

WEDNESDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER 2010

The Speaker, Rt Hon. Sir Peter Kenilorea took the Chair at 10.16 a.m.

Prayers.

ATTENDANCE

At prayers, all Members were present with the exception of the Member for Malaita Outer Islands.

Mr Speaker: Honourable Members, welcome to the first sitting of the 9th Parliament. Before we proceed with business for today, Members need to first take the oath of allegiance as required by section 63 of the *Constitution*, read with Schedule 1, in order to participate in the ensuing business of the House.

As Members might recall, I had earlier requested disclosure of direct pecuniary interests from all Members, failing which a Member is not permitted to take the oath. I am very pleased to inform the House that all 50 elected Members have duly declared such interests, and I have those declarations with me for the purposes of Standing Order 78. As such, all 49 Members present today are eligible to take their oath of allegiance at this sitting.

While on that topic, I need to clarify one point to members of the public. Declarations made by Members of Parliament to the Speaker under Standing Order 78 are not for public viewing and are not public information. Such declarations are made to enable the Speaker to assess whether or not a Member has a conflict of interest in respect of a motion, bill or other item of business currently before the House. This assessment is very important because Standing Order 78 (3) does not permit a Member who has a conflict of interests in respect of a motion or other item of business to move or participate in that business. That, however, is the only purpose for which such declarations are made to the Speaker. Under Standing Order 78 (2), declarations made by individual Members cannot be disclosed to the public or even to other Members, except on a motion moved in and passed by Parliament. I hope we are now clear on this point.

That being said, let us return to the business at hand. May I now call on the Clerk to Parliament to administer the oath of allegiance.

ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS

Clerk: Honourable Members, I have received notification made by His Excellency, the Governor-General, pursuant to section 57 (2) (b) of the *National Parliament (Electoral Provisions) Act* (Cap. 87) advising of the names of persons duly elected at the last general elections held on 4 August 2010 to the 50 seats of Parliament. The notification is in the form of a declaration by His Excellency published in the Extraordinary Gazette No. 220.

By virtue of Standing Order 2 (2), it is my honor to now administer the oath of allegiance in accordance to section 63 and Schedule 1 of the *Constitution*. I will call out the names of each elected Member in alphabetical order and ask each Member to come up to where I am and take the oath. For those who might not be familiar with this process, taking the oath entails you holding the Bible with your right hand, reading out the oath and signing the Oaths Book. I will now proceed with administration of the oath.

(48 Members of Parliament took their oaths)

SPEAKER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr Speaker: Honorable Members, on behalf of the House, congratulations on your being elected by your respective constituents and I warmly welcome all of you as fully fledged and sworn Members of the National Parliament of Solomon Islands.

Today's sitting marks both the commencement of the 9th Parliament, and the commencement of the first session of this Parliament. This House is grateful to the good people of our beloved nation for exercising their mandate and electing their representatives into this honorable House. I am pleased that the recent general elections were a success overall and this House thanks the people of Solomon Islands for always striving hard to uphold principles of democracy.

Our people have spoken and mandated each of you to carry this nation forward. Elected Members have in turn put in place a government to lead us. I sincerely thank all Members for playing your part in forming a government. I also wish to congratulate the new Prime Minister and his government on behalf of this House. While neither Parliament nor its Speaker has any say on how the Cabinet will govern the affairs of our country, I pray that the Cabinet will always uphold the Westminster principle and convention that Cabinet is always collectively answerable to Parliament where each Minister hails from."

On that issue, I am also very pleased to inform the House that the Official Opposition and the Independent Group have also been formed informally. Again, I wish to congratulate and welcome Members and designated Leaders of

both groups on your formation. The next Speaker will recommend the respective Leader of these two groups to His Excellency, the Governor-General, for appointment pursuant to section 66 (1) and (2) of the *Constitution* as soon as possible after today's sitting. To the Opposition and Independent Group Members, like the government, you two hail from Parliament.

It falls on the Opposition to always ensure that Cabinet is always collectively answerable to Parliament. On their part, Members of the Independent Group are at liberty to support either the government or the Opposition on issues based on their consciences or on ideologies. However, a Member of the Independent Group, including its Leader, who officially joins either the Opposition or the Government, will cease to be a Member of the Independent Group. Please be always mindful of this constitutional restriction.

As we begin our journey as a new Parliament, I bid all Members to always bear in mind your primary constitutional functions as parliamentarians. These are to be legislators, to represent your respective constituencies, to provide oversight for executive actions, and to control and approve government finances. Your primary duty is to Parliament and you discharge this duty by performing the four functions to the best of your ability regardless of political affiliation and interests. I have confidence in each Member that whichever side you find yourself in over the next four years, you will always put Parliament first."

Before I conclude, I wish to formally inform this honourable House of a recent tragedy affecting Parliament and many good people of our country. As Members will recall, following the election of the Prime Minister, the Member for Shortlands Constituency, the late Hon. Steve Laore passed away tragically. On behalf of the House, I would like to express my sympathy and condolence to the family of the late Member, and to his constituents who are now without their chosen representative. It was indeed an unexpected tragedy that has taken away a beloved husband, father, brother, cousin and uncle from his family; and a national leader from Shortlands Constituency, this Parliament and this country. This House is most grateful to the Ministry of Home Affairs and all others who assisted for according the late Member an official funeral and for assisting related arrangements.

Parliament has lost one of its own before he had the opportunity to formally join the House. Later on this sitting, after Members have taken their oath and elected their two presiding officers, Members will be given the opportunity to pay tribute to their late comrade. My tribute at this stage is to formally inform the House and to speak on behalf of myself and my family given that this will be my only opportunity to make this tribute.

Honorable Members, that concludes my opening remarks. We shall now proceed with business for the day.

ELECTIONS OF SPEAKER AND DEPUTY SPEAKER

Mr Speaker: Honourable Members, the next business before the House is the elections of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker pursuant to section 64 of the *Constitution*.

We will proceed with the election of the Speaker first, which I will preside over, before proceeding with election of the Deputy Speaker, which the new Speaker will preside over.

The Clerk will administer this process and she will be assisted by the Secretary to the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Mr Jeremiah Manele. I shall now call on the Clerk to proceed with the election of the Speaker.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker and Honorable Members of Parliament, on the closure of nominations for the election of the office of the Speaker at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday 7th September 2010, there were four candidates nominated for the election.

They are, in the order in which the nominations were received by my office:

- Mr. Patteson OTI, former Member for Temotu-Nende;
- Sir Allan KEMAKEZA, former Member for Savo/Russell;
- Mr. Fred FONONO, former Member for Central Kwara'ae; and
- Mr. Francis Billy HILLY, former Member for Rannoga/Simbo."

I am satisfied that all four candidates are qualified to be elected as Speaker under section 64 (1) (a) of the *Constitution*. I am also satisfied that all four nominations meet the requirements of Standing Orders 5(2) and 5(3) and are thus valid. However, this morning, Mr. Oti withdrew his candidacy in writing for his own reasons. Standing Order 5 does not expressly provide for withdrawal of candidates. In situations where the Standing Orders are silent, Standing Order 82 permits us to look to the usages and practices of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom. However, in this instance, even the practices of the House of Commons do not assist because its Speaker is an elected Member of the Commons. As such, we cannot rely on any practice of the House of Commons in terms of the election of Speaker.

In light of the silence of the Standing Orders on withdrawal of candidates, it falls on my office as that responsible for the administration of the Speaker's election to determine whether or not withdrawal is permitted. Based on in-house procedural advice, and with the concurrence of the Speaker, I am of the

view that a candidate for the Speaker's or Deputy Speaker's election may withdraw at any time before the conclusion of that election.

In reaching this view, I considered other electoral procedures, in particular the procedures for electing a Prime Minister set out in Schedule 2 of the Constitution. Paragraph 3(3) of that Schedule expressly allows withdrawal of candidates even after nominations close but before conclusion of that election. Similarly, for general elections, the National Parliament Electoral Provisions Act allows withdrawal of candidates even after close of nominations.

I am therefore satisfied that is a basic principle of democratic elections to permit withdrawal of candidates at any time prior to the conclusion of elections. The principle behind this is obviously that no person should ever be compelled to go through an election if he or she clearly does not wish to.

For the above reasons, despite the silence in Standing Order 5 on withdrawal of candidates, I accept the withdrawal of Mr. Patterson Oti from this election.

As such, for the purpose of this election of a Speaker, there are only three candidates:

- Sir Allan KEMAKEZA, former Member for Savo/Russell;
- Mr. Fred FONONO, former Member for Central Kwara'ae; and
- Mr. Francis Billy HILLY, former Member for Rannoga/Simbo.

We will now proceed with the election.

(Election proceeds)

Results of the election were as follows:

Sir Allan Kemakeza	-	27
Mr Francis Billy Hilly	-	17
Mr Fred Fono	-	<u>4</u>
	<u>Total</u>	<u>48</u>

Clerk: Honorable Members, in accordance with Standing Order 5 (12) it is my honor to announce that the candidate duly elected by Members of Parliament as the Speaker of the National Parliament of Solomon Islands, with a majority of 27 votes, is Sir **ALLAN KEMAKEZA**. Congratulations, Sir.

Mr Speaker: Honorable Members, I wish to join the Clerk in congratulating, Sir Allan Kemakeza on his being elected as the next Speaker of this honorable House. At this point in time, I am speaking on behalf of myself and my family and as your outgoing Speaker. I believe I will have the opportunity later on to bid Members my farewell, but for now, please indulge with me for a while longer for some brief remarks.

OUTGOING SPEAKER, Sir PETER KENILOREA'S FAREWELL REMARKS

Sir Peter Kenilorea: Honourable Members of the House, it is with a heavy heart that I address you one last time as your Speaker after eight years serving this honourable House. Whilst for me personally, leaving gives me the opportunity to rest, I am still sad to bid this House and Members farewell today. I have been part of this House since 1974 either a Chief Minister, Prime Minister, Member and Speaker so I have developed to soft spot for Parliament and a genuine concern about how Parliament leads this nation forward.

Today, I finally retire fully from my official capacity in Parliament since myself and former pioneer colleagues formed the first Governing Council in 1974. Today, as one of the pioneers and fathers of this nation and this House, I finally retire from the House, completely and leave it in the capable hands of my successor and in your good hands as Members of the House who will take us forward in the next four years.

It has been a humbling honor for me to have served two terms as Speaker of the National Parliament. I wish to sincerely thank Members of the 7th and 8th Parliament who had confidence in me in entrusting me with the office of the Speaker of this honourable House. I am very grateful for your support which had been tremendous and genuine all through out the past eight years. I extend my gratitude to Members of the 7th and 8th Parliament who either retired or were not re-elected.

I can only hope that my tenure as Speaker I have been fair and accommodating to you. If I inadvertently insulted you or was unfair to any of you in the past 8 years, please accept my most profound apology. It has been tough trying to manage and accommodate many deferring interests while remaining impartial and avoid politics. I like to think that I at least gave my very best attempt at doing that. If I failed in that regard in the past, I ask your forgiveness for I am only but a human who is just as prone to frailties that mankind share, irrespective of what society one belongs to.

At this juncture, I wish to reflect briefly on my time as Speaker over the past years. As I recall, when I was first elected as Speaker of this House in 2001,

the nation was in the grip of a tragic civil unrest. We have come to know as the 'Ethnic Tension'. Those were indeed very difficult times for all of us. The Parliament I was elected to serve was handicapped in many ways by the conflicts and its Members and I had very little drive or support to fulfill Parliament's constitutional functions and duties.

It took hard work and dedication for Parliament to slowly assist in bringing back normalcy. As Members will recall, eventually Parliament acted and invited our friends from the region to intervene. The rest is history and need not be repeated. However, as Speaker during those trying years, I wish to take this final opportunity to thank the then Prime Minister, Sir Allan Kemakeza, and all Members who unanimously supported him, for taking the necessary steps to bring an end to what was a sad chapter of our nation's short history.

Following the end of the conflict, I believe it was very evident to Members of the 7th Parliament that the focus for the rest of that term had been on the restoration and post conflict management. Many thanks to our Forum country friends, we spent the next three years restoring law and order and the economy, strengthening the functions of our governing institutions, including the police and the judiciary. On its part, Parliament, I believe, did the best it could in the circumstances, and enacted important pieces of legislations to assist.

The year 2006 brought about the 8th Parliament. As Members will recall, it started on a sad note but both the nation and Parliament recovered quickly with a strong desire to move on with nation building and restoration. In that regard, the 8th Parliament was collectively very hard working indeed.

I am very pleased to have been part of the achievements of the 8th Parliament between 2006 and early this year. Parliament was very active and positive, despite some hiccups. Parliament enacted many laws which reformed both the public and private sectors. Parliament also approved important white papers, the most notable being the White Paper on Political Party Reform, and reports. A number of very vital private motions were also brought to Parliament and passed.

In the 8th Parliament, standing committees performed beyond expectations after the revival of the committee system in 2006. For the first time since independence, standing committees were fully functional and carried out their respective mandates in a bipartisan manner with pride and zeal. We should all be thankful to the dedicated members who drove those committees for restoring Parliament's capacity to scrutinize the executive. Perhaps the best example of the culmination of years of hard work by committees was the inquiry undertaken by the Foreign Relations Committee into the *Facilitation of International Assistance Act* 2003 and the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, RAMSI.

Another feature of the committee system which was revived was the use of special select committee. Two notable examples were that which dealt with parliamentary privilege in 2007 and that which inquired into the quality of the healthcare system in 2009. It was indeed a great delight to see Members make full use of the committee system not only to provide oversight to executive actions and departments, but to educate our good people about committees, Members and Parliament. I applaud all former committee Members for your dedication.

Many of the achievements of the 8th Parliament would not have been possible without external support. The main support came from an initiative we came up with in the 7th Parliament in 2004. Here, I am referring to the UNDP Parliamentary Strengthening Project which stemmed from negotiations with UNDP and the Machinery of Government Programme of RAMSI. The resulting Project implemented by UNDP but co-funded by UNDP and MOG proved to be the lifesaver for Parliament as an institution.

This Project saw the engagement of a dynamic change management project manager and young graduates. With funding from UNDP and MOG and the guidance of the Clerk and myself, the Project very quickly identified weaknesses of Parliament and its committees, and went about systematically addressing these. The support provided by the Project was what we needed for our Parliament and I personally testify to the incredulous assistance which I received from Project staff since 2006. For that I wish to thank UNDP and RAMSI one last time for their unwavering support through the Project. It has been a great pleasure to have worked with these two organizations and I hope their support will extend to the new Speaker and Deputy Speaker.

Parliament also had the support of many other friends who came to us in a time of great need. In that regard, I wish to acknowledge and thank our partners and friends, namely the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Australia and United Kingdom, the Centre for Democratic Institution (CDI), the New South Wales Parliament and all other organizations who assisted this Parliament one way or another. I extend my gratitude as well to bilateral partners of Solomon Islands who have assisted Parliament directly. I would like to thank the Japanese Government for providing Parliament with its first ever standby generator. On that note I would also like to extend my gratitude to RAMSI for providing Parliament with its second standby generator which we are now using. I wish to make special mention of the Republic of China (Taiwan) with whose assistance Members will soon have their own office space for the first time in history. I also acknowledge the contribution and support of successive governments since 2001 to Parliament.

With such high level of support from many stakeholders, I have been watching with much satisfaction as Parliament rapidly grew from a conflict handicapped institution to a Legislature which is fast gaining the reputation of being one of the best in the region in terms of its processes and support to Members and the Speaker. Over these years, I have come to learn a priceless lesson. Although Parliament may be the highest institution of the land, it cannot function in isolation and needs appropriate external support to flourish. This in turn requires strong networking and cooperation between Parliament, the executive, the judiciary and external partners. I strongly believe that this approach should be maintained even after I leave.

On their part, Members have contributed to the rapid development of Parliament by firstly accepting the UNDP Project and embracing change it proposed. I urge current Members to maintain this and make full use of the support that the Project provides, as former Members did. Often, you will find that as a legislator, a Member is only as good as the support he has in fulfilling his functions. We now have a dynamic Secretariat which will provide the best procedural, committee, information, corporate and civic education support you can find in this country. I hope Members will soon come to realize the value of such support and use it to go from strength to strength.

The achievements of the last House with such support were very visible and bode very well for the future of this Parliament. I wish to mention in particular some key achievements which I hope Members will appreciate and maintain. Here I am referring to:

- The new sound system which has increased the audio-capacity recordings for hansard, media and the public listening to debates within the public gallery;
- New ICT services, allowing members to access internet and emails from within Parliament to the outside world;
- Research and Library services available at Parliament Library;
- A security fence which has increased the security level of the Members of Parliament, Parliament staff and Parliament facilities;
- The new office complex for Members currently being constructed;
- The revival of a fully functional parliamentary committee system which has increased the scrutiny functions of Parliament.
- A review of the Standing Orders;
- Hosting of an Open Day in 2008 and 2009'
- Hosting of the first ever Youth Parliament;
- Television coverage of Parliament and committee proceedings; and

- The establishment of the Secretariat which provides the services I referred to earlier.

These have all been milestones in the development of our Parliament and I am very pleased to have been part of these. Once again, I thank all friends, partners and previous governments for making these and many more possible. It is heartening to know that the partnerships that Parliament has worked so hard to establish will remain on after I leave. I pray that the Members of this House maintain such partnerships for together with these friends, you can achieve anything that you set your eyes on.

Before I conclude, I wish to take this opportunity to thank the Deputy Speakers who have served with me since 2001, the Clerk to Parliament, the Deputy Clerk and all officers of Parliament for supporting me all these years. I am eternally grateful to you all for helping me see the weaknesses and, at times, mistakes of Parliament and to rectify these. Your support has been my source of strength even in trying times. Because of you all, I managed to serve as Speaker without too much stress. Indeed, on many tough occasions, my officers lost sleep on my behalf and guided me through difficult decisions without complaint. I must say that often my Clerk and her staff made me look good even in ugly situations. I have been blessed by your friendship and support. I salute all of you for serving this nation with an unprecedented passion. Please extend this to your next Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Members and the 9th Parliament.

Let me conclude with one final remark to you honorable Members of the 9th Parliament. I am delighted to have stayed with Parliament and witness the commencement of the 9th Parliament. It gladdens my heart to see some Members we served together decades ago in this Chamber today. I thank you for your long service, and encourage you to share your invaluable experience in driving our nation forward further in the 21st Century.

To Members who are new to Parliament, this will no doubt be an exciting but at times daunting experience for you. I understand that in terms of the rigid procedures and formalities of the House, you might feel intimidated. However, that is what the Clerk, supporting staff and the UNDP Project are there for. I suggest that you utilize the support provided to quickly catch up on how to conduct yourself in committees and on the floor of Parliament. Lest you forget, while procedural matters might be mind boggling at this stage, I am very sure that each of you new Members is already good at what it really is to be a national leader. By that I mean each of you already know very well how to help your people and advance their lives. This is something you need no lessons on. That is indeed the core of your duties as a parliamentarian and I encourage you and re-elected Members to always keep that duty in mind over the next four years.

Once again, I would like to thank all former Members, current Members, previous governments, bilateral partners, multilateral partners, other parliaments, our own Parliament staff and all others who have assisted or supported me during my time as Speaker. I hope each of you have benefited in some ways during that time and I pray that your help will bring many blessings and rewards to you in years to come.

To God be the glory great things He had done. Thank you so much.

Sitting suspended for 30 minutes

Sitting resumed at 1.13 pm

The new Speaker, Sir Allan Kemakeza took the chair.

Mr Speaker: Honorable Members, before we proceed, I wish to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all Members of Parliament for electing me as your new Speaker of the National Parliament.

The honorable Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the honorable Leader of the Opposition, honorable Ministers of the Crown, Leader of the Independent Group, leaders of all political parties, Members of Parliament, the Attorney General, Clerk to National Parliament and supporting staff, ladies and gentlemen, first and foremost my congratulations to all of you who have been elected to the National Parliament, for your successful election in the 2010 general elections.

I also wish to join my predecessor in conveying my apologies for the tragic loss of the Member of Parliament for Shortlands. It is tragic that we lost one of our great leaders and on behalf of my family and that of myself, our words of condolences to his family, children, relatives and the people of Shortlands.

Secondly, honorable Members, I wish to acknowledge the father of the nation and my predecessor whom I took over from him through your election today. He is a father of the nation who has brought this country this far and this country now rests upon young leaders like yourself. Honorable Members, our people in this country have spoken and have given you the great responsibility of taking our country forward. I cannot go back to history but as time goes on we will do that.

Thirdly, it will not go down well in the records if I do not thank you for your trust and confidence by electing me to the post of Speaker of National Parliament for the next four years as of today. To those of you who have some

reservation on my candidacy, be assured that I will be fair and just in discharging my responsibilities in accordance with the national constitution, the standing orders and other subsidiary legislations and regulations.

Being the Speaker of the National Parliament is not just chairing the proceedings of parliament meetings, but to ensure that all branches or divisions within the legislature or the parliamentary office functions, are improved and meets the challenges of our time. These challenges need the full cooperation of all Members of Parliament, the government through our minister who is none other than the Prime Minister himself.

Development partners and other stakeholders are very important players. This is to ensure that the highest law making body on the land meets the expectations of our people in the country who own this Parliament. Other parliamentary democracies in the world and within us will have their respect and trust on us in as far as our protocols, conventions and treaties are concerned in which we are a party to. To the general public, respect your Parliament. You have elected our 50 Members of Parliament who now represent you or represent us in this parliament. Work together with them to build our country in a peaceful, harmonious manner as one people and one country.

Finally, my office will ensure that all Members of Parliament are fully equipped with relevant materials such as the copy of our national constitution, the standing orders, legislations, legislation handbooks etc. etc. for your guidance in dealing with parliament business.

Honorable Members as I said, my remarks will be very brief. I will be with you for the next four years and we will be guiding each other as we go along in taking our country forward in this law making body. Thank you.

ELECTION OF DEPUTY SPEAKER

Clerk: Mr. Speaker and Honorable Members of Parliament, on the closure of nominations for the election of the office of the Deputy Speaker at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday 7th September 2010, there were a total of three candidates nominated for the election. However, only two nominations are valid.

They are, in the order in which the nominations were received by my office:

- **Hon. Dr. Derek SIKUA**, Member for North-East Guadalcanal; and
- **Hon. Namson TRAN**, Member for West Honiara.

I am satisfied that these two candidates are qualified to be elected as Deputy Speaker under section 64(1)(b) of the *Constitution*. I am also satisfied that

these two nominations meet the requirements of Standing Orders 5(2) and 5(3) and are thus valid.

I wish to inform the House that there was a third nomination, that being for Sir Allan Kemakeza. However, being not a Member of Parliament, he is not qualified to be elected as Deputy Speaker, which is a position that may only be taken up by a current Member. Accordingly, that particular nomination was invalid and will not be considered in this election.

We will now proceed with the election, with the two candidates announced earlier. We will use the same process I read out for the election of the Speaker. The only difference, however, is that in this election, there are only two candidates so if neither receives an absolute majority of votes at the first ballot, there will only be **three further ballots** to elect the Deputy Speaker from that point onwards, failing which I will countermand the election and commence it *de novo*. And just like the election of the Speaker, the majority vote will be 25 because we have 48 Members who had taken their oath and that is half plus Members present plus one.

Hon Lilo: Point of order. We now have the new Member for Outer Islands here who is yet to take his oath of allegiance. Can that be facilitated for him now before the election of the deputy speaker?

Mr Speaker: Because of other commitments, I will allow the Clerk to administer the oath of allegiance for the Member of Parliament for Malaita Outer Islands.

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH

(Member for Malaita Outer Islands took his oath of allegiance)

(Election of the Deputy Speaker proceeds)

Results of the Election were:

Hon Derek Sikua	-	23
Hon Namson Tran	-	<u>26</u>
Total		49

Clerk: Honourable Members, in accordance with Standing Order 5 (12) it is my honour to announce that the candidate duly elected by Members of Parliament as the Deputy Speaker of the National Parliament of Solomon Islands with a majority vote of 26 is **Hon NAMSON TRAN**, Member for West Honiara. Congratulations, Sir.

Mr Speaker: Honorable Members, I too would like on behalf of the House and Members to congratulate and welcome our new Deputy Speaker of this Honorable House. I am very pleased that the House now has its presiding officers. At least, our Parliament is fully equipped to take on the challenges of the next four years. Together, the Deputy Speaker and myself will serve this honorable house with impartiality and always in the best interest of Parliament at heart. Let us now proceed with our next item of business.

OBITUARY SPEECHES

Mr Speaker: Honourable Members, I had earlier received a request from the Honourable Prime Minister for leave to make an obituary speech of tribute to the late Hon. Steve Laore, Member for Shortlands Constituency. As we heard at the commencement of this sitting, the former Speaker formally notified this honorable House of the passing away of one of its Members and indicated that Members will have the opportunity to pay tribute as well. I have granted leave to the Honourable Prime Minister to deliver his obituary speech.

Before we proceed with that speech, it is customary and proper that we all pay tribute to and remember our fallen colleague and national leader, the late Hon. Steve Laore, Member for Shortlands Constituency. May I please ask all Members, and members of the public present and listening in to rise and observe a moment of silence with me in memory of the late Hon. Steve Laore.

The Speaker, Hon Members and members of the public stand for a minute silence in memory of the late Steve Laore

Mr Speaker: Thank you Honorable Members and the good people of Solomon Islands for joining me in remembering the late Member. I now call on the Honourable Prime Minister to deliver his obituary speech.

Hon. PHILIP: Honourable Speaker, before I do so I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your successful election to the high position of the Speaker to this Honorable house.

I rise to express my sincere and heartfelt remarks in this obituary speech on behalf of the government that I lead, myself, my family and the many people in the Rendova/Tetepare and South New Georgia constituency, to pay tribute to one of our fallen comrades two weeks ago.

The novelty of that situation, that incident still lingers on in the minds of some of us, and I consider it appropriate to take the matter to the floor of this Honorable House to render it an appropriate benediction. On that same note, I would like to commend the comments made by the outgoing speaker of Parliament for his kind words in relation to the tragic passing away of our comrade, the late Steve Laore.

As you would probably recall, in my speech at the official funeral of the late Steve Laore at Burns Creek, I referred to him as a young leader ready to take and prepared to take up the call of duty on behalf of his people in the Shortland Islands. Today under the roof of this Honorable House, I wish to leave in the Hansard Records my final thoughts and prayers for my young friend who had left so many questions unanswered in my mind. Questions that I will never have answers to until perhaps one day when in the presence of the one who gives life and takes it away, revelations will be uttered and answers will be given for the many unanswered questions that I have and the reasons for taking away Steve's life so unexpectedly, so early and as we all thought, so prematurely.

A young man was brought to my attention and was introduced to me as Steve. He was young and was ready to represent his Shortland Islands constituency and to serve the interest of this nation for the next four years. His untimely death in the early hours of 26th August 2010 came as a surprise to all of us, his fellow colleagues of this Honorable House. I came to know Steve as a straight talker full of energy, bright, honest, knew why he was elected and trustworthy. For those of us who came to know Steve he was a friend and a colleague. He is a person we could count on and depend on for advice and support. He was a simple man from Nuhu yet full of determination and enthusiasm for the challenges ahead.

In my heart I know the Government I am leading has lost a dear friend. Moreover, in my conviction, I know the people of Shortlands dearly lost a young and energetic member of parliament, one that is irreplaceable. Further, this Parliament missed the company of the late Honorable Steve Laore and his contribution to our nation. I urge this House to ensure the legacy of Honorable Steve lives on, a legacy of friendship, mastership, trustworthiness, honesty and dependability. May his legacy lives on.

Mr Speaker: Thank you honorable Prime Minister. Honourable Members, in line with the precedence of this House, I now open the floor of Parliament for any Members to contribute to this obituary speech.

Hon. AGOVAKA: Firstly, I would like to thank the Prime Minister for introducing the motion to the floor of Parliament.

To the family, chiefs, elders and people of Shortlands constituency, I on behalf of my people, family, chiefs and elders of Central Guadalcanal Constituency would like to send our deepest condolence to you all on the loss of your elected Member of Parliament, honourable Steve Laore. The late Steve Laore attended the St John's school when I was also there. I knew his brothers and sisters well and he was a junior student when I was a senior student. Our paths again cross when he became elected Member for Shortlands Constituency. Until his death, Steve was a quiet person but affirm in his decision. He was a very supportive member of the group.

To the late Honourable Steve, we will not know what you have in store or plan for your people for your contribution to the welfare of this nation. Your voice will not be heard in this honorable House. Your loss here on this earth here is a gain in heaven. May you rest in eternal peace.

To the chiefs, elders and people of Shortlands Constituency, may you go to the bye election polls whenever it will be called and come out of it with a new member who will serve your interest in parliament. Until then my prayers are with you all. With these few remarks, I resume my seat.

Mr SOFU: Thank you for giving me this opportunity to join the Honorable Prime Minister and the Minister for Foreign Affairs to also express my words of condolence to the immediate family of the late honourable Steve Laore.

I stand here on behalf of my chiefs, church leaders and people of East Kwaio to also express our sympathy to the chiefs, church leaders and people of Shortland Islands. However, before I do that let me first of all congratulate you on your election as the Speaker of the National Parliament. I believe with your experience being a former prime minister and Deputy Speaker in the 8th Parliament, I hope and I believe you will continue to guide this House in our deliberations.

The late Honorable Steve Laore was known by me since 1983 when he was a very young boy. Also, during my time as Minister for Infrastructure Development, he was one of the contractors of the Ministry. He did well by working and cooperating together with us. The Late Honourable Steve Laore is a very young person, very simple to approach and to talk together and to discuss issues of interest. We dearly miss him.

To you the chiefs of Shortlands, church leaders, the parents, brothers and sisters, and the wife of Honourable Steve Laore, please accept our words of condolence on behalf of my good people of East Kwaio. You have trust in him by electing him to represent you, but because our time is in God's hand, God has plans for us that we do not know but only God knows. With these few remarks may the soul of the late Steve Laore rest in peace. Thank you.

Mr. ABANA: I would like to thank the Honourable Prime Minister for his speech on the late Honorable Steve Laore. I would like to join the Honourable Prime Minister in conveying my heartfelt condolences to the family of the late Honorable Steve Laore and his people.

The late Steve Laore won the parliamentary seat for Shortlands constituency in the last general elections very determined to represent his people. I believe the late Steve came prepared with a lot of development aspirations to achieve for his constituency, and I am of the opinion he could have done a lot of things for his people. Sadly, the events of his sudden passing away have overtaken all his good intentions. It was not timely even for his family, for Members of Parliament and his people of Shortlands Constituency. I share with late Steve Laore's family and the people of Shortlands Constituency our deepest sympathy and may his soul rest in peace. Thank you.

Mr TAUSINGA: First of all, I would like to join my colleagues in congratulating your elevation to the position of speakership. It is not a mistake or accident that you have been elected to the position. Everything about your quality speaks volume about your competency, and so I offer you and on behalf of my family and that of my constituency our heartfelt congratulations. I know you were once upon a time on the benches we are occupying now and at times I can remember you were usually ruled off for some inappropriate remarks. I am pretty sure you are not going to take revenge on some of us who are now occupying the benches. In any case congratulations, we will render you our support.

At the announcement of the winning candidate for Shortlands Constituency, I knew then that I have a colleague in Parliament. At this moment, I would like to join others to make a few comments on the matter before us, our obituary speeches in respect of the loss of a colleague Member of Parliament. And in particular to share my heartfelt sympathy to the family of the late Honorable Steve Laore and as well as my constituency, and so on behalf of the people of North New Georgia Constituency and that of my family I would like to extend to the family, the children he left behind, the people of Shortlands and his friends, our sympathy at this moment of your bereavement.

The late honorable Steve Laore has won the support of his people of Shortlands and his elevation to be their representative in Parliament carries the hope, the trust and the expression of views supposed to be through the parliamentary domain. His strategic departure indeed robs the expectation of family members and constituents, parliamentary colleagues and Solomon Islands as well.

Yes, death brings sadness and anguish but in times of sorrow, the comforting love of the son of the Almighty is ever more present and His relieving consoling power shines brightly in times of helplessness and hopelessness. May his soul find solace with the Lord. I resume my seat.

Mr SOALAOI: Firstly, I wish to join my other colleagues in congratulating you for winning the election to become our Speaker for the National Parliament. I have confidence in your capability to assist Members of Parliament during meetings, and I look forward to your support towards me and other colleagues in Parliament.

On the speech by the Prime Minister, I wish to thank the Prime Minister for giving us the opportunity to express our sincere words of condolence on behalf of our constituencies, and in doing so, on behalf of Temotu Vattu Constituency, which is the furthest constituency to the east opposite to the constituency of my late colleague Hon. Steve Laore. To the wife and children of the late colleague, please accept our sincere condolences on behalf of my people in Temotu Vattu constituency.

I can imagine the determination and commitment of the late Steve Laore to serve his people when he won his shortland seat. Unfortunately, we will never know his potential since he left us. I can also imagine the preparedness of his people to work with him when he was elected Member of Parliament for the Shortlands Constituency. I understand this is a painful event that has occurred to our late colleague and is also very painful to his family and also his constituency. Because of that I wish to once again express on behalf of my family and myself our sincere words of condolence to the wife and children of the late colleague Steve Laore. May his soul find rest with the Almighty.

Mr. SIKUA: Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to make an obituary speech, but before I get on to that business, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate you on being elected as the new speaker for our National Parliament. I have no doubt that you will undertake your role as Speaker of the National Parliament with due diligence and be fair and just to both sides of the House.

In contributing to this business at hand, let me first of all say thank you to the Honorable Prime Minister for introducing this business in today's business of the House. I on behalf of the chiefs, the leaders of churches, community leaders and people of my constituency of North East Guadalcanal, wish to convey our most sincere condolences to the family, relatives and the good people of Shortlands of the late Steve Laore.

I have come to know the late Steve Laore through his brothers and sisters through education and through marriage, but personally I have come to know

the late Steve Laore when he was engaged as my contractor to build four (4) feeder roads in my constituency of North East Guadalcanal in 2006 and in 2007. At that time I used my own constituency funds to maintain the roads that have never been used for about 10 to 12 years and I have been very fortunate to be introduced to the late honorable Steve Laore who has kindly accepted my request for him to come and rebuild the four feeder roads in my constituency. That is when I came into contact over two years with late honorable Steve Laore and I have come to know him personally as well as his family and his workers.

At the passing away of the late honorable Steve Laore, me, my family and my people were very saddened of his sudden passing away, and so I take this opportunity to convey on behalf of my wife and children, my family and everyone in North East Guadalcanal our sincere condolences to his wife and children and his good people of the Shortlands Constituency. I have been informed that his wife and children are now getting ready to come back and that his business was slowing down and so I am doing all I can to make sure that I assist in whatever way I can for the return of his family as well as trying to assist his workers. So I ask my good Minister of Finance to also support the endeavors that I am embarking upon in this regard

With these few remarks, again my sincere condolences to the family and the constituents of Shortlands of the late Steve Laore and may his soul rest in peace.

Hon. HA'AMORI: I also stand up to extend the sadness and sorrow of the people of West Makira Constituency to our good people of Shortlands on the passing away of their Member of Parliament. It is very sad indeed that the hopes of our good people of Shortlands have been dashed so suddenly.

As much as we, the people of West Makira Constituency share the loss of the Member of Parliament for Shortlands with our good people of Shortlands, it is what the late MP represented and would have adequately represented that I would like to briefly comment on at this time. The late MP Steve Laore came through the various stratas of our society and as such would have been a very adequate representative, a valuable promoter and a champion of the commoners, which we should be representing also in this Honorable House. The late MP Steve Laore's passing away is a loss not only to the good people of the Shortlands, to this House and the Government but the commoners as well who he would have so adequately represented in Parliament. Such is the extent of the loss. The late MP was a simple and unassuming man. Although he was a simple working man, he was one of the sons of the Shortlands who was trust worthy. I have come to accept that the late MP was someone I can trust. Before I sit down I

would like to say once again, thank you late Steve Laore MP and the good people of Shortlands for such a fine son. Thank you.

Hon. MAELANGA: First of all I would like to congratulate you for being appointed as the new Speaker for our National Parliament. I would also like to thank the Prime Minister for moving this obituary speech so that all of us could make our speech of condolence to our brother, the late honorable Steve Laore, Member for Shortland Islands.

I, with the Minister for Provincial Government, accompanied the body of the late honorable Steve Laore to Shortland Islands where I shared my sympathy with the people there when I arrived at Mbalalae Airport, Shortland Islands. I shared the sympathy on behalf of the Government and all Members of Parliament to his people, the chiefs, church leaders and everyone who came to the airport to receive their late honorable Steve Laore.

I would like to say here that on behalf of my people of East Malaita Constituency, my chiefs, church leaders, women and children, I share our deepest sympathy to the family of the late Steve Laore and his people of Shortland Islands. Our good Lord gives and takes and may the honorable Steve Laore's soul rest in peace with our Lord. Thank you.

Hon. RIUMANA: Thank you for giving me this opportunity to briefly contribute to this obituary speech. But before I do so, may I on behalf of my people of Hograno/Katova/Kia/Havulei Constituency congratulate you for your successful election today.

May I on behalf of my constituency, join the others to extend our condolences to the late Steve Laore. I met Steve in a very short time during the course of the democratic process. And during those very short times, it makes me feel like we have known each other for ages past. The late Steve Laore is a simple but a great leader. His passing away is very untimely. He passed away at a time when he was just about to demonstrate his constitutional duties as the legitimate representative of his constituency of the Shortland Islands. Unfortunately, his voice cannot be heard.

To the families, relatives, chiefs and supporters of the late Steve Laore, may I on behalf of my constituency extend our deepest condolences and sympathy to the people of Shortlands. The Lord gives and the Lord takes and may his soul rest in peace with the Almighty God.

Hon. TOVUSIA: Thank you for allowing me to briefly contribute. First, I would like to congratulate you for winning the seat of the Speaker. I just want to contribute briefly on this business moved by the Prime Minister.

I come to know Steve Laore during the time of the political struggle of choosing a prime minister. I think Steve Laore is a person who has his own words. Steve Laore, every time we meet at the Pacific Casino always came and gave me good advices which I cannot forget.

The late Steve Laore has helped the Guadalcanal people in a lot of ways. I know that a ray boat owned by East Guadalcanal has been fixed by Steve Laore. I think the late Laore still has a lot of things that he should deliver to the people of Guadalcanal and the country as a whole, but now he is gone.

This afternoon, I just want to say to the chiefs of Shortlands and the immediate relatives that everybody has felt the sorrow over what has happened to the late Steve Laore. Our biblical belief is that Steve Laore died in the hands of the Almighty and only in the Second Coming at the resurrection morning will we see Steve Laore up at Heaven. Thank you.

Mr. HOU: I would like to also contribute to this business that we are now discussing. But before I do so, let me on behalf of my people congratulate you for the successful election to the speakership post for this Parliament.

I would like to thank the Prime Minister for introducing this speech and also thank you for allowing us to comment on the speech. The late honorable Steve Laore, although I do not know him very well personally, I believe his election came about as a result of a lot of vigor and determination on his part. He was a very practical man and I am sure this Parliament and our discussions would have benefited a lot from his experiences. Unfortunately, these experiences and his very good intentions for his people could not be realized as a result of his untimely passing away. I would like to, therefore, on behalf of my family as well as my people in Small Malaita Constituency, my community leaders, my chiefs, church leaders and all the people of Small Malaita express our deepest condolences on this sad occasion to the family of the late Steve Laore, his people and of course the people of Shortlands. May his soul rest in peace! Thank you.

Mr SOGAVARE: Thank you very much. I too would like to stand up and join the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Ministers, the Leader of the Opposition and others who have contributed to this obituary speech. But first of all, I join the others as well in congratulating you for your successful election to that office.

First of all, I want to thank the government for according the late Member of Parliament for Shortlands the appropriate funeral service held at the Maranatha Hall. Some of us did not attend because I guess there was a breakdown in communications, but our hearts go out to the families of the late

Steve Laore. Before I express the condolence of the people of East Choiseul, first of all, let me thank the government and those that have made the life of the family of late Steve Laore comfortable. I would like also to thank the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister for Provincial Government who accompanied the body of the late Steve Laore to his place to be laid to rest.

Like the Member for South Malaita, I do not personally know Steve Laore until he was elected to Parliament by the people of Shortlands, and that demonstrates the trust and confidence that the people of Shortlands have for this man. And it is just appropriate that it must be this House that expresses this kind of statement to a man that his people have put their trust and confidence on to be a member of this house. Just like the others who have spoken, he is yet to demonstrate that capacity and that ability to lead his people on this floor and he was taken away by God Almighty, of course.

As the Prime Minister has said already, this is a matter that we can only trust the wisdom of God when it comes to life and death. Death is something we do not have control over so we can only trust the infinite wisdom of God for taking away life so early robbing his people and his family of a person being entrusted upon with their confidence to come and lead them in this Honorable House.

As the Minister for Education has said and probably made reference to, we should learn from important traits and qualities that people like that have left behind. As I have said I do not know him personally but from what we hear being expressed around the floor, this person someone who has served this country in his capacity as a person in the private sector and has contributed to the development of this country. This is something that should be appreciated and recognized by this House, and so it is just appropriate that we give this time for us to express our condolence to this person.

There are a lot of lessons that we can learn from situations like this. One that comes out very powerfully is that when we are elected to Parliament we ceased to be owners of ourselves. The people have entrusted their responsibility and trust on us to represent them in this House, and that brings up some very important responsibilities on ourselves too, to ensure that we look after a person that our people have entrusted to come and represent them in this House in terms of our health and in terms of what we are doing outside of Parliament. That probably leads to the need as well that maybe we need to look as well on our health Members of Parliament, and I am pleased that the Parliament Office usually arranges doctors to come and check us up so that this person that people entrusted their responsibility on is healthy and represents his people for the full four year term. I am not saying this because the average number of people

passing away in one house is about three since I joined Parliament in 1997 of people who have left us, great leaders who have left us.

Before I sit down, I would like to join all the other colleagues and on behalf of people of East Choiseul that I represent in this Parliament, extend our sincere heartfelt condolence to the families, chiefs, village leaders of Shortlands for this great loss of a person they have entrusted their responsibility on him to represent them through this Parliament. Thank you.

Mr FOLOTALU: I too would like to contribute on this speech. On behalf of my people of Lau/Mbaelelea Constituency, the chiefs, elders, church leaders, the constituents and especially my family and wife whom we are quite familiar with the people of Maleai and Nuhu when we used to live in Korovou some years ago, to express our heartfelt sympathy and condolences to the family and relatives of the late Honorable Steve Laore.

To the people of Shortlands and relatives I have no other words to express, except to comfort you with the words of Patriarch Job and I quote, "Steve, I know your redeemer lives and he will stand on the earth on a later day, even if your skin is destroyed yet in your flesh you will see God, you will see him with your own eyes and not another. May his soul rest in peace with his redeemer". Thank you.

Mr MUA: Thank you for allowing me to contribute to this obituary speech. Before doing so, on behalf of my family and our good people of Savo/Russells, I would like to congratulate you on your successful election as the new speaker of the National Parliament for the next four years.

I would like to join my other colleagues to convey our condolences and heartfelt sympathy to the family of the late Steve Laore and the people of his constituency. It is quite sad to lose a colleague, someone who should have contributed to nation building.

I attended the funeral service of the last Steve Laore and it was quite disturbing later to realize when the media speculated that there was no one from the Opposition side that attended when in fact the Member of Parliament for Savo/Russells did attend. God gives life and He also takes it away and our wish is that when God returns He will resurrect our dear brother and friend in the resurrection morning. Thank you.

Mr TOZAKA: I would like to join the Honorable Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, Ministers and also colleague Members of Parliament to contribute to this obituary speech. But of course, I would like to take this first opportunity on behalf of my family, on behalf of my people of North Vella La

Vella Constituency for congratulating you congratulating you in your election as the speaker of Parliament in the high institution of our land. Congratulations and I wish you all the best in your work taking up this responsibility. It is a very, very challenging task but, of course, with your experience, skill, very long serving Member of Parliament yourself, I am sure we will enjoy the work that you are going to take upon yourself now in this office. I also would like to congratulate the Deputy Speaker for his successful election to the House.

On behalf of my people, I would now like to take the opportunity to express my sincere sympathy and condolences to the people, the wife and children and the people of Shortlands for the untimely passing away of late colleague, Hon. Steve Laore on the 26th of August. The people of Shortlands, indeed, and the country as a whole have lost a leader, a leader who has been elected for the first time to represent his people in this honorable House. It is a void indeed in Shortlands to be filled and may God can give them peace and comfort at this time of sorrow and bereavement. May the soul of the late brother rest in peace with the Lord.

Mr Speaker: I think that conclude the obituary speeches. Let us proceed on to the next item of business.

MOTION

Mr Speaker: Honorable Members, I have also been notified earlier by the Honorable Prime Minister of his intention to move a motion of appreciation at this sitting. He sought permission under Standing Order 26 (1) to move a motion without the requisite notice, and I have granted the Honorable Prime Minister my permission.

For Members' information, although this particular motion might not necessarily be one of public urgency, in my opinion, circumstances demand that I treat the motion as such. As will be made known shortly, the proposed motion relates to the former Speaker of this House and is not contentious; but rather is one of appreciation. The most appropriate day to move this motion is obviously the day on which the former Speaker completed his tenure as Speaker, that day being today. Moreover, as the proposed motion is one of appreciation, the need for 3 days' notice is not so vital as it normally is where a motion is controversial or contentious."

For these reasons, I have granted permission under Standing Order 26 (1) to move this motion. Before I call on the Honorable Prime Minister to move that motion, however, there is another related matter that needs to be addressed. The Honorable Prime Minister has also requested that if his motion without notice is

permitted, he wishes to have the former Speaker, the Rt. Hon. Sir Peter Kenilorea, be invited to join me at the Speaker's Table for the purpose of the proposed motion. This is because the proposed motion of appreciation is in respect of Sir Kenilorea.

A non-Member is not permitted to be on the floor of the House except by motion or by leave of the House. As such, I now call on the Honorable Prime Minister to take the necessary steps. Before that I will ask the Clerk to call the Sergeant At Arms to bring in the outgoing Speaker, Sir Peter Kenilorea if there is no objection from the floor.

Hon. Abana: Point of order. With the good intentions of the Prime Minister, this side of House proposes if Members of Parliament can be given ample time knowing that Parliament will be adjourned for the next two weeks so that we could prepare well. We really need to farewell the outgoing Speaker in a manner that we all give it our best. This is just a suggestion from this side of the House and I hope the Hon. Prime Minister would consider it.

Mr Speaker: I have no objection on that request from the Leader of the Opposition and I will leave it to the Prime Minister.

Hon. Philip: Yes, this side of the House would concur with that sentiment. I think it will be appropriate in that sense to have ample time for Members of Parliament to organize their expression of appreciations to Sir Peter Kenilorea, the outgoing Speaker so that Members of Parliament can put much thought and preparation for that particular business. I would like to concur with the Leader of the Opposition to perhaps delay this particular motion until we resume parliament from the 23rd onwards where we might be able to put this motion back on again for a better expression of our appreciation for the outgoing Speaker. With that I have no objection and concur with the suggestion by the Leader of Opposition.

Hon. Abana: I would like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister and the government side for that understanding.

Motion adjourned to a later date

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT MOTION

Hon. PHILIP: I beg to move that its adjournment today Wednesday 8th September 2010, Parliament stands adjourn to Thursday 23rd September 2010.

Mr Speaker: It has been proposed that Parliament adjourns today, Wednesday as the Prime Minister suggested. This is a motion brought under standing order 9(2)(b) on special adjournment. I will now give Members the opportunity to comment on this motion.

Hon. Abana: I probably did not hear clearly, maybe the Prime Minister can explain reasons for the special adjournment motion. But again, this side of the House does not have any difficulty with the adjournment. It is probably just the explanation as to that special adjournment that is needed.

Mr Speaker: In fact, I have given permission to the Prime Minister to inform the House of the reasons of adjourning Parliament to 23rd of September.

Hon. Philip: I will just move the motion to elaborate on the reasons for putting the motion to Parliament. I move that at its adjournment today, Wednesday 8th September 2010, Parliament be adjourned to 23rd September 2010.

The main reason for this special adjournment is to enable the government to finalize the 2010 Supplementary Appropriation 2010 before it is brought to the Public Accounts Committee and thereafter Parliament when it resumes on 23rd September.

This special adjournment will also enable the National Parliament Office to undertake its induction programme for new Members of Parliament from the 12th which is this coming Sunday to the 16th September this month. The induction programme as you may have already seen in the documents circulated by the Clerk to Parliament will commence with a Church Service on Sunday 12th September 2010 at the St. Barnabas Cathedral. The program will start on Monday after registration and continues on until Thursday 16th September.

My government sees this induction seminar as a very important process in helping Members of Parliament, both new and old to be aware or be reminded of their roles and responsibilities as Members of Parliament. We feel that with that particular time given we should be able to prepare the Supplementary Appropriation Bill and also allow time for the programme of the National Parliament to proceed to give new Members of Parliament and old Members of Parliament an opportunity to know a little bit more about their responsibility in as far as leadership of Parliament and their role as parliamentarians is concerned. With those few words, I beg to move.

Mr Speaker: The motion is now open for debate.

MR ABANA: Thank you for giving me the opportunity to once again contribute briefly on the motion moved by the Honorable Prime Minister on this special adjournment of Parliament.

Before I do so, allow me to congratulate the Honorable Prime Minister for his successful election as the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands. The same is extended to the Deputy Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers, the Leader of the Independent group and Members of Parliament on their election victory into this Honorable Chamber. Also allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your successful election as the Speaker of the National Parliament and likewise the Deputy Speaker of Parliament, the Member of Parliament for West Honiara Constituency.

The Opposition side will continue to render support towards ensuring a healthy and effective parliamentary democracy in Solomon Islands. On the same token, I also extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the outgoing Speaker of Parliament, Sir Peter Kenilorea for his splendid and fine leadership in his tenure in office. The same goes to the former Deputy Speaker of the last House, the former MP for North West Choiseul. I wish them and their families every success in their future endeavors.

Our good people of this country ought to be congratulated as well for what was largely a peaceful, fair and free national general election across the country in spite of a few incidences that may have occurred in some places. We have also witnessed the same here in Honiara for a peaceful reception on the result of the election of the Prime Minister two weeks ago under close surveillance by the RSIP and RAMSI. Thank you the RSIP and RAMSI for a job well done.

I also wish to thank my electorate of Fataleka, men, women, children, youths, chiefs and Church elders for returning me for a second term in office. A historical decision I accepted with humility and I promise to serve my people earnestly with the best of my leadership ability.

On the motion proper, like I have alluded to earlier, this side of the House has no difficulty supporting the motion for reasons clearly stated by the Honorable Prime Minister and we fully concur with the intentions of the motion.

Furthermore, my appreciation to the loyal members of the Opposition group for their trust and confidence they have in appointing me to the office to the Leader of Opposition, a responsibility I did not take for granted, but I pledge to give my utmost best as I serve in this very important role. The Opposition side is ready to take on the government in providing a constructive, vibrant and proactive watchdog role in the conduct of the people's government. The Opposition will ensure the government is accountable and transparent in conducting the affairs of this nation.

There will be difficult situations and challenges ahead of us, ones that we will call for difficult decisions and choices. We will no doubt have disagreements in the future, and in principle it is a mark of a healthy society. But nevertheless we must not allow our disagreements to be the seed for disunity but deliberate in our efforts to building each other and the nation. Let us embrace each other with our colorful diversity, our weaknesses, strengths and even disagreements.

As national leaders we want to see a stronger and not a weaker Solomon Islands, a more untied Solomon Islands, a more peaceful Solomon Islands and a more prosperous Solomon Islands. It is in our hands whether we can together as leaders at all levels of our society and the people find common a purpose to build such a Solomon Islands. I thank you and I support the motion.

Mr SOGAVARE: I want to join the Leader of the Opposition and maybe get some clarifications from the Prime Minister when he rounds up the motion.

The reason for the adjournment as outlined by the Prime Minister is to bring in a supplementary appropriation and also the induction course that Members of Parliament are going to attend. At the victory speech the Prime Minister gave at the eastern gate, he told the nation that within 30 days the policy framework of the group is going to be put out. I hope that work is going on and maybe the Prime Minister will inform Parliament on the progress of that task, and after that the hefty work of actually costing out that program to be reflected in the 2011 Budget. That is a very big task. We just want to be sure in terms of the continual delivery of service that if the government is not able to bring in the 2011 Appropriation Bill before the end of the fiscal year then it is obliged to bring a motion to ask Parliament to empower the Minister of Finance to continue to use resources from the consolidated fund. We would like to be sure on that, that the reason for us adjourning Parliament until the 23rd September is basically to bring in the Supplementary Appropriation and not a resolution to ask Parliament to continue to use funds if the budget proper is not brought to this House.

Apart from that, this side of this House, as the Leader of the Opposition has said does not have any problem supporting this motion. But just for the Prime Minister to inform this House that the preparation of the Budget continues and will be completed and will be brought to parliament this year, but if not there is a resolution is coming. Thank you.

Hon Philip: Thank you and I would like to thank the Honorable Leader of the Opposition for his comments and support in support of the motion, and also the Member of Parliament for East Choiseul for his comments on one or two aspects

of the motion that perhaps there maybe some hidden motives something behind the motion.

As far as my bold statement made on the eastern gate of Parliament on that day, we have developed a framework for the program where officials have been directed to give more emphasis to the political directives, the new philosophy of guiding the government's new program towards achieving more results in terms of the government's new development aspirations. That is important and work is ongoing and we hope to complete that in the shortest possible time.

I think all of us will appreciate the circumstances through which the elections have been conducted in the past few months and the time taken to from the government have all been filled with constraints and therefore has taken a little bit longer for the government to be formed.

We also realized that the Government coffers are somewhat not very good in terms of revenue and we would like to see that we can harness the revenue situation to a little bit more respectable level. At the same time we would like to ensure that a proper supplementary appropriation bill is formulated so that government expenditures are also given a lot more sanction by Parliament and to ensure the next way forward for the government is given sanction by government.

We will ensure that that particular appropriation bill is given ample parameters so that enough provisions mandated by parliament to ensure government is not necessarily hampered or impeded to carry out its work for the remaining part of this year and also early next year. We hope that by the end of the year the government should be able to properly put down its comprehensive program of action and properly phase out its development aspirations and with the budgetary provisions enough to carry out the program of action the government is going to put forward at the end of this year.

With those few words, I beg to move.

Mr Sogavare: Point of order. I think this side of the House has raised one very important question, and that is we require the Prime Minister in his roundup speech to explain to us whether they are going to bring the 2011 budget in the next sitting after this adjournment? When we come back are they going to bring in the budget, the 2011 budget or if not then the Minister of Finance needs to bring in a motion for Parliament to empower him to continue to use funds in 2011, the first 4 months of 2011. That is a very important issue for this side of the House. We could face a constitutional crisis if we do not bring in the 2011 appropriation bill this year.

Hon Philip: I am very much apologetic about that omission. Yes, the supplementary appropriation bill which will be brought at the resumption of this meeting will be for a supplementary appropriation bill to give financial provisions until the end of this year when we should be able to, at the same meeting propose a resolution to empower the Minister of Finance to spend money in the first quarter of next year equivalent to a quarter of this year's budget. I think that is the clarification.

The special motion of adjournment agreed to.

Hon Philip: I beg to move that this House do now adjourn.

The House adjourned at 3.32 p.m.