount. I was not given any \$20,000 to do any consultation. I am not sure too because if you go for consultation right now in your constituency, and my colleague has just said it that when you go for consultation in the constituency it is going to be 'cash-sultation', people will be asking you money. You go for consult but people will be asking you for money. I think

there is a taskforce and now this motion is for the establishment of a special select committee, which I believe is the right thing to do.

I know all of us are tired and people want the Prime Minister to wind up so that we are finished for today. But I also think this is a very important issue for us.

Just to also record my support for the Prime Minister's motion, I see this as the way forward and I am appealing to Members of Parliament for their understanding. If we do not do it now, when are we going to do it? I think it is only us who are thinking about this, and if the next Parliament comes and this is not taken up this country is going nowhere. Whilst we all decide to have a prosperous nation we must show some unity right in this chamber. Once again I thank the Prime Minister for the motion and I support the motion.

**Hon. MANETOALI:** Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this motion. I see this motion as an important motion hence I have to make known a few of my contributions before this Honorable House. I would like to thank the Honorable Prime Minister for the motion of adjourning the debate on this Bill to the 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2010. The Bill is part of the CNURA's Government reform program, hence I speak here as a minister of the current Cabinet and also as a representative of my constituency of Gao/Bugotu.

We make laws on this floor of Parliament because there is a need. We do not make laws because we only want to make laws. We legislate because there is a need. What we have been discussing is the Constitution Political Parties Amendment Bill 2009 because there is need to pave the way for the Political Parties Bill. We all know and some who have already spoken know that the Constitution is the highest law of this country hence any laws passed must be consistent with the Constitution. The Political Parties Bill must be consistent with the Constitution hence a few amendments to the Constitution need to be done so that the Political Parties Bill is consistent with the Constitution.

We have all the benefit of hearing speakers explaining the importance of the political party system on the floor of this Parliament. This country, of course, has no strong party system and the CNURA Government sees the party system as important to government stability in this country. I support the Constitution Political Parties Amendment Bill. Of course, we need a majority to pass the Bill. However, it appears on the floor of this House, the amendment to the Constitution does not go down well to some Members of this House. Of course, we all have the right and freedom to express our views hence Members of Parliament have expressed themselves. The amendment to the Constitution now will give way to the political party system in this country, and from past years political parties have been operating on ad hoc basis and candidates have gone



down to the people campaigning that he or she belongs to a party and preached to the people about his or her party manifesto. However, when that candidate wins the election we no longer hear that party. Party in Solomon Islands is for campaign purposes only. We have a weak party system in this country and that is the very reason why the CNURA Government comes with this constitutional amendment to give way to the political party bill.

We have heard that Members of Parliament have opposed the current constitutional amendment, especially on three grounds, and these are on maintaining of a Member's freedom, foreign concept and no consultation. In regards to foreign concept, from the outset the foreign concept argument cannot be sustained. We cannot say foreign when the amendment is done by the government of the day. The amendment has gone through Cabinet and Cabinet approved it. Moreover the parliamentary system in Solomon Islands is a reflection of the Westminster system, even the order to set up the independence state of Solomon Islands is an order made by Her Majesty pursuant to the provisions of the Foreign Jurisdictions Act 1890 of the United Kingdom. Hence the current amendment is not a foreign concept, it is not made by the UK Cabinet or other countries' cabinet. The current amendment is made by the Solomon Islands Cabinet. Now the amendment comes on the floor of this House for approval, however, some of us are not in favor of it. So how long are we going to run political parties on ad hoc basis? How long?

On Members' freedom, most speakers maintained that the Members' freedom to move around shall remain, yes, but the freedom should be exercised with diligent care and responsibility. Everybody in this House has been a grasshopper, and this should not be denied, but we must have a good reason to cross the floor. Bad reason punishes that Member. It must be a principle reason. I believe the Constitution Amendment still caters for this.

Now we come to this no consultation. In my view, as we are here we are representatives of our people and we speak on behalf of our people and whatever we say and do is done on behalf of our people. But if we look at our current Constitution, the Independence Order, the Members of the Legislative Assembly at that time went to England and signed the documents there in England, and they brought that document back to Solomon Islands. It is not every people in Solomon Islands flew to England for signing of the document there. It was the representatives of the people that went and brought the Constitution here in Solomon Islands, which we adopted on the 7 July 1978. That is my argument on the consultation purposes.

The fact that the honorable Prime Minister has moved the debate to next year, that will give an opportunity to some of us to consult with our relevant constituencies or relevant people on this amendment to the highest law of this

country. The reform is now before the floor of this Parliament, and some of us Members of Parliament fear any repercussions of the amendment. But most Members still want to remain with the old system that we have been adopting since independence until today.

This situation is quite similar to the story of Moses in the Old Testament, where Moses took out the people of Israel from Egypt and when they reached the desert the people complained to Moses why he took them out from Egypt. They told Moses that they should go back to Egypt rather than dying there in the wilderness. But Moses said to them that they have to go forward and so they went forward.

This Bill, at the moment, as we have heard in the debates in this honorable House, does not go down well with some of our honorable Members of Parliament. The Honorable Prime Minister was saying let us go forward, let us move this debate to next year, we should not give up and so this is similar to what Moses said to his people of Israel in the desert when he took the people of Israel through the desert.

**Hon Wale** (*interjecting*): So who is Moses?

**Hon Manetoali**: It seems like the Prime Minister is Moses in this scenario because he was saying let us go forward with this constitutional amendment until next year. With this short contribution I want to support this motion and I beg to take my seat.

**Mr AGOVAKA**: I too would like to add my voice on this motion moved by the Prime Minister. First of all I would like to thank the Prime Minister for moving this motion. This Bill is not about the Government, this bill is not about the Opposition or even the Independent. This Bill is about Solomon Islands and its people. I think the idea of trying to regroup to come to some consensus on how we should go forward with this Bill is far important than what our individual views are here on the floor of Parliament.

This morning I deliberately miss Parliament because I have to attend a meeting called for by the Ministry of Lands for the landowners of the Lungga/Tenaru land. To us the people of Lungga and Tenaru, land is an important matter hence I have to go to this meeting. When I arrived at meeting the former Member for East Central Guadalcanal approached me and said, "The government does not have the money and so it cannot host this meeting and therefore it has to be postponed". She left and I went into the meeting and I can see the chiefs getting frustrated and were asking why the government did not seriously think about their meeting. I said to them that the government has its

own programs, agendas and policies and so it will attend to us when it has the time and money.

I could recall what the Minister of Education was saying yesterday that if we do not support this Bill, may be next year, 2010 there will be more burning houses, or another burning of the China Town. The same message was delivered to me by the landowners that if the Government does not take this into consideration they will take action or and take the laws into their own hands. I told them not to do that. I came back and talked with the Prime Minister and the Minister for Lands about this and hopefully they should be able to finance the hosting of this meeting.

But coming back to the motion, as Chairman of the Constitution Review Committee, in my debate on the Bill, my last statement before I sat down was that this Bill is best left for another day. I think the Prime Minister heard this because now he is asking us to re-look at this Bill. I think it was in his wisdom that he adjourned debate on this Bill. I think he must have read the recommendations that my Committee, the Constitution Review Committee made. The first recommendation is for wider consultations to be done on the Bill to obtain meaningful and more insights on the practicality and the practical issues of the bill.

I you look at recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, most of the recommendations are exactly what the next motion is going to address. I think the Special Select Committee is going to do its deliberations confined to the Bill that Parliament has committed to it. This Bill is a matter of public importance. After the Committee presents its report the Minister, and in this case the Prime Minister, the Prime Minister will then report to Parliament together with his proposals as to the actions he proposes to take thereon.

I think the Bill will come back as it is but the report by the Select Committee will contain the observations, the recommendations and its findings of which Parliament will once again look into. I believe that the Committee will also reconsider some of the submissions made by the various stakeholders, including the Opposition and the various stakeholders around that have submitted their submissions to the Taskforce. I only hope the Committee's deliberations are televised and broadcasted so that there is transparency, accountability and participation of the various stakeholders. I wish that the Prime Minister will be able to select through you, Sir, a bipartisan committee that is really bipartisan and is able to deliberate on the Bill as it is and provide its recommendations to Parliament.

With these, I too would like to see this motion goes through so that we reconsider what we are talking about here on the floor of Parliament. Thank you very much.

**Hon Sikua:** Thank you and at the outset let me sincerely thank all colleague Members of Parliament who have contributed to the motion for their various contributions and their support for the motion I have moved, which is simply to adjourn debate on the Constitution Political Parties Amendment Bill 2009 to 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010. I would like to thank all colleagues who have contributed, especially the Honorable Leader of the Independent group and members of the group for their support.

I think there are basically three or four issues that have been raised which I would like to respond to in my reply. I think the first one is the question raised by the Honorable Leader of Opposition that what guarantee or assurance is there that the points raised will be taken onboard this time if the motion is passed. In response to that, I would like to say that the reason why I moved Motion No. 10 is to provide that assurance that the points that have been raised during the debate on the bill and, of course, any other points that have been raised will now be taken onboard. This is simply because the composition of the Special Select Committee will be made up of members, pending your approval, members of the Constitution Review Committee, and this Committee already has three members from the Opposition inside, and my proposal to you, Mr Speaker, is for the Honorable Leader of Opposition to nominate two more. What that would mean is that everyone from the Opposition side will be in the Special Select Committee. Also, the honorable Leader of the Independent Group, my recommendation to you, Mr. Speaker, is that he can recommend another two more. He only has one left and so he can nominate his other colleague and all of them will be in the Committee. I will recommend four members, two of my backbenchers and two of my Ministers, and therefore it will be truly bipartisan because everyone in the independent, and everyone in the opposition will be in the committee. I hope it does not include the Chairman of the Public Accounts because he is going to be busy.

To answer that question it will be truly bipartisan. The assurance is on the second motion that it will be done, and I hope that we can come back with our views. Of course, the only outside members would be the Honorable Attorney General and the Legal Draftsman so that when the committee do its work and deliberates there is no second hand news reaching their ears to try and tune the issue according to what the Special Select Committee is saying . When the Special Select Committee wants anything and says it, they can get on to exactly what the Special Select Committee would like to do. In terms of assurance and guarantee, that is my response to that.

The second point is the concern on whether the select committee will be truly bipartisan. I think I have made my point here that, yes, I do believe it will be solved.

Thirdly, I think is an issue raised by the Deputy Leader of Opposition and reiterated by the honorable MP for Temotu/Nende on whether it will be the same bill or will it be a different one altogether? That is why the second motion has a deadline for the Committee to report to the Prime Minister, and that will be on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February 2010 so that it gets to Cabinet and the Attorney General's Chamber will have time to do the changes. And if there are substantial changes I would need to notice them, and I would like to do that by the 15<sup>th</sup> February, and that is why I pitch the debate to commence again on the 16<sup>th</sup> March. Because any major or substantive amendments must get to you, Mr Speaker, four weeks before and therefore the adjournment to the 16<sup>th</sup> March. Debate can commence on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010. So we are catering for any substantive amendments, a four week notice period, and so we are looking at that. I think the motion is such that we are catering for the concerns that have been raised in terms of the assurance that views will be taken into account now that the Special Select Committee is truly bipartisan and if there are any substantial changes, we have scheduled all that into the timing of the commencement of debate on the second reading of this Bill. With these few remarks, I beg to move.

*Motion for the debate on the Constitutional Political Parties Amendment Bill 2009 to be adjourned until 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010 agreed to.*

**Mr Speaker:** The debate on the Constitutional Political Parties Amendment Bill 2009 therefore, stands adjourned to the 16<sup>th</sup> March 2010. We shall not proceed on this Bill until that day.

## **MOTIONS**

**Mr Speaker:** I have been advised that the Government wishes to refer the Constitution Political Parties Amendment Bill 2009 to a Special Select Committee as we have heard. The Honorable Prime Minister gave sufficient notice of his motion which seeks to achieve that. Thus, although the notice of this Motion does not meet the usual three clear days notice requirement, I have given my permission for the motion to be moved today. I gave that permission on the basis that further consideration of the Bill is such an important and urgent matter. I now call on the Prime Minister to move his motion now.

**Hon. SIKUA:** I move

- (1) that a Special Committee be established under Standing Order 73 to:
  - (a) consider the various debates by Members of Parliament during the second reading of the Constitution (Political Party's Amendment) Bill 2009 (No. 24 of 2009) in relation to clauses 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11 & Schedule 2 of the Bill; taking into account the Political Parties Registration and Administration Bill 2009, and
  - (b) Examine the Report on the Constitution Political Parties Amendment Bill 2009, (No.24 of 2009), National Parliament Paper No. 41 of 2009 by the Constitution Review Committee; and
- (2) That the Committee report to the Prime Minister prior to the conclusion of the second reading debate on the bill (No. 24 of 2009) before 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2010.

In my motion for adjournment of the debate, which we have just passed, I stated my intention to move a motion for establishment of a special select committee for facilitation of further consultations. I need not repeat what I have already said but rather may I adopt the same explanation as the reasons justifying establishment of the Special Select Committee.

**Mr. Oti:** Point of order. Has the Prime Minister moved the motion because I have an amendment and so I do not know when I am going to move it but I would like to move it under 26(2)(b) with your indulgence. But I do not know when am I going to move the amendment because the Prime Minister is going ahead now in moving the motion, which means the amendment, has to be disposed of first before the debate on the substantive motion. Your clarification is sought here, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr Speaker:** The amendment would be part of the debate of the motion moved, and so we allow the motion to be moved and following that you can make your amendment.

**Hon. Sikua:** Thank you for your ruling, Mr. Speaker. You will note from the wording of the motion I moved that the Committee will consider the clauses I have noted as being the contentious clauses, namely clauses 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, & Schedule 2. Of course, the accompanying bill will also be considered

You will also note from the wording of the motion that the Committee will be able to examine the report of the CRC. As you know, the report is already out there and for that purpose the CRC has already discharged its responsibilities on that matter. But may I repeat, however, that the report of the special select committee will be presented to me. I will then consult the Cabinet and the Government Caucus and Government's response will then be produced and presented to this Honorable House together with the Committee's report. This process will enable the Committee to propose improvements it thinks desirable and, of course taking into account the views and the points we have raised thus far.

I have fixed the final date for reporting to be on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2010. As I have already explained, this is so that if substantive amendments are to be made to the Bill, the Government will have adequate time to draft and present amendments to you. This motion is passed and so I kindly call upon all my good honorable colleagues, all Members of Parliament and members of the Committee to support the Committee, and all members of the Committee to attend meetings of the committee and to make recommendations.

At this scale and for now this should be the final consultation opportunity for all of us Members of Parliament. I hope that the special select committee is quite a big committee, if you accept my recommendations, and I hope that they will have the quorum to meet during the period we allow them to meet so that they can put together the report and look at the points we have raised. The process proposed under the motion, as you know, is allowable under Standing Order 73.

I note that there are some very vital legal issues that have been raised, and as I have explained I have recommended to you that the Attorney General and the Legal Draftsman be appointed as members of the committee as this is a permissible under Standing Order 73. But this is subject to your approval, of course. With these few remarks I beg to move.

**Mr Speaker:** Honorable Members, the Prime Minister has moved that the Special Select Committee be established with the terms of reference he has just read out. This is a substantive motion and so I will allow debate on it. The floor is now open to any Member who wishes to speak to this motion. Obviously, the Honorable Member for Temotu Nende wishes to make an amendment.

**Mr. Oti:** Under Standing Order 26(2)(b), I seek your indulgence to move this amendment to the motion moved by the Prime Minister.

The amendments proposed here are in relation to (a) & (b) and perhaps if I could read or specify what needs to be removed and substituted by what, so

what I want to propose here is that under (a) instead of 'consider' that the Special Select Committee "reviews" instead of "consider". After the word 'various' delete 'debates' and in its stead insert 'recommendations and suggestions raised by Members of Parliament'. Review is to substitute the word 'consider' and instead of debates to use the words 'recommendations and suggestions raised' and the normal one runs as it is.

Because of the debates that have taken place so far, it is not necessarily restricted to the clauses of the Bill as mentioned, this amendment proposes that delete after No. 24<sup>th</sup> 2009, delete the reference to 'in relation to clauses 2, 3, 4, 5, 4, 7, 8 and Schedule 2 of the Bill'. And also delete 'taking into account the Political Parties Registration Amendment Administration Bill 2009. That is the first one. And so the motion should now read as follows: "Review the various recommendations and suggestions raised by Members of Parliament during the second reading of the Constitution (Political Parties Amendment) Bill 2009 No. 24 of 2009". That is the first amendment in regards to paragraph (a).

In regards to paragraph (b) to add before "examine" to add "further examine" because it is already in the report, "further examine" the recommendations on the report of CRC, and rest remains the same. The additions are "before examine, add "further" and before report includes "recommendations in the". Thank you. Those are my proposed amendments.

**Mr Speaker:** If the Clerk has all the language correct, I will allow the debate to continue, but if not I am going to suggest a five minute suspension so that the actual words that have been suggested are included and added and taken out from it, be supplied by the mover so that we can do it properly under Order 30 of the Standing Orders. I suspend Parliament Sitting for five minutes.

*Five minutes break*

**Mr Speaker:** Parliament is resumed. The motion before us has been amended and I would like to go through the amendment so that everyone is clear. The original wording of the motion is with you but the amendment is, (a) "Review the various" and then "recommendations and suggestions raised by Members of Parliament during the second reading of the Constitution Political Parties Amendment Bill 2009, No.24 of 2009, and (b) "to further examine the recommendations in the Report on Constitution (Political Parties Amendment) Bill 2009 No. 24 of 2009, *National Parliament Paper (No. 41/ 2009) by the Constitution Review Committee*, which means that (a) is particularly much more general than the original (a). Part (a) was trying to specific referring to various clauses but the amendment simply gives a general review of all the suggestions and



recommendation that have been raised by Members of Parliament. Those were the wordings of the amendment. I wonder whether the copy of what you have given me Clerk has also gone around to all the Members. Okay, they are still photocopying so that each Member has a copy and got their language correct. We need to have this correct because if after the debate of the amendment it is accepted then the original motion falls away, and it is the motion as amended that we will pass. That would be the procedure. That is what I would like all of us to understand and where we are coming from and what the amendment involves. In general terms the substance of the motion is not touched, it is just certain language and certain specific information that was left over and a general one brought in under (a). We will just wait until all the Members are given a copy of their amendment so that the debate that will follow is clear so that you are clear, and I hope you have the language of the original motion with you.

**Hon. Sikua:** As the amended version of the motion is being passed around, I thank you for this opportunity to respond to the proposal for amendment to the original motion. As I have mentioned in my introductory speech the wording of the original motion that I moved, this side of the House believes that the Committee will consider the clauses which we believe are the contentious clauses that have been covered in the debates by Members of Parliament. Having gone through the issues in our meetings yesterday, the focus should be on these contentious clauses and those are the clauses that have been specifically mentioned in the original motion. We believe that any other general points or issues can be covered by the Committee in Part 1(b) of the motion. Therefore, this side of the House does not support the suggested amendments. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker:** We have already debated the amendment but we have given the honorable Member to actually introduce reasons for these amendments. So you speak to your amended and then we will allow that to be debated.

**Mr. Oti:** I guess I just have to summarize. Since the Prime Minister has already made his position, it will be a futile exercise if I specify the reasons as I have not yet specified but the Prime Minister has already concluded on it and so there will be no debate but I will also conclude. Is that the expectation?

**Hon. Sikua:** I have expressed the Government's view on the suggested amendment because I thought that he is already moved before we went for the break and that is why I came back to inform the House of the Government's position. Thank you.

**Mr Speaker:** What the honorable Member did was to make the suggestions for amendment. He has not spoken to his amended motion as yet, and I was going to allow him to speak to his amended motion but we have already heard the Prime Minister's view and the Government's view as a whole on it. Do you still wish to continue with your suggested amended motion?

**Mr. Oti:** Thank you for what it is worth. Perhaps to satisfy our processes and procedures, I have to move it inspite of the position, which is out of procedure that the Prime Minister has put forward.

Why I proposed this amendment, and as you rightly said, Mr Speaker, so that it is more general than what is intended because of the comments I made in relation to the first motion that was moved this afternoon, and also in part which the Member for West Makira came in from that if it is specific and it resulted in a new proposal to a new bill altogether, it will defeat the purpose for the postponement of the debate on the bill that has been adjourned. We would like to make it general so that it is not restricted, to the extent that comes the date to which we agreed upon in the first meeting and the Bill has substantively changed, then we have to debate it all over again. As is currently worded, intention is that so it does not tie it down so that it is in conformity with the intentions of the first motion and it does not tie the hand of Parliament to debate the continuation of the Bill we have adjourned is debate this afternoon. That is the reason why I want it to be general so that it is not possible for it to result, because your terms of reference is restricting you to the original one and is more general. That is the intention of the amendments.

Also, of course, looking at the terms of reference of the various Standing Committees, the use of the word 'review' stands out there. Consider is there too but we are reviewing the positions that have been issued in this debate, and for the Special Select Committee to come out with its review what does this means, what are the cross cutting issues brought out in the debate hence the need for review, not just to merely consider and then make a recommendation later on in the report on paragraph 2 of the terms of reference. It was made with a good intention but as the Prime Minister has said, that is the prerogative of the Government as it were, the position that was taken. But we are just trying to be helpful in this instance.

As our procedures require, once we dispose of, and as you said we dispose of this amendment either in the affirmative then, of course, these new terms of reference will now be the basis for the Special Select Committee that will look at the issue at hand. On the other, if it is in the negative then of course we fall back on the original motion and it depends on the Special Select Committee as to how it will look at these issues, and some of them will be quite substantive.

For example, maybe it would not result in numbering but the MP for West Makira today has mentioned something about numbering, changes in the numbering of the clauses. Would that amount to substantive transformation in the Bill? Would that therefore, amount to a new bill altogether and would therefore be disqualified to come to Parliament as originally envisaged under the first motion we have passed? But that is the intention of the amendments.

But I will leave it to the House and to the Members to see the merits of what I am trying to put forward here. In fact, there was no consultation on this, apart from what was passed to me by the MP for Savo/Russells, it was just out of my own reading of the amendments; there was no consultation I made with anyone because it belongs to me as a Member of Parliament to the House. So, this is not to be misread that it was part of the process we are going through now making it difficult. No, Mr Speaker! With due respect that was not the intention, neither was anybody consulted about those recommendations. With those comments I beg to move.

*The motion is open for debate*

**Mr TOSIKA:** I would like to contribute briefly to the amended version of this motion. I concur that this amended motion is more appropriate than the original motion on the basis that we are trying to consider the entire Bill because if not we should have voted on it already.

My reason is that we are trying to resolve an impasse that all of us are trying to mitigate our way in. If the government thinks that it should remain as it is, then I am not going to support the original motion. I think that we should give it a head way that all of us here work together to achieve the object and purpose of reviewing this Bill that we are trying our best to pass. I strongly believe that the Government side should support this amended motion and thank you.

**Mr Boyers:** Just a position of representation here in relation to this proposed amendment to the motion and the recommendations in it. Looking back at the other motion of adjourning the debate to next year, on the debate on the bill proper, the issue that comes into mind is the question that now we are going towards a special select committee throws the onus back into Parliament to come up with a conclusive outcome that will be a conducive bill to support this political reform. It has to be made clear the position of the Special Select Committee and its position to consider and to examine, and in doing so there has been a position of an amendment, especially in the process of review, and I am just hoping that this select committee is not set up in a bipartisan position to

actually go through all these to know that any changes we recommend are going to fall by the way. It is just an issue here that we are just here to consider only and to examine.

What I am trying to get at here is that we do not want to come to Parliament next year to continue debate a bill that has no amendments. That in itself would be a failure and would put the blame on us when in fact all we have done is being given the opportunity to consider and to examine without having any position of saying how can we have ownership on issues we have raised on this floor of Parliament. The original process, how I looked at it, the original motion, I think actually does deal with the relevant issues which also has been considered in its totality by saying let us be more general but also in the event if we are specific here why are we only considering. The process is, as an oversight select committee, of course, we can only make recommendations but how can we make recommendations when we are just considering and examining. Recommendations can only come out by reviewing and therefore it gives creditability to the Select Committee and the moving of this motion and the whole reason why we are adjourning. I just need some clarification on that. I mean recommendations and suggestions raised by Members of Parliament is just the same as debate anyway. But the issue I am worried about is the reviewing. I mean we are just making a record of what we have said and say this is what we believe, I mean it is already on Hansard and everyone knows to go back to a position in the last minute, the dying hours and get thrown in and say if you do not accept it then you are not responsible. I am just a little bit concerned and it needs some clarification that the whole purpose of the Select Committee being set up, and I believe the purpose of that change, especially on review and taking out the political parties registration and administration, but we are not debating that, we are actually debating a constitutional position and that is why we moved an adjournment motion specific to that one.

Can I get some clarifications that when the Select Committee is set up that its recommendations will be taken onboard to put together, formulate and that we continue in the debate to pass a process that is conducive for everyone here.

**Mr Speaker:** Yes, the normal procedures for a Special Select Committee are in the Standing Orders where we report to the Minister responsible for this particular subject, and in this case it is the Prime Minister who will get the report, and the difference between that is that he will also submit to Parliament, not only the report but the Government's view on that report as well or the reasons why he asked Parliament to make that report. So there will be the Government's view on the report tabled in Parliament as well. If the suggestions by the Committee or by the Government are accepted by Parliament they become an amendment to

that bill. So it is not going to be a new bill but they are simply amendments to the bill that is under debate.

**Mr Oti:** Now I am going to give my concluding remarks as a matter of procedure because the other two have commented to it and contributed to the debate. The Prime Minister has already summarized it before this motion was even debated, the position of the government. Unfortunately, we did not think that this is a motion of the government. We thought it was a parliamentary motion so that everybody is able to contribute freely to the amendments, intentions of the spirit and the letter of the amendment, and that is what we want to avoid, that it is seen, the government one and the opposition and the others are making us at loggerheads with these issues. We must take this responsibility out of Government and put it squarely on the shoulder of Parliament hence the Special Select Committee. Unfortunately it is not seen this way. The more this is happening the more we are reading the intentions, and that is bad. Be that as it may, that is now, I guess, the position of the Government and I thank the position taken by the Prime Minister on behalf of the Government, which we were trying to bail out of this standoff, and also I would like to thank the two contributors on the other side of the House.

With those comments, I beg to move.

*The motion was defeated*

**Mr Speaker:** The motion is defeated and so we will go back to the discussions of the original motion as moved by the honorable Prime Minister. Are there any speakers to the motion?

**Hon Sogavare:** I think with the defeat of the suggested amendments to the motion, the real intention of the Government is now very clear. I think the sentiments raised by the Member for Vona and Vona and the Leader of Independent Group are very appropriate and relevant for this House to take note of. We have gone through a number of days of debate impasse. In fact, it is the government side that has problems with this Bill. You have put your Ministers and backbenchers under a lot of pressures, you have an open revolt by backbenchers who made their intentions known to defeat the Bill if a vote is taken on it. That is because of very important concerns, views and suggestions raised and expressed in their debates, which they want the government to take serious note of. And those are issues that were not taken serious note of when this Bill was nurtured through the Caucus, Cabinet and the various consultations

the Government has made to get the views of people so that it comes up with a bill that can be presented on the floor of Parliament.

Well, it did hold those consultations, and as I said earlier on when we talked on the adjournment motion, those views were not taken seriously. It is still the intention that the views and concerns that MPs raise will not be taken serious note of. This is the clear intention in here. We will have to open it up so that all of us, as rightly pointed out by the mover of this motion, remove it from the various walls, from the Opposition, from the Independent and from the Government and bring it onto the floor of Parliament because Parliament as a collective body looks at this Bill that is causing so much pressure on Members of this House.

In saying that as well, the way it is cleverly taken through the process as well, clearly shows yet the intention of the government. In fact, I thought the appropriate Standing Order that this should be taken under is Order 31 to withdraw this Bill so that we can look at. But, of course, they are frightened that there might be a dissenting voice, if the debate continues and a vote is taken and is defeated. This is still a strategy to continue to save this Bill and so the original intention will continue to come.

The point that is raised by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is valid in that the second reading moved by the Prime Minister is talking on the bill as the bill that we have, which is the subject of contention. There is no guarantee, although now it looks like the same bill will still come, but if the intention of what we wanted to do now is to be taken into serious consideration, it is a totally different bill that must come, a totally different bill. It will not be the Constitution Political Parties Amendment Bill 2009. It will be the first bill for 2010, and so it is a totally different bill and there will be amendments made, although the Prime Minister has said that there will be amendments made to the amendment bill. I do not know how we are going to deal with that under the Standing Orders. So the intention is still there. We are trying to find a way forward, and in fact the Member for Temotu Nende has seen that we are basically putting in walls here. Let us break down those walls and look at this through the eyes of Parliament as a collective verdict.

So I am really uncomfortable with the intention here to move it to the Committee and now they are not going to seriously review it but they will be just be considering it, and what we would probably see is the same thing coming back again, and if that happens you will still have the same result that we are having now. People will still not support it, so what is the use of going through this exercise again, and what is the use of all these consultations we are doing when we are not going to take up the recommendations, and probably we will be repeating the same thing. What we are saying here is let us be serious about

these things and take onboard the concerns and views expressed and come up with a different view. Re-notice it; we need four weeks to do that, and then bring it back to Parliament. So the appropriate Standing Orders I thought that should apply here is Standing Order 31, and that is to withdraw it and then refer it. We are sure that there will be no dissenting voice and so we are not going to vote on it and so the Bill remains intact but it is taken back to the committee to look at it. And once it is amended you can re-notice it again if the amendment is substantive, which we hope it should because if not then it will not be supported again, and so we will be wasting time putting it through the committee just for window dressing, just to satisfy the thinking of Members just to save face and then it will come back and suffer the same fate again.

I am really in support of the recommendations on the amendments proposed by the Member for Temotu Nende but since they were defeated, I find it very difficult as well to do that unless, I do not know, as I said I am in a very, very difficult position now to make any decision on this because what is clear now is that the government is not serious about it. Although the Prime Minister stood up and said you are guaranteed, well we want to ask the question as well that what guarantee is there as well that the amendments will be taken up. And the move here by defeating this amendment really shows that there is no guarantee whatsoever. We are uncomfortable with the move taken by the government on this.

In saying that, I will just take my seat, although I am really disappointed that the Government continues to take a very defensive stance and does not even want to give into our suggestion of trying to solve this issue more amicably through the eyes of all Members of Parliament. We suffer under all sorts of pressures. People were threatened to be fined and all those sort of things. I think it is time that we are amenable to recommendations like finding the way forward. This is not finding a way forward, in fact it is totally contrary to what the Minister of Lands has said that we are not moving to Canaan here, but we are actually going back to Egypt.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to contribute here. I strongly believe that this one should be done under Standing Order 31 where you are guaranteed that there will be no dissenting voice. You withdraw this Bill so that it is reconsidered on a neutral ground. It is not voted on, and so it is still intact. In saying that, I resume my seat.

**Hon. HILLY:** I rise to contribute to the discussion on Motion No. 10. I think the original motion is quite in line. Maybe the words that are here are foreign words, but we still think that 'consider' could also mean 'review'. Perhaps it is better to say consider and review.

In regards to changing of the word 'debates' to 'recommendations', you see when you look at the areas that Members have raised during their debates, these are the areas of contention. And it puts it quite categorically clear, especially clauses 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and Schedule 2. When you are going to review or consider this Bill, you cannot go away from looking at what is that bill paving the way for. Therefore, deleting the rest of (a) waters down the objective...

**Mr. Oti:** Point of order. We are debating the original motion. No reference should be made to what was already taken out. Unless you have nothing to talk about then do not say anything. The amendment has been taken out already. Let us stick to the merits of including the sections referred to here. Do not make reference to something that does not exist in this motion. Thank you.

**Hon. Hilly:** Sir, I want to bring to light as to why this motion is better than the proposed amended motion. I still stand by my point that in review and consideration you cannot just put aside this Bill that is trying to pave the way for it in the Constitution. That is why I said that the original motion is much clearer as to how the Committee is going to make its deliberations.

Part (b) is basically the same. Change the report to recommendation. The report of the Constitution Committee is a very important report. Just look at the recommendations it made, look at their arguments on the rest of the report for the committee to look at. Therefore, this original motion is a much better motion and I support it.

**Hon. GUKUNA:** I also would like to thank the Prime Minister for move this motion. I think the time for us to withdraw this bill has already passed. This is not the time to talk about it now. We have made a decision to move on. We have passed a motion pertaining to the same bill, and this is just a follow up to the first motion we passed earlier on this evening.

I want to reiterate the point that was raised by the Minister of Commerce that when we debated this Bill, the objections that were raised were based on clauses; they were debating clauses, the objections were based on clauses and phrases and so I do not see why it is at fault to include those concerns which I believe are being taken care of in this motion. My fear of what has been suggested and I need to refer to it, to make a point here is that it appears to me that the intention is to come up with a new bill altogether, which is not the intention of the motion that has been moved by the Prime Minister.

The motion moved by the Prime Minister refers to suggestions and it also includes the report of the Constitutional Review Committee, which is consistent with what is stated in part (a). Now if we are going to for the amended version,



which we have just thrown out, then there will be no need for us to consider the report of the Constitutional Review Committee because we are going to come up with something substantive in (a), which means it has to go back to the Constitutional Review Committee. Because as has been raised it is a new thing if we are going to be raising a new thing under (a), are we going to also include the Review Committee because my understanding is that if there is a substantive bill it has to go back to Committee for its views, and that will come back to Parliament. That is my interpretation why I objected to the amendments because I believe the original version is correct because (a) should lead to (b) and the amendments should make a version. There is no fear, the government has already said that we will consider. In fact all this mess we are going through now is because of objections and the need to be taken care of. To just sit down and raise the point saying that the Government is not going to do that is speculating and not trusting the system. Are we raising a point that the real objection is to reject this Bill and not concerned about the specifics of it? That is just a small point I want to raise and thank you.

**Hon. HAOMAE:** Thank you for allowing at this late hour to contribute to the debate of the important motion moved by the honorable Prime Minister.

Let us move on, and let us not move on from suspecting each other but move on. That is my appeal to Parliament now. The word 'debate' is more inclusive than recommendations and suggestions. Also, if you put weight on the word 'consider' and 'review', the word consider is weightier than review. They could come up with recommendations and all those, and so I think the motion as moved by the Prime Minister is in order in accordance with those interpretations.

Also in (b), (b) ensures that the report with the recommendations of the Constitutional Review Committee inclusive will be examined by the Special Select Committee, and it is a special select committee. We have appointed that because of the reasons of what has transpired. Everybody in the four corners of this Parliament is quite agreeable and favorably disposed to the ideals and intentions of the Bill. It is some of the technicalities of the Bill that we have problems with, and those technicalities must be spelt out and highlighted. That is the reason the clauses are highlighted in here so that the Select Committee does not go hunting around the bush or going around in the wild bush, but must address the technicalities, the areas of contention referred to by Members of Parliament and therefore it is in order, and that is the reason why I objected to the amended motion moved by my friend and my colleague from Temotu Nende. Thank you and I support the motion.

**Sir KEMAKEZA:** I thank the Prime Minister for moving this motion. I think I am a much better coordinator of peace between the two parties than anybody else because I am in the middle. I am not so concerned about the wordings of the two motions, the amended one and the original. But suspicion perhaps can come in, as the Leader has said because why only include 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11 and then Schedule 2 and miss out 9, 10, 12 to 18. I think that is the first suspicion that comes because the debates cover the whole Bill. I think that is the suspicion. If we are to make an amendment it we will not achieve what the MP for Temotu Nende intended. It will stop at 2009 and then we delete it up to section 11 and Schedule 2. That is the one. Maybe consider or review, but many times in my experience, the word 'consider' when something is considered it is put there in the records and will stay there forever, that is the end of it. Every motion that comes in here are just to consider, consider and consider. Perhaps that is the suspicion of the Member of Parliament for Temotu Nende. But the Prime Minister in his speech is very clear that everything we have raised will be taken onboard. I am also happy that all members of the Opposition, this middle group in here will become members of that side as well. So let us take the Prime Minister's word, and let us do this review or consider or whatever and then it goes back to Cabinet because the worst thing about this Bill being opposed are the Ministers. I used my intelligence to detect this that the worst group is the Ministers. They are the ones that really oppose this Bill but because they are afraid otherwise the Prime Minister fires them and so they pretend to support it. The Prime Minister has also given the warning that anyone opposing this Bill knows that he is going to be sacked. Even just outside the corridors here they are saying that it is the whole bill. I keep my ears open as I go around the corridors, and I concluded that the poison is in Cabinet and perhaps in Caucus, and not this side of the House. If we start to question ourselves again, I bet you that this Bill, even if it comes on March will be thrown out. Why? The poison is inside Cabinet and Caucus. If the intention of the amended motion is to generalize it and remove the specifics because the suspicion is if it is just specific on the clauses but what about the other clauses not included. That is very suspicious. To those who will become members of this special select committee, if these are recommended and the government is still stubborn as it is tonight, forget it, it will never happen. That is why I would rather suggest that whatever word is used, just allow the Prime Minister to go ahead and appoint the committee, with the recommendation of the Prime Minister let the committee bring up the report and by March if it comes back again, and that is why I said I bet you that it will come back to square one if the government does not take into account what Members are raising.

But thank you Prime Minister for having confidence and trust on Members of Parliament, both in the opposition and the independent and your backbenchers to be in the committee. We will do our utmost best to assist you. But somewhere somehow somebody is stubborn, maybe if not the Prime Minister then the Cabinet; if not the Cabinet then a few members of the Cabinet; if not a few members of Cabinet then maybe the officials who are stubborn in making compromises to these changes.

That is my judgment, as a middleman in making sure the two do not fight. Let us dispose of this and let us see what is going to happen. One thing that all of us must be mindful about is that comes April all of us will only be caretakers and this Bill will be thrown out of the window. When we are caretakers whether you are a minister you will no longer be a Member of Parliament; you are finished and you have to wait for 2010. That is my fear that if we do not work together now to come up with a consensus and to understand and not throw suspicion on each other because of our actions, stubbornness and advices here and there, surely we will go for a good compromised bill that all of us will agree on. Make sure Ministers do not come and interfere again because your time will come to consider it in Cabinet anyway. I will go along with the Prime Minister because his words are already recorded in Hansard and so when the time comes to debate this in March/April, we would say this is how you said it but when the Bill goes nothing has changed. For that reason I support the motion.

**Mr. BOYERS:** I would also like to join my colleague from Savo/Russells to contribute to this motion. First of all, I would like to refer us to the comments made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs in his encouragement to us in moving forward. I would like to add on to that that it is moving forward for good, not for the bad. That is what we are doing here today; we are perfecting a process to create a, not so perfect outcome but the best we can. I remind him that in his moving forward to the Promised Land, I remind him that the Promised Land is Israel and not Iran. If it is Iran then I should start to call him Honorable Mohammed Haomae. When you move forward you move forward for the good, not for the bad.

I suppose coming this far and going through the deliberation of wondering how come we did not plan this better, I hope it is not a reflection of the Bill itself. I hope there was foresight planning and understanding of practical outcomes. Because we are now dealing with outcomes that we did not expect hence the time limit, the time frame, the extension hence the motion for adjournment to a later date hence this motion that we are dealing with now.

As the Member for Shortlands has said, I hope that this is put before us here in the right spirit, and we hope that this right spirit will manifest itself next

year with the Bill being acceptable, not only in the sight of God but also in the sight of everyone in this house and in the sight of the people of this country.

Sir, I have voiced my concerns in regards to the amendment motion because what we do not want to do is to come back next year with the same bill and it fails, because that will not be our blame in the process of this select committee. We are here to make a refinement process, a bipartisan process to create the desired outcome for all 50 Members of this House and for the benefit of our country so that we fulfill the Government's policy of political reform. In noting that this is what we are going to deal with, restrictive to the area of consideration which is different from reviewing. I believe now we are in the hands of faith and in doing so we look at whether it is going to create further doubt or it is going to create confidence.

In saying that, the reason why we are here going through this process because the original bill has to have three quarters of the house in order to pass it. These present motions of adjournment and special select committee take a simple majority, so obviously they will pass. But in fact these motions are an acknowledgement that the Bill is not going to pass. We are dealing with the outcome of what was already mentioned on none withdrawal. We could have started with a clean slate and move forward. That is why we have the process of contention of doubt and suspicion. It is our job as human beings that when we look at another person we are there to look at the good in them and not the bad. Therefore, I will take on that position by saying that I will look at the good of this motion from the Prime Minister, accept his guarantee, work forward in confidence and faith, hoping that the outcome will manifest itself in a bill that is acceptable, that will not fail but does go through and will be implemented. I hope we can do this earlier than the time frame stipulated here. Because as was mentioned we are coming up to the elections and it takes three quarter majority of the house, and that is quite a lot.

I hope the motion moved here by the Prime Minister to set up a select committee has thrown the responsibility into all corners of Parliament to a bipartisan process of making these recommendations and in your position it fails, I want everyone to know that it was not because of us. We want to make a better bill. I believe that is the nuts and bolts. So it is upon us all here today to make sure we come out at the other end with a bipartisan representative bill. We look forward to the amendments, we look forward to a balanced amendment to the Political Parties Amendment Bill and we certainly look forward to the Political Parties Administration and Registration bill.

I suppose in the process of looking at this without the amendments, we hope that there is genuineness on this floor and we take on the Prime Minister's guarantee in good faith that as we proceed after this motion we will work in

haste and come forward with a perfect bill that will reflect the desire of all of us, representing all of our people. We can go forward in the next elections saying that we have created a better process of governance in our country. With those few words I support the motion.

**Hon. Sikua:** In responding to the debate on the motion, first of all I would like to thank all colleagues who have contributed to the debate on this motion. If I can just dwell a little bit on the wording of the motion, the wording of the motion, especially on the use of the word 'consider' is consistent with Standing Order 73 from which this motion is derived. Standing Order 73 uses the words 'to consider, to be considered, has considered' and so on. It is Standing Order 71 and 71(a) that is to with the Bills and Legislation Committee that uses the word 'review' and in Standing Order 71(a), in relation to the Constitution Review Committee, that particular Standing Order uses the word 'review' as well. We have used the word 'consider' in the motion as it is consistent with the Standing Order from which it is derived and that is Standing Order 73.

In line with what the Honorable Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade has said, the word 'debate' is more broad and encompassing and would include recommendations and suggestions and therefore, the word debate is used. On No. 2 of that motion, the committee to report includes recommendations. As you know very well when any special select committee submits its report, it will definitely include recommendations. Those are things that will be dealt with in line with what you have mentioned in your clarification to the question raised by the Honorable Member for West New Georgia/Vona Vona.

I would like to echo the sentiments that have been mentioned by my colleague, the honorable Member for Central Guadalcanal when he said that this Bill does not belong to any individuals in this Honorable House, but this bill is about our country and it belongs to our people. Let me thank all honorable colleagues for their understanding and contributions. The way forward that the Government in the form of these motions has put across ways that we can regroup, we can continue dialogue and consultations so that we can get to where we want to get to come March of 2010 when debate on the bill resumes.

I would like to thank very much all colleagues who have contributed, and as I said earlier on, we have listened and I must apologize if all the colleagues that have called for my withdrawal of the bill are not happy with it, and to the colleagues who wanted us to take the Bill to the vote and get it over and done with now, I also apologize to you. I think the way we have come so far is the way forward and so I want us to be patient, I want us to cooperate, work together for the betterment of our people and country.

I once again want to urge the committee, a bipartisan committee to work together in the spirit of togetherness and cooperation so that comes March of 2010 when the Bill is resumed, we can move forward. With these few remarks, I beg to move.

*The motion is passed*

**Mr Speaker:** The Special Select Committee is accordingly established with the terms of reference specified in the resolution and the Speaker will make appointment at a later point. We shall move onto our next item of business.

## **MOTIONS**

**Mr Speaker:** Honorable Members, I have been advised that the Government wishes to move a special adjournment motion, and the motion is in order and in line with our precedence, as such I have given my permission for it to be moved today even without the requisite notice. I now call on the Honorable Prime Minister to move his motion.

**Hon. SIKUA:** I move that at its adjournment today, Parliament stands adjourned until 7<sup>th</sup> December 2009. Firstly, thank you for allowing me to move this motion and to sincerely thank all honorable colleagues on both sides of the House for your patience, for your staying power and for your forbearance. Thank you very much.

The main reason behind this special adjournment motion is to allow the Public Accounts Committee to proceed with its hearings on the 2010 Appropriation Bill next week, and also to prepare its report on the Bill before Parliament deliberates on it the week after. I trust that the Public Accounts Committee will be able to complete its hearings next week so that Parliament can deliberate on it and pass this important piece of legislation before we break for the festive season of Christmas.

This special adjournment motion to Monday 7 December is basically to give time to the Public Accounts Committee to consider the 2010 Appropriation Bill. I believe that if we continue with any other business of the House, it would deprive our colleagues in the Committee from contributing to whatever business of the House that will be on next week. That is the sole reason for moving this special adjournment motion. With these remarks, I beg to move.

*The open for comment*

**Hon HAOMAE:** Thank you for giving me the floor to comment on the motion moved by the Honorable Prime Minister, and I would like to thank the Honorable Prime Minister for moving this special motion of adjournment today. We have moved forward and we have moved forward for good. We have moved forward for good not to the promised land of Israel or the promised land of Iran or the promised land of any other country but the promised land of Solomon Islands, and I support the motion. Thank you very much.

**Hon SOGAVARE:** I just want to contribute in support of the motion. In fact, it is this budget that we should be talking about; we should have brought it to Parliament and discuss it since these bills are giving us headache. This side of the House does not have any problem supporting this motion. In fact, the Public Accounts Committee needs to sit down to look at the Budget. And so we do not have any problem supporting the motion for us to adjourn. Let us adjourn now so that we can take panadol to relieve our minds. The way we are going if we continue going on all of us will end up at Kilu'ufi and so we support this motion.

**Hon Sikua:** Thank you, yes nothing else to say, but to thank the Honorable Leader of the Opposition and the Members of the other side of the House for their very kind understanding. I think the Minister for Foreign Affairs said something as well but he is extra happy too because he wants to go overseas next week and so I thank him for his support as well. Thank you and I beg to move.

*The motion is passed*

*The House adjourned at 7.26 pm*