

NATIONAL PARLIAMENT OF SOLOMON ISLANDS

DAILY HANSARD

FIRST MEETING – EIGHTH SESSION

WEDNESDAY 10TH MAY 2006

The Deputy Speaker, Sir Allan Kemakeza took the Chair at 9.39 am.

Prayers.

ATTENDANCE

At prayers all were present with the exception of the Ministers for Department of Police & National Security, Home Affairs, National Reform & Aid Coordination, Culture & Tourism, Public Service, Education & Human Resources and Members for Small Malaita, Hograno/Kia/Havulei and North Vella La Vella,

MOTIONS

Motion of Sine Die

Debate on the sine die motion continues

Hon TAUSINGA: Mr Speaker, lest I be misled to debate a budget speech rather than a motion of sine die, I wish to take the first chance to join in the debate of the motion before us, which is the motion of sine die. Thank you very much indeed for giving me the opportunity.

Sir, Before I advance my observation on matters of parliamentary and national importance, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people of North New Georgia Constituency for the trust and confidence they have on me for re-electing me to Parliament and to be their representative and servant for the next four years, not only to advance the interest of North New Georgia but more importantly that of the nation, Solomon Islands. I wish to thank them for allowing me another term in Parliament

and I accept their confidence with humility and gratitude.

Sir, there can be no appropriate and opportune time than now that I have to remind them that the country seeks from them their perpetual commitment, continual rededication, their participation on economic development and their prayers so as to enable us to advance our country's interest.

Mr Speaker, moreover, I would like to take this opportunity and on behalf of the people of North New Georgia to congratulate honorable Members of Parliament who have successfully contested the seats of their various constituencies. I extend to you all my comradeship and friendship and further pledge to work together with you for the common good of our citizens. Congratulations!

Sir, I would also like to congratulate the honourable MP for East Choiseul, Hon Manasseh Sogavare for successfully contesting the Prime Ministership. Mr Speaker, it is not often that one has the opportunity to respond and affirmatively answer a call of national duty, in particular a calling to a higher office such as that of the Prime Minister. That honor is reserved for a very few people who hold popular confidence and who through the people's representatives is privilege and elevated to the position of servant of the people and a leader of a nation. I have every confidence in your leadership. We will walk the extra miles beside you towards the country's destination. Congratulation!

Perhaps Mr Speaker, if I have to make a very small remark here that there may have been some questions arisen as to why I have to relinquish the position of candidacy to that particular position. Mr Speaker, I can only say in my small voice that one has to lose in order for one to gain.

Mr Speaker, allow me to appreciate and congratulate the election of the Speaker of Parliament. The Parliament is national in its ownership as well as its function but representative in its composition. Therefore, to take charge of the Speaker's Office is indeed an honor and a service to the people of the country. The fact that the Speaker was unopposed speaks well of the confidence and trust that honorable Members have on the office. Congratulations!

Mr Speaker, before I continue on the motion itself, I would also like to record my appreciation and thanks to the Office of the Speaker and the Members of Parliament for enabling us all to come to the meetings to attend to parliamentary matters. Without your dedication and commitment we would not have come this far. Thank you, and thank you very much indeed.

Now the motion. This motion seeks from each of us our individual consent to terminate the present meeting until we are summoned again at a later date to deliberate on other government matters that are of national importance. In other words, this motion tells us that the government has no other business and that Members of Parliament at the termination of this meeting may go home to their constituencies and the government be allowed to proceed on its work programs.

Yes, Mr Speaker, in such a circumstance the government does not have any further business for the meeting. I can willingly give you my consent to have the Parliament adjourn sine die.

But before I do so, Mr Speaker, permit me to make my remarks on the events of the past weeks, and perhaps impress upon honorable gentlemen in this chamber the need for all of us to take a "self-examination", and the role we all play in the security and stability of our country, in particular in the context of national experience or the national injury inflicted upon the people and the nation, Solomon Islands.

Sir, I also feel that the debate of the motion would be incomplete if I fail to participate, and my observations of the unfortunate sad event that saw the destructions that befell our capital, and especially the historical landmark – the Chinatown – because I was the unsuccessful contestant for the Prime

Ministership, in whose name and popularity the people demanded the resignation of the Prime Minister-elect immediately after his election. I feel obliged to make some clarifications and observations that may throw some light on the event, which can perhaps, form the basis of our healing process.

At the outset of my debate, I wish to position myself on a platform from which I must speak on the matter. In doing so, I must immediately declare to Parliament that the mandate given to me by the constituency of North New Georgia, demanded that the first article and the last article of my conviction and duty be that sir, that I am – first – a Solomon Islander, and – second – a North New Georgian, and thus the performance of my duty must be conducted from the highest standpoint, and in the interest of the country and its people. And upon this platform and standpoint, allow me to make my contribution to the motion.

Sir, if there is one thing that I have never shared with my closest friends and my immediate family, that one thing has to be my ambition to be the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands. And so the decision to be a candidate for the Prime Minister's position was made some eight months ago without the counsels of my closest friends or my immediate family. That decision was mine and mine alone; the decision to put forward my name for the position. I had no idea of my appealing nature neither do I know about my life's public image that made people believe on my suitability of the position. The choice to be a candidate was a demonstration of trying to answer a call of national duty just like all other candidates for the post. I was not prepared for what was to come.

What happened on that Election Day was unprecedented, and will do down in the history of our country as BLACK TUESDAY. The demonstration that sparked the chain reactions was from people from all corners of the country. And whilst we are still recovering from the ethnic unrest some six years back, we nevertheless chose to inflict further injury to our country.

Yes, in the past, there might have been disapprovals of the choice of Prime Ministers but there were no public demonstrations and no protests – none equal or comparable to the

recent one. There were no demands for resignation from Prime Ministers-elect, no demands for new leaderships or new government to be formed or no hindrance of Members of Parliament from exiting the Parliament Building. Indeed it was an experience that is unprecedented incomparable to past experiences and perhaps an experience that we need not repeat.

Sir, there was complete confusion on the part of everybody; no one was prepared for the scene that emerged in the Parliament compound that day, not even the law enforcement agency was prepared for the chain reactions that followed. The looting and burning of properties were sufficient evidence of the un-preparedness of the law enforcement agency, and which in my opinion, called into question the competency and credibility of the Commissioner of Police.

His Excellency the Governor-General must have read the situation correctly. He exited before the human barricade was formed to hinder us from leaving the Parliament.

Mr Speaker, the people demonstrated against our choice for they identified that choice as an extension of the old regime that they felt delivered little or nothing to the population of Solomon Islands.

The people demonstrated because the success of the election of the Prime Minister-elect was alleged to have come from business tycoons, and that in the public opinion was a danger to public interest.

The people demonstrated because the choice that was made was perceived to be susceptible to corruption or have acted in a corrupt manner previously, and can be remote-controlled by these business tycoons. And in a situation where public perception formed the opinion that one is corrupt or one can easily be manipulated or has become a symbol of corruption of a regime, one does not need to prove beyond reasonable doubt that the image is already tarnished, the popularity shredded into pieces, and therefore, public support withdrawn and ultimately one can be forced to accept the alternatives. This was the situation that set forth the chain reactions on that BLACK TUESDAY.

The important questions before us are:-
What can we learn from that Black Tuesday?
How can we assist in the healing process?

Mr Speaker, public peaceful demonstration whether issued with permission or not usually attracts negative criticisms. It is something to be feared by authorities, something that is perceived to be potentially dangerous if such demonstrations are out of control. I think it is important that demonstrations are conducted in a manner that guarantees public peace. However Mr Speaker, I can understand the people who think negatively about public demonstrations and protests. But the fear of demonstration or protest, in my view, is the ignorance of one's love for one's country.

Sir, those who demonstrated and protested and demanded the resignation of the Prime Minister-elect and demand for a new government to be formed immediately had concerns for their leaders and those who will advance the interest of the country. May be the actions they did were regrettable but they have genuine concerns.

The people were concern because they wanted their Members of Parliament and their government to be free from undue influences. They wanted their Members of Parliament and their government to be free from corruption. The people were concern because they wanted their Members of Parliament and their government to deliver goods and services to the citizens. The people were concern because they wanted their Members of Parliament and their government to create opportunities that would allow citizens to take on activities that can better their lives. The people were concern because they wanted their Members of Parliament to put the interest of its citizens and that of the nation ahead of their own and be good representatives and servants.

These concerns, in my view, expressed the love the citizens have for their country – an expression of patriotism – that formed the basis of the demonstration that required the resignation of the Prime Minister-elect and the immediate re-election of a new one. But the insensitivity of leaders and the application of wrong strategy by RAMSI Advisors saw the transformation of patriotism to frustrations/anger that have the destructive force on that Black Tuesday.

Suspicious abound about the involvement of parliamentarians in the

formation of the demonstration or inciting of violence, and the looting and the burning of properties. But I must not be mistaken by my remarks – especially on patriotism – that I render support to the destruction or had any participatory role. I must say to you and to the people or the country that I have no love for violence neither do I have love to incite violence. Like all peace-loving citizens of our land, those who are living and those who have gone before us, and great men of peace past and present the world over and those who became symbols of peace, I join them all. The first and last of my conviction, my faith is peace for all and for all time. So I categorically deny that I have love for violence and that I love to incite violence.

The smokes that rose from the conflagrations that have now abated and the ashes that now become the debris were seen by the nationals and international communities through the media, speaks volumes about ourselves and our country.

Many people had something to say about the event or had advanced their observations and analysis of the reasons for the occurrence of the devastations and destructions of properties. But suffice to say, Sir, a quick response from our Pacific neighbors the RAMSI by sending in military and police personnel guaranteed security, law and order.

I think such a good gesture from our RAMSI friends showed that we can count on each other in times of national despair or when situation is beyond the national capability to contain incidents that threaten public safety and public security. The quick response does also reflect that Solomon Islands stability is every Island State stability as well. We are the Pacific, and the Pacific is all the Islands States. And so we must appreciate the readiness of our neighbors and the quick dispatch of contingent who, through our own makings require their presence and assistance for our country. But this must not imply that we must not take possession of ourselves, our land, by deviating from destructive causes and actions.

However, the international media sees the opportunity to tell the world that Solomon Islands is full of criminals and corrupt parliamentarians. This portrayal of the poor

image of Solomon Islands, in fact, was made prior to the National Election and prior to the incident of the election of the Prime Minister.

The Civic Education and the Winds of Change programs made people aware what to expect from their leaders. Therefore, the events of the past weeks through the media was a manifestation or confirmation of leaders of the country being unduly influenced to the extent of using their positions for personal gains from money provided by the Republic of China. And the medical went on to infer that these parliamentarians were not able to conduct themselves above and beyond corruptive and bribery practices.

What amazed me, Mr Speaker, was the fact that the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia and the Prime Minister of Australia as well, support this line of thinking and cautioned the Republic of China and even the Peoples of Republic of China to stay away from Solomon Islands. Both leaders believe that the source of corruption was in their opinion that a tug of war exists between the Republic of China and the Peoples Republic of China for diplomatic relations, and the Republic of China poured money into parliamentarians' pockets to induce them away from their recognition of the Peoples Republic of China.

Mr Speaker, I admire these gentlemen and I admire the leadership they provided for their country and the manner for which they take responsibility to instill in us that good governance is what people expect from leaders. But on the other hand for them to level accusations at both the Republic of China and the Peoples Republic of China is indeed an exhibition of the ignorance of men's susceptibility to temptations as well as to human weaknesses.

For whilst it may be correct to suggest that the Republic of China creates opportunity for corruption and to make situations appear as if bribes have been committed, it must be understood that corruption and bribery is a man's own making. An individual is responsible for his own actions, and so in this regards one cannot blame others for one's own actions.

On the other hand, Mr Speaker, if the comments about the Republic of China and the

Peoples Republic of China were to determine who are our friends - Solomon Islands with the other countries, then this would appear to be interference into the domestic affairs of Solomon Islands.

If their comments were made to show that they know something about everything in Solomon Islands or they know everything about something in Solomon Islands - then God forbid - that displaces me from my own knowledge from my own country. Oh yes, Mr Speaker, but I would not take the choice in living in Venus or Mars.

In like manner, Mr Speaker, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Down Under, and as well as the Prime Minister should refrain from making unnecessary comments that can easily be construed to be not in keeping with the foreign policy of Solomon Islands.

What happened in Solomon Islands in recent week is bad indeed, and as I said earlier was incomparable to past experiences in our history. But that should not make other friends in other region suggest that they do not have similar problems in their own backyards.

Of course, they have Mr Speaker. What of the Lebanese uprising at the Bondi Beach in December 2004 that cost some human lives and also saw the burning of a supermarket in the Sunshine Coast. What of the daily criminal activities in Cabramatta in Sydney. What of the abduction of children in the streets of Queensland. What of corruption that is eating into the various institutions Down Under.

What leaders should have said is something to the effect like, 'look guys, we have helped you and we do not expect you to create more problems. We are answerable to the taxpayers and that you should not put our necks on the chopping board. We have provided RAMSI and so use it to help yourselves'. This I think is what I expect to hear from friends in the region.

The media portrayed a poor image of Solomon Islands, and the destructions that went with the event in order that the country be made to look bad, and for people to have no confidence in Solomon Islands. In other words, the poor image portrayed that people in the International communities be made to believe

that the leaders of Solomon Islands are incapable of running their own country.

However, what the media failed to show or recognize and appreciate was the fact that the demonstration and destruction was confined to the Capital, and there were no losses of life. All other parts of the country were peaceful, and that every body went about doing their daily activities.

Whilst the media appropriately were showing the bad side of the event, they also chose to ignore the good side of human nature, the many good things the ordinary Solomon Islanders did for the victims, in particular helping them to safety and comforting them.

That is also a good side of the human nature, and in times of trouble it is usually illuminates brightly, and this needs to be appreciated and recognized. It is this side that usually creates heroes.

Sir, many people can speak about the sad event. Economists can speak about it in terms of the economic impact. Sociologists and anthropologists can speak about it in terms of the social impact. Lawyers and justices can speak about it in terms of the likely criminal nature of it. Clergies can speak about it in terms of morality, and perhaps our inadequacy of good character building. Political scientists and analysts can speak about it in terms of peoples' power and its eroding impact on our democracy. Other critics can speak about it in terms of the shortcomings of our election laws and systems. Mothers and fathers can speak about it in terms of family needs and family comfort. Sons and daughters can speak about it in terms of reconciling their future with that of the present. And so everybody can speak about it in terms of how every one sees and feels about it. But what is strikingly obvious is the fact that parliamentarians, politicians and leaders can speak about it in terms of everything but themselves.

Mr Speaker, I am not expert in analyzing leadership qualities and the role leadership plays in diverse ethnic composition of a country, neither I do profess knowing what constitutes good leadership. But perhaps on the context of parliamentary responsibilities, and as far as constituency representation is concerned, I can settle on the understanding that

parliamentarians, except the Prime Minister are first, representatives, and second servants of the people.

Sir, the Prime Minister performs dual responsibility within the country he is the head-servant of the people, and in the international arena, and Solomon Islands stands equal with the family of nations, he is the leader of the nation, unlike parliamentarians who are only the servants.

Forgive me, Mr Speaker, but I do not subscribe to the notion of a parliamentarian as a leader or a master. The perception that a parliamentarian is a leader in his own rights gives the impression of 'self-elevation' that can be misconstrued or misled that oneself is over and above the master-servant relationship, which is the fundamental essence of a representative government reducing the population to servitude.

The fact is, Mr Speaker, I am the servant and the people are the masters. So it is expected by the people that the role I play must be to the extent that I do not cause confusion, instability and must not be a security risk to the people and the country. I must provide the security and stability for my masters, from which shall emerge freedom on which opportunities can exist that will help them better their lives and make Solomon Islands livable for their children and that of their children's children.

Security and stability is the government's duty Mr Speaker, and the government's duty is everybody's duty and everybody's duty is the people's duty. It is therefore important to note that the people's duty is parliamentarian's duty. This confirms the representative nature of Parliament or democracy. This means that a parliamentarian must be the first to demonstrate security and stability for the people of the nation.

Therefore, the sad event on Black Tuesday speaks clearly about ourselves, our duties, our steadfastness on principles or otherwise. The fact that one is elected to Parliament testifies on the belief and confidence that our people have on us. The fact that one is elected to Parliament testifies good reasons to enter Parliament.

The fact that we are elected to Parliament testifies that one is focusing more on

national interest than one's own interest or that of another individual. But the fact that we allow ourselves to associate with business tycoons, and in particular the active participation of businessmen in the formation of the government can send a wrong signal, and can give rise to opportunity that breeds suspicion, breeds distrust and breeds frustrations that can effect national injury to our country, as evident in Black Tuesday.

Perhaps what I am trying to say here, Mr Speaker, is a reminder that elected parliamentarians should not be security risks or instable themselves, but rather be a unifying force or unifying factor that can sweep away the mighty walls of frustrations and hatred.

Respect is not acquired, neither can it be bought nor can it be exchanged for 30 pieces of silver. To change allegiance from one political camp to another, one cannot expect to earned respect except the stand fastness on their beliefs and principles as well as performing duties for the people of Solomon Islands.

Perhaps I need to appreciate Mr Speaker, that the Honorable Member for West New Georgia, in the silent of the night, prior to the election of the Prime Minister, visited me, and lured me to be the candidate of the current Opposition. He won my admiration Sir, for being the first person and the first Honorable Member of Parliament, in my 20 plus career, to lobby and lure me to join the other camp. He was advised instantly that he has more experience in jumping around than I do, and was advised to join my camp instead of me going to him. Anyway, he enjoyed a beautiful bottle of wine, after which he and his merry-men disappeared into the night.

The Solomon Islands people, the regional communities and the Commonwealth of Nations were bewildered of what befell us, and of what we have done to ourselves and our country. They have every reason to hold poor opinion about us, for in many ways they have assisted us recover from our earlier ethnic unrest, that put us in downward spiral. Had it not been for their assistance, we would have not been able to look after the interest of the country. They have poured in millions of dollars to salvage us from sinking deep into the abyss of uncertainty.

Black Tuesday may appear to them as our inability to take possession of ourselves and our sovereignty. Therefore, whatever poor opinions others may have on us, let us work and prove to the contrary. Let us make Solomon Islands elevated to a new height, new hope and new direction. Let us show them that we can up all, in the name of unity, make peace with ourselves and with each other.

The national injury that was inflicted upon this little nation needs a new prescription, a prescription that goes beyond the formation of the government, a prescription that gives hope for the victims and the people of Solomon Islands, a prescription that can instill confidence not only on investors but all those that love our country, including our neighbors and the Commonwealth. We must, and the government must also see that those who are victims be assisted in ways possible to rebuild their lives.

Mr Speaker, allow me to end my debate by looking at the positive side of life. The smokes that were seen at Chinatown and other parts of the Capital also speak to us that there is hope. Beyond the frustrations and despair, there is hope. As my friend, the Honorable Member for Aoke/Langa Langa had counseled me, that beyond the smoke, there lies a garden of roses with its fragrance, beauty and tranquility. Therefore, let us use the experiences of Black Tuesday, as a beacon that lights our path, and for which we can build our joyous, peaceful and bright future for all – a people that can fulfill the declaration of our constitution – ‘a people, proud of the wisdom and the worthy customs of our ancestors, mindful of our common and diverse heritage and conscious of our common destiny’. Only then can we and the country be worthy of God’s unceasing and abundant blessings. Come countrymen; join me to make the nation see.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, I must now consider the circumstances upon which the motion requires my consent. Yes, the government does not have any business. There is no more need of me to be present here. There are no more businesses to call us together and so I must now declare in order for me to exit this debate, I have no other alternatives but I beg to support.

Mr SITAI: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for allowing me to join colleagues in participating in the debate of the motion of sine die moved by the Honorable Prime Minister on Tuesday this week.

Sir, I consider it my duty to take this opportunity to first of all thank my good people of East Makira for re-electing me back to Parliament to serve them. I thank them for their confidence and trust. I appeal to them all that the election is now over and so we should now work together for the betterment of our constituency.

Having said that, allow me too, Sir, to comment on a number of issues I would like to raise in this debate, some of which have already been covered by Honorable colleagues who have been spoken before me.

Just a brief comment on the statement of government policy delivered by the Prime Minister on Tuesday. I would like to us to look at that statement objectively and with some optimism, although it is said to be completed in terms of submissions from the various factions that have formed the Grand Coalition.

I say that for one reason. That reason is I note that some of those policy directions are matters that have already been put into place by the last government, and their continuity is important, although there may be additions. This is the basis of the statement I have just made.

On that line, I am pleased to hear about decentralization. But I would like to call on the government not just to talk about it because we have talked about decentralization for so long. Let us make it real this time round even if we have to share the resources available to us, development funds what have we, and I would like my honourable colleague, my good friend, the Member for Aoke/Langa Langa who is now the Minister of Finance to take particular note of what I am saying.

Divide the budget and give us our share. Not only us but the other provinces as well all have plans. Let us make those plans real. For us in Makira and our sister province, Temotu, I am glad that some members or colleagues from my province are Cabinet Ministers in the government side, particularly my good colleague the Member for West Makira who is now the

Minister for Provincial Government and our other colleagues. Give us money. Give us the funds to build our boat infrastructure to serve our two provinces, to create that service and to create employment.

I am raising this only because we are now talking about decentralisation. There are other projects such as infrastructure and what have we. If we are going to be serious, I am calling on the government to look at these projects for these two sister provinces.

Another issue that I also wish to raise, which I am also happy to hear about, and now that we have this government in power, is the baby of our colleague, the Minister of Finance which those of us in the last Parliament tabled here for our discussion and there was approval of the new roadmap for the constituencies. I know the Minister will do it because he knows how to put it in place, and I am putting it back to him again on the floor of Parliament. He is responding to what I have said, but I want the government to make this real because I think it is an accepted fact that without the development of the constituencies, Solomon Islands will not be a nation. The 50 constituencies are the pillars of this nation because that is where 80% of our population live and that is where the resources are. We have come this far and have seen no developments and so this could be the way out.

My good Minister of Finance and the government lend me your ears on this one. Please include this in the final policy statement of the government.

Having said that, Mr Speaker, allow me also to say a word or two on some constitutional matters in relation to the now so called 'Black Tuesday' and other constitutional matters relating to participation of women in politics.

Let me begin by saying this. I would like to thank His Excellency the Governor General for his patience, his wise counsels and for very ably presiding over what was supposed to be only one Prime Minister's election. We ended up with two elections. Through his foresight it enabled our two colleagues who are now under Police custody to exercise their constitutional rights in their duties as parliamentarians by casting their votes. That shows to me that democracy is very much alive

in Solomon Islands. Thank you your Excellency.

Having said that, the other issue I would like to raise in a form of question is this: The experience we have had so far is quite trying. But I would like to talk like this. Where do we draw the boundary colleagues? Where do we draw the boundary between people's power and the authority and power of parliamentarians voting a Prime Minister as well as disposing of a Prime Minister?

I say this because what we have done has set precedence. This was already alluded to by our colleague MP for North Malaita in his debate yesterday. I just want to highlight it because what we have done, 48 of us or 50 of us will haunt us through these coming four years, and will also likewise haunt future parliamentarians of this nation. What has happened is very obvious that every time we do not want a Prime Minister we will change him through this kind of pressure. This is why I asked that fundamental question earlier on. It is something for us to be concerned about. It is something for us to rectify. We do that now next time we will do it until eternity, and do we want it to happen that way? I do not think so. It is now incumbent on us 50 Members of Parliament to rectify this situation through the constitutional means to put it right.

In this connection, Mr Speaker, I am calling on you to very quickly appoint the Constitutional Review Committee, the Standing Committee of Parliament comprising of members from both sides of the House, and task them to look at ways and means of putting this situation right.

For example, it has been aired in this Parliament in the debates that we have to look at the proper Westminster System where a party that returns a lot of members after any general elections is the party that should form the government. The Governor General should appoint the leader of the party to form the government. I believe that will also stop us from all sorts of lobbying and all sorts of things that are happening to us, which our people are so concerned about leading now to all sorts of accusations made against us.

Alternatively, I would like suggest, Mr Speaker, that after the general elections when

Members nominate the candidate for Prime Minister, we should allow the whole nation to vote for the Prime Minister like the presidential system. In that way it would be fair. What we are doing now is just like hijacking our authority. Are we going to allow for this to continue? As I have said, this is going to haunt all of us in the coming four years and the next parliamentarians who will come after us. I consider this as our duty to put it right.

Another issue in relation to the constitutional review committee is to revisit the idea that was also put to Parliament for consideration by my learned good friend, the MP for Aoke/Langa Langa, the now Minister of Finance in the last Parliament. Why not create open seats for women to participate in Parliament? When we vote for Members of Parliament in the constituencies, the idea that was proposed by my learned colleague was to also have open seats that at the same time people cast their votes they also vote for those open seats for women candidates. Can that be revisited through the work of the constitutional review committee to be backed up fully by the government of the day? Women could also take care of other issues relating to development of youth? Those considerations should also be taken into account.

Those are the constitutional aspects of what I wish to say in relation to 'Black Tuesday' as being aired now in Parliament for our consideration.

Mr Speaker, there are other matters too that I would like to touch on before I sit down because I have said that I would be brief. I thank the Prime Minister for committing our country back to the hands of our Almighty God. I fully appreciate and accept that. This is a Christian country. But what I would like to say is, that in itself is not enough. We have to cleanse our hearts from hatred, from jealousy and from what have we? We have to instil in our hearts respect for each other, respect for our cultures, tolerance, peace and good will.

I challenge us on the floor of this Parliament, the 50 Members of the House that we are the ones who should start this process, and the government to allocate enough funds to undertake meaningful reconciliation between our people. If we do not do that, this country

will never be normal again. Mark my words, Mr Speaker. I want us to consider this very seriously.

The last issue I would like to raise, Mr Speaker, is in relation to two points raised in the House by our colleagues who are now on the government side. I will begin with the comments made by my colleague Member for Temotu Nende who is now Minister for Foreign Affairs when he said this Parliament was hijacked by outside forces. Likewise the comments made by my good friend and colleague, the Member for Aoke/Langa Langa who is now the Minister of Finance, under privilege and he was privileged to express his concern about the use of Parliament Building to accommodating the riot gears and other weapons the Police used during the 'Black Tuesday'.

What I would like to say, Mr Speaker, is this, and I would like it to go down in the records that the saddest moment for me as a parliamentarian was what happened during that day. Whilst we have so much respect for this House, what some of us have called the soul of this nation, Solomon Islands, and concern for the points made and raised by my two colleagues, what is so sad about it in my view was the fact that our own people were stoning this building during that day. Have we forgotten about that? Have we? Is that the respect this House deserves to have? The soul of this nation, the highest law making body of the land, is that the respect it deserves?

And to make it worse some of us were held as hostages in this very House until six o'clock in the evening while some fortunate ones went out without even a touch on their skin outside there. What is going on Mr Speaker, may I ask? Is this the cooperation we are talking about? Is this the behaviour deserve of us leaders, the 50 of us? No wonder this Chamber is so divided and no wonder we are still pointing fingers at each other.

If I was in proper health condition I would have done what some of you colleagues have done. I would have gone out. We were held as hostages here. Unfortunately the media never highlighted this fact. They were interested in different things and not the fact that parliamentarians were held as hostages by their

very own people in this House, the soul of this nation.

Mr Speaker, bear with me if I have to say this. It is something that we must help our people to come to some understanding, and that is for all of us to respect this House.

Thank you Mr Speaker, for your patience, thank you honourable colleagues for your forbearance, and I support the motion.

Hon OLAVAE: Mr Speaker, thank you for allowing me the floor to contribute towards this sine die motion. Mr Speaker, before doing so, first of all with your indulgence I would like to extend my sincere thanks and gratitude to the Honourable Prime Minister for introducing the motion. I would also like to thank previous speakers who have contributed significantly towards the motion.

Mr Speaker, it would be remiss of me not to thank my good voters and people of South Vella La Vella, so may I take this opportunity to thank them as well for mandating me as their political leader for the second term in office.

Mr Speaker, this country is on its recovery and restoration stage in stabilising its law and order situation and revitalising its shattered economy. Therefore, Mr Speaker, the road ahead of us to tackle all those economic and other associated problems will take a long, long time prior to achieving full recovery.

My people of South Vella and the rest of the rural populace with due respect to all of you, what we have been reaping have been the bi-products of successive governments implementation of various policies for the last 27 years since we obtained our independence.

Mr Speaker, myself and other new Members of Parliament who have just joined as politicians have been having a very, very tough time to contribute in tackling all the financial and economical mess we have inherited. Therefore, my rural populace's patience and tolerance is expected to give us ample time under this government to shift its infrastructures and economic policies that will best suit you to participate fully in your endeavours to revitalise our ailing economy. In other words, Mr Speaker, the implementation of the new roadmap by this government, the bottom up approach policy will lead to reforms and

subsequent rural economy and national economic recovery.

Mr Speaker, with the vision this government has there is hope for our country and its people for the future. Sir, our country has wealth of resources to bank on. Our strength depends on formulating conducive economic policies to involve a wider spectrum of our population and foreign investors to convert these billions of dollar value resources into foreign exchange earnings for the growth of our economy that will realize or raise the welfare and standard of living for the people we represent.

Mr Speaker, our track records have shown us that despite the wealth of resources this country has since obtaining our independence economically we have been lagging behind other small forum island nations. That clearly reflects that successive governments even did not know their priorities. Their policies we have been adopting and implementing have been not been conducive to the economic growth of this nation. So where do we go from here Mr Speaker? How are we going to tackle or solve most of these problems?

Mr Speaker, are we going to continue with the same way of implementing our program of actions after the passage of future development and recurrent budgets year after year as we have been doing since we obtained independence?

These are the very questions we need to answer. If the way we have been implementing our policies have not brought us better results economically for all those donkey years, Mr Speaker, then what are the alternative approaches we are going to take?

Mr Speaker, our track record has shown us as well that better options have not been found by successive governments and political leaders since independence. That is why we have been throwing mud at each other, especially old politicians who have been serving now four to six terms as politicians in this House or in previous governments.

Mr Speaker, that has been the very reason our economy has been in tatters, and that has been the very reason why I changed my allegiance from the previous leadership to the government that I believe in now

(hear, hear)

that will bring about economic changes under its new roadmap, the bottom up approach, measures and policies.

Mr Speaker, this bottom up approach measures are mainly talking about decentralisation of infrastructure development to stimulate rural economic activities by the wider spectrum of our population and the private sector, which both foreign and local will participate under that will further stimulate exportable commodities for our foreign exchange earnings. Sir, only time will tell us the truth about what will happen in the future having all those ingredients for our economic growth are being put in place. So let us wait and see.

Finally, Mr Speaker, may I take this opportunity to extend my sincere thanks as well to RAMSI who has been stabilizing our law and order situation on their arrival almost three years ago.

Mr Speaker, I also thank donor partners for their supplementation of our efforts in revitalizing our shattered economy and so forth. This government, Mr Speaker, is going to cooperate with its donor partners and RAMSI to stabilise its law and order situation and its economic recovery programs as we go along on partnership basis. Together, Mr Speaker, we will change our country's law and order situation and our economy from worst to better in the future.

With these few contributions, I support the motion.

Mr LONAMEI: Thank you Mr Speaker, for allowing the MP for Maringe/Kokota the floor of Parliament to contribute to this very important motion.

Mr Speaker, before I continue, I would like to take this golden opportunity to convey to all the chiefs, youths, Mothers Union Members and all good people of Maringe/Kokota, my sincere and humble gratitude for giving me their confidence and trust to speak for them in this honourable House.

Mr Speaker, to those who have supported other candidates, I respect your decision and your choice. Now that the election

is over, I want all of us to work together for the good of our villages, wards and our constituency as a whole.

Mr Speaker, I would also like to thank the Premier of Isabel Province and also all the Isabel Provincial Assembly Members for their support and for the good work they are doing for the people of Isabel.

Mr Speaker, I would also like to thank the churches, especially the Diocesan Bishops, the Clergies and the Christian people for their continual pray of support as we will always need their prayers as we go along.

Mr Speaker, may I, in the name of the Tripod in Isabel, which means the Premier, the Bishop and the Office of the Paramount Chief, condemn in strongest term, the unlawful actions, looting and eventually the burning down of the Chinatown and other business houses in town. The Isabel people do not want and accept that type of ways and we urge the present government and responsible ministries to deal with those responsible accordingly with the laws of Solomon Islands.

Mr Speaker, may I convey, on behalf of the people of Maringe/Kokota and Isabel as a whole, our sympathy and sorrow to those who have lost their businesses and homes, especially the Chinese Community.

Mr Speaker, I am sick and tired of hearing the word 'corruption'. I am tired of heading statements like 'that Member is corrupt', 'that Member has been paid by so and so', 'that Member has been paid by Taiwan'. Mr Speaker, this side of the House has been especially labeled as corrupt. Mr Speaker, I too am looking for money. I want money but where is the money because I have not found any money. I want money to pay my campaign agents because at this time they are saying they have worked for nothing.

Mr Speaker, I have never been lobbied or lured like that. I deny all the corruptions labeled against this side of the House.

Mr Speaker, our voters are very sensitive this time. They are very sensitive and if they feel that their Members of Parliament are corrupt they are going to vote them out. They have done it, and that is why the 50 of us in here were seen as not corrupt. We are leaders they respect to represent them in here.

Mr Speaker, what really saddens me is that fact that some politicians point fingers or single out Taiwan. Mr Speaker, no Member of Parliament here will deny the assistance that Taiwan has given to them. Taiwan has helped us a lot especially with the RCDF and micro projects, and no one here in this Parliament can deny that assistance. Solomon Islands really need Taiwan.

Solomon Islands really needs Taiwan's money more than Taiwan needs Solomon Islands.

We in Isabel, Mr Speaker, have benefited from Taiwan. Taiwan has helped us purchase two of our boats, the M.V. Isabella and Estrella, and I believe and hope that Taiwan will give us another boat.

Mr Speaker, I believe the Taiwanese who are also here with us have heard the allegations leveled against them. They are human beings just like us and they have customs too, and they are really when they heard Solomon Islanders making such allegations on them. So I urge the government and the Minister for Foreign Affairs to apologise to the Taiwanese Embassy diplomatically and also in our custom way as well.

Mr Speaker, I would like to join other colleagues to thank RAMSI for their good work it has rendered to Solomon Islands. RAMSI is here to stay in full force. The army must stay here indefinitely. The army left and that is why we saw Chinatown being burnt down. Therefore, RAMSI must stay in full force here in the country.

Mr Speaker, I am sure RAMSI officers who have been posted to Buala in Isabel Province will agree with me that they are the happiest officers serving here in Solomon Islands. They are very happy to be in Buala and in Isabel. They want to keep coming back to Buala to renew their contract and so I believe they are very happy with us from Isabel. "Les long Isa moa".

Mr Speaker, during the tension when all exportable commodities went down, only Isabel sustained the Solomon Islands' budget through its logging operations. But when it comes to sharing of the benefits we are always left out. For more than 10 to 15 years ago, Mr Speaker, we have been left out. There are no

infrastructures, no roads, no improvements to hospitals, schools, clinics and what have you.

Isabel is one of the big provinces but because we do not produce more people and that is why you may think we are a small province.

Mr Speaker, with this present government and also having the Member for Gao/Bugotu in the government, we would like to see all projects for Isabel to be approved.

Mr Speaker, I think there is need to look at changing the formula of sharing benefits. Instead of looking at sharing the benefits according to population, we should base the sharing on each province's contribution to the national income.

The Holy Bible even says that "*The more you give the more you receive*". That is the Christian principle. But what is happening now is "The less you give the more you receive". No wonder we always twisted Christian principles and that is why bad things are happening to us.

Mr Speaker, being a new Member in Parliament, in my first meeting of Parliament I have the following experiences and surprises that I will never forget:

1. The riot after the MP for Marovo was elected Prime Minister on 18th April 2006. Mr Speaker, the Government was held hostage for more than six hours in Parliament while the Opposition walked away freely. It would seem to us that the riot has been well strategised.
2. The vote of no confidence. Some may say this is politics. But in my layman's point of view we know and understand what this means.
3. The movement of leaders (MPs) from camp to camp, from floor to floor. Again, others may say this is politics but from a layman's point of view we can also understand the type of people.
4. The decision by the Governor General to enable MPs in jail to vote. They are Members of Parliament and our learned lawyers said it is okay with the Constitution. In my layman's point of

view, in any future elections Members of Parliament can stay wherever they want maybe in their homes and still they can cast their vote. Ballot papers would be flown to me in Buala and I will vote from there.

Lastly Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the Prime Minister and his Cabinet. I look forward to working together with the government. I would also like to thank your good self, Mr Speaker, the Clerk and the staff of Parliament for your support and for the work in looking after Parliament Members.

To all the Members of Parliament, all the best in your endeavours in helping people in your constituencies.

Mr Speaker, may I end my debate with this short prayer: *‘Father forgive us for we are confused and also do not know what we are doing’*.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Hon VAHOE: Mr Speaker, thank you for allowing me to contribute to the motion of sine die.

Mr Speaker, I would like to join honorable colleagues of this honourable House to congratulate you for your successful election as the Deputy Speaker of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, as the new Minister for Communication, Aviation, Meteorology and Member of Parliament for Malaita Outer Islands Constituency, I wish to congratulate honourable Members of Parliament who retained their seats and the new ones who have made it to Parliament this time.

Mr Speaker, I also wish to take this opportunity to thank my predecessors who have been Members of Parliament for the Malaita Outer Islands seat in Parliament. Sir, they have done well and I on behalf of myself and my family wish to thank them for a job well done and also thank the people of Malaita Outer Islands for the confidence they have on me for electing me to be their new Member for Malaita Outer Islands. Mr Speaker, I wish to assure my people that in the next four years, I will do my best to serve them and the nation in the best of my ability.

Mr Speaker, let me turn first over to the unfortunate circumstances which shocked this nation as we start the business of this new House. It saddens me that such a thing should ever happen to our beloved nation. But let it be a grim reminder to all of us that as leaders it is very important for us to realise that whatever decisions we make in this House will have a direct effect on our people.

It is my prayer that as leaders we would ensure that our leadership brings about joy, peace, progress and prosperity instead of chaos, insecurity and an uncertain future.

At this point in time, let me take this opportunity to thank the Honourable MP for Marovo, for what I believe is a very difficult but painful decision, but an honourable decision made at a crucial moment in the political development of this nation.

Mr Speaker, my chiefs and my people have mandated to take my stand and be where I am today to serve their interests and not my own. As a new Member of Parliament, the events of the past weeks have shaken me and made me realise how important it is, that as leaders we must make a stand to stay away from wrong and unethical practices that against the beliefs and freedom to decide on behalf of the people I represent in this honourable House.

Mr Speaker, I believe that decisions must be made on principles rather than from opportunists who do not care about our beloved nation. Mr Speaker, I believe our people have spoken and as Members of Parliament, can we stop and listen to what they are saying?

I have decided not to be part of the problem and wish to remind honourable colleagues that our people are tired and sick of leaders who say one thing and do another. As a new Member of Parliament, I urge all politicians to collaborate in partnership for the advance development of our people and our nation.

Mr Speaker, as responsible Members of Parliament elected to the highest decision making institution in this land, I do sincerely hope that we will not disappoint our people in the next four years. Mr Speaker, it is my firm belief that all Members of this honourable House owe it to their families, voters, and members of their constituencies who have made the

honorable decision that will bring about change for the betterment of our people.

Mr Speaker, may I congratulate the decision taken by this side of the House which brought about the positive and immediate changes of joy and jubilation to the ordinary citizens of Honiara and the country as a whole. These are signs of good things to come and I wish to invite those on the other side of the House to open their hearts and minds to let us work together for the good of our nation and our people who entrusted us with this awesome responsibility.

Furthermore, I wish to clarify to my people of Malaita Outer Islands and the nation, my position in the light of my arrest during the eve of the curfew. Frankly speaking, I have breached the law and let the court of law justify its course. Sir, I also wish to iron out any speculation that I was drunk. That was totally misleading.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, may I thank all Christians throughout the nation for their prayers for the peaceful election of the Prime Minister, the MP for East Choiseul.

Mr Speaker, may I acknowledge the good people of Solomon Islands in one way or the other to assist our Chinese Community for the sad events caused on the 18th April 2006.

Mr Speaker, may I acknowledge the Clerk to Parliament and all her staff for a job well done. Sir, lest I forget may I also acknowledge my good people of Malaita Outer Islands for their contribution to the country's economy in terms of marine products.

Sir, with all due respect, I support the motion.

(applause)

Mr Deputy Speaker: Before I give opportunity to the Member for Rennell/Bellona, I would like to bring the attention of all Members to Standing Order 32(5) and let me quote: *'A member shall whenever possible avoid referring to another member by name'*.

Mr GUKUNA: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me time to contribute to this sine die motion moved by the Honorable Prime Minister. Mr Prime Minister; please accept the sincere

congratulations of my people, the people of Rennell and Bellona on your appointment as our new Prime Minister.

Mr Speaker, let me take this time to first express my heartfelt gratitude to the people of Rennell and Bellona for giving me the opportunity to be here in this Honorable House.

Mr Speaker, the good people of my Constituency had used recent elections to give me the Authority to speak on their behalf and be at their service over the next four years. I sincerely thank them for the confidence and trust placed on me.

Mr Speaker, I want to assure my good people that I came in here with an agenda that only seek to improve the living standards in our beautiful islands of Rennell and Bellona. And in thanking my good people, let me also assure them that I accept the mandate they have given me with great honor and humility. This mandate I will carry without fear and I will not allow it to be intimidated nor will I ever trade it for mere political convenience.

Sir, I wish to also assure my good people that I will continue to allow my participation in the proceedings of this House to be guided by your leadership Mr Speaker, a capable leadership of wide experience, very well versed with the Standing Orders of this House as well as supporting provisions of our National Constitution. I wish therefore to congratulate you, on behalf of my people, your people too, for being re-appointed unopposed to the Chair Mr. Speaker.

To effectively represent my people in this, Sir, I will also allow my involvement in national politics as well as my political affiliations in this House to be determined only by the principles of Good Governance and Accountability. This is despite of the unimaginable way in which we have been inducted into the politics of this Honorable House

Two weeks ago, the brand new MPs in this house were supposed to be taught how to behave in this House, how to be useful materials in this House. We were supposed to be put through normal process that the other 25 MPs had the privilege and benefit of going through to learn the procedures of this House. As we all know that did not happen. Instead we were

dragged through a politically driven agenda, a baptism of political-fire that has not been seen in the history of this country.

Mr Speaker, what happened three weeks ago followed an intense misinformation campaign that was seen by some members of the Opposition then now in government as the only way of assuring victory in the face of eminent political defeat they could not accept in any form.

As a result of this misinformation, Mr Speaker, we now have a new government coming into being against a background of false allegations, racial intimidations and unprecedented violence.

As we all know, Mr Speaker, out of the violence and backstabbing of the past weeks, this new Government came out and dressed quickly in the name of the people and is now known as the people's government and talking about swift changes.

Sir, if they had to go through all these troubles just to come out at the end to say that this new Government is simply here to change things, then why the desperation? Why did they have to do all those things in a desperate manner? Why has it been necessary to resort to violence? What are these changes that are so important that they used all their muscles just to topple a Government duly elected through the democratic laws of this country?

Can we accept that we have opted to destroy our reputation; that we have opted to destroy investor confidence and humiliate our own people for the sake of changes that are not even proven, let alone putting them on paper yet Mr Speaker?

The sad part is whether we like it or not, Mr Speaker, we must now accept the depressing truth that violence is a way of overthrowing governments in this country has now become a part of this country. It happened twice over the past three changes of government.

But may I ask, what are we going to really change Mr Speaker? Mr. Speaker, the new government has come in with promises, glaring promises that we have heard before, they are not new. We have heard these promises said in this House! In fact we are accustomed to them so much that we really do not expect anything to change or fulfilled for that matter.

Mr Speaker, I forewarn that the changes this new Government promised will not and will never change this country. Even with your best policies nothing will ever change. Mr Speaker, what this country needs is a change of attitude in our people. This country has an attitude problem. If you want to see this country change then change the attitudes of our people. Put in policies that will change the attitude of some of our people. Once this one single aim is achieved we will have tolerance and we will have acceptance in this country. This country will prosper and we will forever live in peace. If there is no change in attitude nothing will change.

We can put in the best redistribution policies, rural development policies and sustainable policies but some will not work. As I have said the only policy that will work is one that is aimed at changing the attitude of our people.

Mr Speaker, some prominent members on that side of the House had smeared us with outright lies alleging that we as a government are very corrupt. How dare you accuse us of that? Mr Speaker I am calling on them to, please, produce the evidence. This country needs to address corruption and you have accused us of being corrupt. Go ahead and produce the evidence.

I am calling on the Honorable Ministers of Planning and Foreign Affairs especially who openly stated in the SIBC that this House is corrupt to produce the evidence. Be a man and report us to the Police. The Police is waiting on you. Talk to them if you really have the evidence that we are corrupt.

If you have any concern at all for the people who have been directly affected by the recent violence, I call on you to please call the Police, and investigate us. There is need to address this issue of corruption. You are now in government and so you have all the instruments and power to address corruption.

But, Mr Speaker, corruption is not something new to this country. This country is known in the region as one of the corrupt countries. Corruption has been part of this country for a long time. So why is it becoming a pressing issue now Mr Speaker? Why is it that the issue of corruption becomes so urgent that

we needed to hijack democracy and use violence to make a point?

Let me state here, Mr Speaker, that the issue here is not corruption; it is not the need for change either. The issue here is the need to quickly put in place a government that will do all it can to protect indicted individuals. Some of these indicted individuals are the big fish. You now have the chance to catch them. We have been waiting for you to catch them.

Mr Speaker, I voted for the last Prime Minister because my judgment had directed me to do so. I was not paid by the Chinese Community to vote for him as alleged by the other side of the House. I did not receive a single cent from them to vote for the Honorable Member for Marovo as prime minister. Those who claimed that we have been paid by the Chinese must now brave up and again go to the Police. Your allegations had resulted in senseless destructions. Your allegations had directly incited the mob that besieged this Parliament House. I call on you again to please go to the Police to present your evidence.

What is interesting to note is that some of the MPs who made these allegations are the ones that we have been talking about in the public over past years as the most corrupt in this House. They are not new people, and we know them. Why do they have to point fingers?

Mr Speaker, one other sad reality of the recent violence is the fact that those who took part in the violence and looting of Honiara are active members of the SDA Church, the SSEC Church, the Anglicans, the Catholics and many other Christians in Honiara, people who go to church every weekend.

I am ashamed to say here, Mr Speaker that one of the ring-leaders of the mob that destroyed Chinatown is an active Pastor of the Church that I am a part of. I am calling on this particular Pastor to return his loot to the Police. And I am also calling on the authority of the SDA Church to immediately dis-communicate him from the Church.

I am also calling on other Christians who helped looted Honiara to be more loving. You need to rededicate your lives so that you can live as true Christians. Right now, all I can say is that you are full of evil by helping yourselves with stolen goods, you are bringing

up your children with stolen goods, and so you are the purest of all hypocrites.

Sir, as if the assault on Chinatown was not enough, some members of the Government now including those who had lost recent elections continue to accuse the Republic of China (Taiwan) of facilitating corruption in this country.

Mr Speaker, what intrigues me is that these allegations came straight from people, from former MPs who have directly benefited from ROC funding to this country. The least that they should do is appreciate that ROC had given them money that they had used to enrich themselves.

Mr Speaker, I can tell you who is corrupt. Those who are corrupt are people who have used the RCDF and the micro-funds to buy themselves vehicles, to build themselves houses, to send their own children for overseas education. These are the corrupt people. That has nothing to do with us, especially new MPs in this honorable House.

Some of them lost recent elections because they may have misused these funds that instead of helping their people they helped themselves.

As I said, Mr Speaker, the least we can do is to appreciate the role that the ROC has played in this country. We should appreciate the assistance that the Government and the good people of the Republic of China had graciously given to us. What we have given them in return is not good. It is unchristian and is not worthy from us.

Let me say again that the ROC and its people do not deserve your criticisms. But they deserve respect in return for their uttermost respect for this country.

Mr Speaker, our business with the ROC is our business and we should never allow anyone else dictate this. Leave it to us and we can deal with it, and please for once respect the decisions made by politicians in this country.

Mr Speaker, with all my due respect, I believe that what happened in Honiara on April 18, 2006 must have something to do with the fact that some MPs in this house may have overstayed in this House far too long.

With due respect again, Mr Speaker, and apart from them losing their usefulness at the

national level, they have claimed this Parliament as their own. They thought that they own it and have become experts in our Constitution. They twisted it to suit them. And so they hijacked the proceedings of this House and sought to intimidate the judiciary as a way of getting what they want.

Sir, what is very dangerous for us as a country is that some of them have become power hungry. They have developed a dirty thirst for power. They have used all means including a direct assault on the principles of this House for the sake of taking power.

Mr Speaker, we could be breeding anarchy in this very House. We must not miss the writings on the Wall, as someone has pointed to some other writings earlier, in saying that give them the opportunity, and one of them could rise as a ruthless dictator.

Mr Speaker, I have a feeling that we could be wasting our time looking far for the root causes of what happened on April 18, 2006 - the root causes of the political upheavals we have just went through. Mr Speaker, we may don't need to look far because most causes are right here in this House

Mr Speaker, the good people of my Constituency fully support the good work of RAMSI in this country. RAMSI is the best thing that has ever happened to this country for the last three to four years. We should all support RAMSI that it must be here for sometime.

RAMSI is not here to take away this country as one colleague said earlier. It will leave when things normalize. It has no intention of taking over the sovereignty of this country. If I were to make a choice between RAMSI and sovereignty, I would rather have RAMSI. RAMSI can stay here as long as it wants, and its good work must continue. What RAMSI has achieved, no right-minded leader in this House will oppose.

Mr Speaker, my people also support the good work of our local Police. I strongly urged them to continue their investigations into the root causes of the events of the past weeks, and I do hope that they will soon bring those perpetrators to justice. Because unless that is achieved there will be no true justice.

Mr Speaker, in conclusion I would like to wish the other 49 MPs all the best as they go home to see their people after tomorrow. A safe journey back home and we will see each other again.

Mr Speaker, thank you and I support the motion.

Mr TANEKO: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for allowing me the floor of Parliament to contribute to this very important motion of sine die on behalf of my people of Shortlands and on behalf of everyone of us in the Chamber this morning.

Mr Speaker, first I would like to thank my people of Shortlands for giving their support and confidence by reelecting me to this House of Parliament to represent them as their father for the second term.

Mr Speaker, before I continue on with the sine die motion, let me draw this House's attention to the message in 2 Chronicles 7: 14, and I quote, "If my people which are called by name, shall humble themselves praying and seek my face and turn their wicked ways, then will I hear from Heaven and will forgive their sins, and will heal their land".

Mr Speaker, I stand here on behalf of the nation and my people of Shortlands I can hear a lot of things, which I do not want to repeat them. This Parliament House is the house of the 50 Members to rule and reign on behalf of the nation Solomon Islands. We are decision makers, we are peacemakers mandated to be peacemakers of this nation Solomon Islands.

The incidents of the 18th April which occurred in here, which most of the speakers have mentioned and I don't want to repeat, is evidence of the seeds we have planted. The Bible says that "whatever seeds we plant whether good or bad will be reaped by ourselves".

I would like to appeal in this House, to all 50 Members of Parliament to have new sets of mind, new visions so that we can be visionary in our minds in order to serve the nation Solomon Islands to our best. That is all that is needed.

We will still sing the same tunes, the new Members, half of the members in this House are new members. Half is 25 members

because there are 50 Members. Let us stop singing the same song, and change.

As the MP for Rennell/Bellona has said our attitude is the problem in this nation. If that is true, what are we going to do? Change our attitudes, repent, and turn away from wicked ways as model leader of this nation.

Mr Speaker, why not allow the churches to come in here and preach to us and encourage us. Mr Speaker, I would like to thank my people, church leaders and chiefs for putting this microphone to my lips so that my voice can be heard on behalf of my people of Shortlands and on behalf of the people of Solomon Islands. Mr Speaker, all Members in here must be models in the streets and in the homes.

Mr Speaker, in 1982 when I came back and landed here in Solomon Islands as a young boy, I supported the PAP for one reason. And that is the quality and integrity of leadership of those in the PAP. I joined PAP since 1982, which is about 24 years now, simply because of that reason. I support that Party until now.

Mr Speaker, I went and flew the flag of PAP. I would like to tell the House that the PAP does not give me any money to campaign.

So many of us in here talk about corruption, many Members in here, but I would like to tell my people of Shortlands that I live in my own house, I do not sleep in hotels, I eat my own food, and I throw my ballot paper into the box of the God's given Prime Minister.

I was not paid by the Chinese, and I stood on my principles. This is my second term in Parliament, I stay at my house and I go and put my ballot paper into the box of the man I trust will lead, rule and reign and change Solomon Islands in the way that God wants.

Mr Speaker, this is the House, the very House that God has given to us the 50 Members. We have to change the nation according to our hearts. What is in your hearts? Is it hatred, destruction, looting? That is somebody's seeds, which is the seed that must be destroyed. Uproot that sin in order for the nation to rule and reign for the betterment of Solomon Islands for the future.

The people are suffering, Mr Speaker, the people out there who have given us the power, the supreme power for you and me to come and be noisy in this House. This is the

man with broken trousers, empty bag, no money, the poor man waiting for us to deliver services. He is waiting for the 50 Members who are responsible to deliver services to him.

Yesterday the Minister for Health mentioned that his constituency has never seen health services. Why? It is because somebody responsible has not been visiting that constituency to change his clinics and his schools.

Sir, I am talking in here after being in Parliament for the last four years. If you go and see there are no schools, there are no two storey buildings because somebody has forgotten to do his job. This is the job of 50 Members, and not only the Shortlands.

Mr Speaker, let us change our attitudes because people are crying and all they want to see is for services to be delivered. .

Here I want to thank the Prime Minister for the bottom up approach he mentioned in his statement. One of the engineers of that bottom up approach is the person now speaking. Let those people who put in their ballot papers see the benefits and change the nation. Do you not want copra? We talk and talk but when are we going to stop singing the same tune in this House.

Our economy is the resources in Solomon Islands. Let us forget what is from outside. We have timber, fish, cocoa, bechedemer and trocus. These are our resources. We are singing outside of the borderline and that is why we have become beggars. This is not the time for beggars but it is the time to change the nation with our own resources. Let us not look far. We are looking far, Mr Speaker, and that is why we complain and we criticize because we have become beggars depending on handouts.

Sir, I thank ROC which has received a lot of criticisms. My friends, ROC money has assisted a lot of people, our poor people in Solomon Islands. Poverty is on land in Solomon Islands, but we can rebuild, we can change Solomon Islands to be resourceful and have blessings because Solomon Islands has abundant of resources.

Mr Speaker, we have been talking and talking. This is my second term and if I do not see any change in Shortlands, if I do not see the

classrooms change, clinics change, income generating to change then it will be a sad story for my people for my third term.

This is the house to make the necessary changes. This is the House to share the wealth. There is inequality there. The Minister for Planning of this new Government, please go and send your technical people rather than sitting in air conditioned rooms. Send them so that they go and see the needs of the Shortlands people.

The Minister of Education should go and have a look because there are no classrooms, no second storey classrooms, but where is the multimillion dollar in the 2006 development budget? It is millions of dollars which this side has budgeted for and approved.

The Minister for Health, Infrastructure and Development, please distribute the wealth equally. There must be equal sharing of the wealth because only then will we bless the people and the people out there, the grassroots will feel, see and touch the blessings that this House is giving to them.

All the budgets are blessed in this House and therefore when blessed they must be shared equally so that the people out there in the rural areas who drop their ballot papers for you, who give you the supreme power for you to come in here, to make decisions, then we must fair and just before we can see true peace in the environment of Solomon Islands. There is no other way.

The Bible says in Proverbs 29:4 that “An honest ruler makes the nation strong”. I believe the Prime Minister will help the people of Solomon Islands and we are behind you Mr Prime Minister. We will pray for you, we will support you but please listen to the revelation of the one who puts you to that highest office because only then can we change the nation. The nation will only change when we listen to revelations that come from above. If a human being on earth comes and pulls you by the ear and you listen to him you are surely going to make a wrong decision.

Mr Speaker, I am glad that I am back in this House for the second term. I am crying and sad because it is almost one month that I have not visited my people who gave me the power on the April 5th to come and stand in here. I came here expecting to go back and visit them

just after one week. However, we had differences and so we destroyed. We say all sorts of things like corruption, bribery and all these things.

Mr Speaker, I am one who has remained faithful on your side. There were 18 of us in the PAP but now how many are left. Only four of us are left. Why? It is because some have already left to go to the other side. Why did you run away from us? You should be here so that we vote for our Prime Minister. Why are you unfaithful to your party? Why did you run away? What good things do you find on that side? You should apologize and say sorry then we ballot and select the paper.

Mr Speaker, Proverbs 11:14 also says, “A city without a wise leader will end in ruin; a city with many wise leaders will be kept safe”. That is us, the 50 Members and so let us make the decision for the betterment of our nation, our children, our grandchildren. That can only be done here in this House and no other place. This is the highest authority that makes law, this is the chamber that legislators come to make laws. The Constitution is enacted here, the Westminster System is approved and passed in here. If we see that those systems do not fit our cultures and are not appropriate for us, then this is the place to change, this is the place to amend it.

The law of the land belongs to the 50 Members in this House. It belongs to all of us in here. Some of you in the House now are lawyers, and so please see if there is need for us to revisit our laws then revisit it. If we see that something needs to be fitted into our constitution then we have to do it.

I am glad that new Members who are here do have that new vision; they have visionary minds and new ideas which must be put forward here. Some of us in here have been around for too long, but the man now speaking is not yet, I want another four more terms to be in this House.

I have a lot of vision in my mind that I should change the nation to a peaceful country as I have the heart for this country. All 50 members are parliamentarian members for Solomon Islands. No matter I am from Solomon Islands but I have a heart for the nation. I have to have a big heart so that we can be one in unity

because otherwise you are only thinking about your own people. Doing so will enable us see the nation as a whole as leaders of this country.

I was very sorry to see the incident that happened on Tuesday 18th April 2006. Members of the Honiara City should go out and talk to their voters not to throw stones at the Parliament Building. They should talk to them in a loving and kind way. I had a feeling that day that we should not spoil the election of the new Prime Minister and our House because no one goes out.

Mr Speaker, we are leaders and being a leader is a painful thing. A leader is like a pilot. A pilot took off in his plane in the morning on a nice sunny day, and when he is half way through his destination dark clouds started to form. In such a situation the pilot is the one to make the decision whether to turn back or to continue on to his destination. It must be him alone to make the decision. That is leadership and leadership is painful. It is a sacrifice and is painful. But when making that decision you have to have a heart so that you can bring justice to the maker of the decision.

I now come to development. There is development here in the budget that the government approved. There are lots of funds here. Last night I attended the European Union Day and I know that the EU has offered almost a billion dollar to support this nation. The Minister for Planning, please look forward into fairly distributing that wealth to the 50 constituencies of our nation because only when the distribution is fair to our nation and country that we will have a peaceful Solomon Islands.

Some Members who have already spoken stated that their provinces and constituencies are forgotten. I want the Minister for Education, Health and Planning to visit my place as well. I am a man from the borderline. You go and see for yourself. The development ministries must send technical people to go and witness first hand with their own eyes and then come back, analyze the needs of the constituencies and then fairly distribute the wealth according to the needs. That is how I see it.

Mr Speaker, we in this House must be serious, and serious in a way that we can rule this nation. Our nation is totally dependent on

the decision makings of this Parliament House. The problem we have is our own problem. We have to accept it. That is strength to us so that we do not repeat the same problem again. We must not repeat this problem. In 10 to 20 years time we must not have this problem again because they are harmless Chinese business people.

On behalf of my people of Shortlands I want to say sorry to the business people. They are blessed people because they are the neighbors that God has brought them in to come and help our nation. They just a minority and harmless business people and yet we destroyed them. I thank the leaders of this nation who have apologized for what had happened. But what is next? We leaders have to change our characters and attitudes. We should not wrongly influence our youths because they have very limited knowledge of what is going on. One very good example is the Constitution on Chapter 2 (1) on the freedom of rights. A lot of people in the villages do not understand what their rights are. When we tell the people about their rights and freedom without explaining truth and justice to them, they can take the law into their own hands. The result of that is what we have seen on April 18 in the burning of shops and buildings.

Under the same Chapter 2 on discrimination, what have we done about this? My friends, I can say that all foreigners who come into this country are only interested in one thing, and that is to invest in our country. This means you and I, and the nation has to look after them. They do not come into the country for nothing. But they love the people of Solomon Islands, they love the races, they love our languages and that is why they are here. They are not here just to enjoy themselves. They come here to bless us with their investments. They are loving people and that is why they are here in Solomon Islands. That must be the mentality and attitude.

Our Constitution says that there must be no discrimination of various races. Our own law says that. This is something that all of us must seriously consider so that we can live in harmony in the country with our other neighbors. We must love people from other nations and races.

Solomon Islands is a country with only nine provinces. And I thank the Prime Minister for mentioning decentralization of developments, which is very true. Urban drift is getting bigger and bigger and is becoming a big problem.

I think we have to enact a law that says people who have nothing to do in the provinces should not come and settle in alienated lands in Honiara. Having such a law will help reduce criminal activities in Honiara. What is happening now is that people settle on alienated or TOL land in the City and are without jobs or are unemployed and this is where the problem begins. Let us wake up to this reality and see what we can do about it.

Sir, I fully believe that decentralization the government mentioned today must be taken up so that developments are decentralized to the rural areas. This will make people stay where they are.

Sir, I think we should have two houses like the lower and upper houses. We can reign and rule wherever we are but it is coming because the government is thinking of approving the State Government, which I think is the best for the future but we do not know.

Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the newly elected Prime Minister and I hope that he will continue to lead this House in his leadership to lead us. This side of the House will be your watch dog but we will support you as well.

Mr Speaker, I would like to thank you for being elected as the Deputy Speaker of this House. I also would like to thank the Speaker of the House and his staff for continuing to do a good work.

I want to appeal to my people in the Shortlands to please continue on with your good work. Even though we might suffer and have lots of pain, but I believe we must continue to work together supporting each other and support our government in our prayers, support our leaders (50 MPs) in our prayers. You need them too and so you help us. That is my appeal to my people and the nation of Solomon Islands.

Sir, this nation belongs to you, you are the owner. We own Solomon Islands. We own the cultures and customs and so let us respect the norms and cultures of other provinces. Only

then can we be able to share unity, love and harmony in our nation.

To all Christian churches in Solomon Islands, please let us encourage our people as we are a so-called Christian country, we must be seen in action as Christian. Only then can we encourage our nation to be one nation.

Sir, I do not want the nine provinces to be divided. We must be one as a family. We are not many. Our population is very small with more than 400,000 and so we need each other. We need to walk shoulder to shoulder with each other. We need to bless each other. We need to intermarry so that we become one because we are a very small family.

With these few remarks thank you and God will continue to bless this nation. Sir, I support the motion.

Sitting suspended for lunch break

(Debate on the sine die motion continues)

Hon TORA: Mr Speaker, thank you for giving me this opportunity to take the floor as the first speaker this afternoon to contribute briefly to this motion of sine die.

Mr Speaker, as we all know this motion is a customary motion normally moved by the government or Prime Minister to allow Members of Parliament say what they want to say in this honourable chamber. I therefore, Mr Speaker, would like to thank you for giving me this opportunity.

Sir, first of all I would like to convey my thanks to the chiefs, church leaders and the people of my constituency of Ulawa/Ugi. They deserve a vote of thanks from their Member of Parliament. This afternoon I thank them for the trust and confidence they placed on me in electing me once again to come and represent their voices in the National Parliament.

Mr Speaker, I bring with me this afternoon to all 50 Members of Parliament including yourself, Sir, greetings of peace from my constituency from all my good people out there.

I would like to congratulate on behalf of my people the successful election of our new Prime Minister and his Government. I also would like to congratulate the honourable

Speaker of the National Parliament for a successful election to retain his seat and yourself, Sir, as the Deputy Speaker of the National Parliament.

Mr Speaker, this afternoon I reserve that it is still premature for me to dwell on other things. I would only like to convey my words of thanks to the Churches, the NGOs, RAMSI, the business houses, those working in ships, doctors and those caring for sick people, and the list goes on. I would like to thank them for the important services they have rendered to the people and this nation as a whole.

Sir, I cannot forget the Clerk to National Parliament and her staff for making things possible, especially for Members who resided in respective constituencies and those who reside in Honiara to come and attend this very important meeting of Parliament. Thank you the Clerk.

Sir, I would also like to thank the machinery of the Public Service, the public offices. They are very important and deserve words of thanks from this floor of Parliament. I thank the Permanent Secretaries right down to ancillary staffs.

Mr Speaker, lest I forget I also would like to thank the trade unions that exist in this country. Without the existence of trade unions the terms and conditions of the work force cannot be improved.

Mr Speaker, allow me to move on. The specific subject I would like to contribute on this afternoon is peace. I was a former Minister of Peace in the last government and I see peace as very important. Without lasting peace in this nation there would not be any developments. I look at peace as very important. And I must tell you, Sir, and the nation that peace in this country is still fragile as far as I am concerned. I believe the new government will treat peace as first priority in its program of action.

How would we sustain peace in this country? I am glad to hear the honorable Prime Minister outlining this in his policies, especially in decentralization of developments in the rural areas. I believe this is very important. That is the only way we can sustain peace in this country by decentralizing of developments in the rural areas.

A lot of programs for peace in this country, I know some of them have been implemented by the last government by my Department. But as I said it is still a long way for us, and this is in regards to peace in this nation. But first of all Mr Speaker, all the 50 Members, all of us who are sitting down here in this honorable House, we are the ones who must have peace in our hearts first. It is us. And then peace in our immediate families and then extend it to our neighbors. I know that if you and I not have peace in our hearts how can you have peace with your brother or sister that you do not know about?

Mr Speaker, I am one of the people who has spent my life time in Honiara. I started work in Honiara in 1971 until this very day and I want to say that I do not have any enemies in town. I believe that is the reason why when you were Prime Minister you appointed me to look after this very important department as the former Minister of Peace. You are not wrong, Sir, for putting me there for you have chosen the right man.

Mr Speaker, when we talk about peace in our country, I think this is the way that we should go. We start from within ourselves and then to our families, children and wives making sure that they also must have peace, which is very important and that is what I believe.

Mr Speaker, this is a big challenge, not only for the government but for all of us here, the 50 Members of Parliament. We want to see total lasting peace for this nation. This is my very strong conviction, and I would like to see our country go back to our way of living in the past whereby we eat together in one pot and one plate. Nowadays I see that is fading away. When you go pass another one who is eating just looks at you. Is that the way to treat our brothers and sisters?

The advice I received when I was a little child, which I still uphold until today, is advice that comes from the Bible. My grandfather advised me saying, 'grandson you must remember that God created you and me and so if you condemn your brother or sister then you are condemning God who is our creator'. All of us in here are made in the likeness or image of God. But again a man can make mistakes in this world. This nation really needs this teaching. I

would like to appeal to the Prime Minister and his government to please treat peace as very important in our country.

Mr Speaker, I would like to move on and raise some of my concerns and observations made last year on education. Some students in my constituency came crying to me saying to me as their Member that they were left out from the selection to undertake tertiary studies. They showed me their results, which is much better than those who were selected. I want to see fair selection to be done by the Ministry of Education so that it is fair to all of our children in the country. I do not mind, Mr Speaker, regardless of where a student comes from but as long as it is fair, and this is very important. If these students are left out where are they from? Are they from other outside countries or from Solomon Islands? They are the human resources in Solomon Islands, and I want to see fairness across the board.

Even our teachers too, Mr Speaker, their pay structure is very poor. They spent quite a number of years training at the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education but when they come out to teach they bitterly complain about their salary because it is very low.

I talk on teachers' salary because my wife has been teaching for almost 27 years now but even cleaners in the office here are getting much better salaries than the teachers. I am very sorry about this, Mr Speaker, and that is why at the beginning of every school year you will find teachers still hanging around not going back to their schools.

Why, Mr Speaker? They are saying that their salaries are very low and so what are they going to eat at the school so why bother going back to school. It saddens me a lot because at the beginning of the first semester this year I have to pay ration worth \$32,000 to start off the Pawa Provincial Secondary, a secondary school at the Makira/Ulawa Province. This is because I have a heart for the students who are our children from all over the country. If I am a selfish man I will just say the food is only for students in my constituency. But I am not that type of leader.

Mr Speaker, this is very important and I want those responsible to take note of this and look at the pay structure of our teachers because

this is one thing to boost the morale of teachers in their teaching and will make them attend to their work. But if we always let them down, and parents complain, and who are these parents, it is none rather but leaders, and therefore we must do things fairly for all the work forces in our country.

I am one person who always feels sorry for people who work and are getting that kind of salary. They cannot survive in this town by getting such salaries.

Mr Speaker, let me move on. Our only national tertiary institution is the College of Higher Education. Last week I went there and look around thinking the hostels there were maintained, but to my dismay they were just the same since I left that place.

No wonder the Director of the College of Higher Education wants to enter politics, but I am sorry he did not succeed. A total overhaul is necessary, if the Minister of Education could take note, a total overhaul of the College of Higher Education starting from the staff. Only then can we see improvement there.

Sir, I used to be in-charge of the Students Welfare Services Division for three years, and I tried my best to do something, but at that time as we all know we have financial problems and so nothing is done.

Some of the students live with relatives in town. But I tell you, Mr Speaker, this is giving a very hard time to their relatives, a very hard time, which leads to them not concentrating in their studies and that is why some of them failed. In order for them to go through their studies to be able to come out and get a job, make sure the students board at the school, they must reside on the campuses. This is very important Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, we in the Ulawa/Ugi Constituency are victims of one shipping company that is providing services to the constituency. In fact it is not providing services, but is taking more money out from the pockets of the people from my constituency, and this man is not from Solomon Islands but a foreigner.

Mr Speaker, I think that kind of service should be reserved for Solomon Islanders. I would like to suggest if the government can subsidize our local shipping companies so that

fare and freight charges are reduced to assist our rural farmers. I say this because this is the only way they can transport their produce from the provinces or villages to the main market center in Honiara. Honiara is the only place that our people want to come and sell their produces at. I would like to see the Government subsidizing local shipping companies in Solomon Islands.

Mr Speaker, I see this as very important that this kind of business or other business appropriate for Solomon Islanders must be provided by Solomon Islanders.

Mr Speaker, I would like to say sorry and I am crying from within my heart. I cannot repeat the history or the events that have gone past. But on behalf of my people of Ulawa/Ugi constituency I would like to give our apologies to the Chinese Community.

I think I was the first Member of Parliament to approach them when they were evacuated to Rove. I went and stand in front of them inside the classroom, and I talk to them on behalf of my people. As I talked to them I saw two ladies crying, and at the same time I saw those two ladies crying, Mr Speaker, the Member for Ulawa/Ugi was also in tears because I have a heart for people regardless of where they come from, what race they belong too, but because we are all human beings and one global family in our country.

As I have said, Mr Speaker, I do not want repeat history because it would be a waste of my time repeating it. But I would like to see all of us in here working together. Please as national leaders who are elected to enact laws for our country, we should sympathize for people who come to help us.

Sir, as I said I am not blaming anyone because sometimes people take advantage of a situation like this. Mr Speaker, thank you and to allow other members to contribute because I believe members from this side and that side would want a chance to speak and thank their people in this motion of sine die, I will end here.

With those few remarks, Mr Speaker, I support the motion.

Hon WAIPORA: Mr Speaker, thank you for allowing me to contribute to the motion of sine die moved by the Honorable Prime Minister yesterday. Mr Speaker, I will be very brief

because other Honorable Members must have time to say their bit.

Mr Speaker, up until 2001 I was standing here speaking as the Member of Parliament for Central Makira. Today I am now speaking as the Member of Parliament for West Makira. Mr Speaker, I am now getting too old and I do not know whether I will make it to East Makira.

First of all, Sir, I would like to thank the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker for your elections to the post of Speaker and Deputy Speaker, of the head of our legislature. They are jobs you well deserve.

Secondly, I would like to extend to the Honorable Prime Minister the profound appreciation and warm congratulations from my good people of West Makira for his successful election as the new Prime Minister of Solomon Islands. Honorable Prime Minister I can assure you of my peoples' continued support and prayers for you and your government and this Parliament as a whole.

Thirdly, Sir, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my humble and heartfelt thanks to the chiefs and the people of West Makira for their faith and trust on me by electing me to be their representative in this Parliament. I not only thank the people of West Makira, but also people in other parts of Makira who rendered their moral support and encouragement to me during the election period. I want to assure them Sir, that I am fully conscious of my responsibility as their Member of Parliament and that I will serve them as expected of me during the next four years and beyond.

Mr Speaker, West Makira produced the founding leader of the government of Solomon Islands who led the country into self government, and not only that he led this country into self government but also the longest serving Member in this Parliament during his time. In fact, Mr Speaker, this great leader never became an ordinary Member of Parliament until he died. He was always either a Prime Minister or Leader of the Official Opposition. He was called home to rest in 2000 when he was still the MP for West Makira and Leader of Opposition.

Sir, in that respect I must say that I feel very small and humble indeed to have taken up

the leadership role that this great man had left behind in the West Makira Constituency. I humbly ask that in any planning process of any government, in terms of development programs for this country, you must never forget and ignore West Makira.

Mr Speaker, we must thank God for being with us in the darkest hours of the last four weeks. We have had many sleepless nights because of confusion and uncertainty, but God said I will never leave you nor forsake you. As we have seen and experienced this promise is true and sure, through the very latest events of 18th April 2006.

Mr Speaker, people were crying for a change in government and the change has come. I believe this new government will cause real change the people desire and have been crying for in its next four years of reign.

Mr Speaker, in order to make a real change to happen to deliver services that people need at their doorsteps, both politicians and Public Officers must change and have the right attitude to work and be dedicated to their God given responsibilities.

Mr Speaker, this country calls for honest leadership now. What had happened on 18th April 2006 was a direct and strong resistance against a dishonest and corrupt leadership. It therefore calls on the government to come up with an anti corruption law as a matter of highest priority. This must be in place before the 2010 General Elections.

Mr Speaker, while there was widespread denial of corruption which the people went strike on during the last four weeks, I am not convinced to believe those denials are totally true. No, Sir, I don't believe that. Because Sir, I can only believe the devil I know than the saint I do not know.

Mr Speaker, people reacted on what they know yet the Opposition threw back blame on this side of the House who solved the problem when it took over power.

Mr Speaker, let me tell you the story. On the 12th April 2006, I and my colleague the Honorable Member for Temotu Pele arrived at the Henderson Airport and we were met and taken to the Honiara Hotel not by Parliament staff but by strange men. On arrival at the Honiara Hotel we were allocated a room each,

and then were briefed separately in our rooms. I was briefed by the MP for Ulawa/Ugi. I was told that after settling down I will be served with lunch and that while I am having my lunch some people will prepare some money to be paid to me.

Mr Speaker, when I heard that I began to wonder as to what is going on, because some people seem to have taken over the responsibility of the Parliament Office in paying Members of Parliament. Indeed, it seems that the Parliament Office has been moved to the Honiara Hotel and MPs accommodated in the Honiara Hotel had taken over the Parliament's accounts, if that is the case.

Mr Speaker, I hope they do not move your office down there. After 30 minutes the Honorable Member for Temotu Nende came and took us out to the Iron Bottom Sound, of course, without our luggages. It was our right camp and so we settled down.

Mr Speaker, this is a very shameful thing because we are playing around, not as National Leaders of the country but as fools. We do not respect each other as leaders. Practice of this nature must be stopped quickly before it gets out of hand.

Mr Speaker, if the two MPs for West Makira and Temotu Pele new to the group were treated in that manner then it means those MPs there in the Hotel must have been treated in the same manner as us. I do not know but that was what had happened to me and my colleague MP for Temotu Pele.

Mr Speaker, from day one my good friend the Honorable MP for Savo/Russells started to attack the Minister for Provincial Government, blaming and pointing fingers at everybody of different faults and failures that successive governments had gone through, forgetting the fact that his four fingers are pointing back at himself and only one pointing to the Minister for Provincial Government.

Mr Speaker, had it not been for RAMSI, the MP for Savo/Russells would not have been the Prime Minister for the full term as he always boasts about. Mr Speaker, but you are very lucky.

As I have said Mr Speaker, I do not want to stop others from talking, and so I am going to stop here. I do not think I will go on

but. But I must thank honorable Members who have contributed to the motion. I appreciate what I have said and I thank you for being very patient in listening to our debates, day in and day out. I wish also to thank all the Parliament staff for their help on MPs in their financial needs, accommodation and traveling, etc.

Mr Speaker, I thank the Clerk to Parliament for the hard work in preparing businesses for the daily meetings of Parliament.

With those few remarks, Mr Speaker, I support the motion.

Mr AGOVAKA: Mr Speaker, first and foremost I would like to take this opportunity to thank my people of Central Guadalcanal Constituency. To the paramount chiefs, chiefs, church elders, women, youths and children of Central Guadalcanal, thank you for your support and your trust in me to lead our people in Parliament.

Mr Speaker, to you the Member of Savo and Russells, may I also on behalf of the people of Central Guadalcanal Constituency congratulate you for being elected as Deputy Speaker of National Parliament.

To the Speaker, who is not here, on behalf of my people of Central Guadalcanal, I would like also to congratulate the Speaker for being re-elected as Speaker to the National Parliament. It is no coincidence that both sides of the House have seen it fit to nominate him unopposed. It shows our deepest respect for him. He is one of the greatest sons of Solomon Islands.

To the Member of Parliament for East Choiseul, I and my people of Central Guadalcanal, congratulate you on your election as Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands Government, Her Majesty's Government.

To my predecessor, I would also like to thank him for the services rendered to the people of Central Guadalcanal.

Mr Speaker, as a new Member of Parliament all the political lobbying caught me by surprise but never off guard. In my campaign before the election of the 5th of April 2006, I thought and advocate good governance, in particular the four elements of good governance – accountability, participation, credibility and transparency.

When I was elected to Parliament I was very jubilant, and when I came to Parliament I was full of enthusiasm in view of changes.

On the 18th April 2006, I certainly saw change. Not just mere change but dramatic change, and one I did not expect. The stoning of Parliament House, the sovereign House of this nation where laws are made, laws amended and laws passed.

The subsequent looting, destruction and burning of shops at the Point Cruz and later Chinatown, Kukum and Ranadi seem to be dissuasion here inside Parliament. This is a change from bad to worse. This is destructive change. Is this what we want in this country, Mr Speaker? In my mind, it is the last thing our country needs.

Mr Speaker, during the three days of looting, destruction and burning of shops in Honiara, my people's lives were disrupted. People of Central Guadalcanal were scared to come to the market to sell their products. They were scared to come to the hospital for health services. They were scared to come to the shops because of all of these criminal activities going on in Honiara.

Mr Speaker, and each time something happens in Honiara it affects the lives of my people in Central Guadalcanal. So much so that when I attended a meeting with my people on Saturday last week, some of them asked me saying when the other side of the House lost they burned the Chinatown, they looted and destroyed properties, but when your candidate, the honourable Member of Central Kwara'ae lost you did nothing. They asked me to stop the projects on Guadalcanal. They wanted to stop our projects, the gold mining project, the GPPOL and close down the logging companies. These are some of the radical thinking coming from the people.

The other radical thinking they have is to come and help those in the city to burn Honiara down. They want to burn Honiara down so that there is nothing here to attract people to come to Honiara so that people can go back to their provinces and develop their own provinces. These are the kind of radical thinking that are coming around and I am hearing from my people. But as a national leader I stopped them from doing so. We should not take the law

into our own hands but let the normal democratic process take its course. And as a leader I appeal to all of us to adhere to the laws of this country and protect the laws that we made for our people.

On the issue of corruption, Mr Speaker, there have been a lot of allegations about corruption. We talk about it in the streets of Honiara. We talk about it in the villages and right here in the Parliament House.

Let me say to Members of Parliament and to the nation that if there are any proofs or evidence of corruption by Members of Parliament, I strongly urge you to report the matter to the Police or the Leadership Code Commission. I am very pleased to hear the Prime Minister in his statement talk about setting up of an anti corruption committee. I think this is a very good committee to be set up and I urge him to quickly set it up to look into all these allegations.

On the issue of good governance, I am sad to say that I really question the wisdom of the government in appointing the two MPs who are my good friends in custody to be Ministers of the Crown and Her Majesty's Government. To me this is degrading the dignity of Her Majesty's Government, the Government of Solomon Islands.

One can say that unless proven in court a person is not guilty. So may I ask the question, is the Member for Marovo proven in court guilty on allegation of corruption? Was he taken to custody? If the answer is no, why were the Members now on the government side saw it fit to corrupt the minds of the people of Honiara to take the laws into their own hands and did what they did?

Mr Speaker, we have not given the MP for Marovo and his Cabinet the benefit of the doubt and the opportunity to lead the government. Straight after the election of the MP for Marovo as Prime Minister, he was condemned right from the start using Chinese and corruption as scapegoats for their own agendas. Where is natural justice?

A statement by the Prime Minister to strengthen the various commissions is very much welcomed. Of paramount importance is the Leadership Code Commission, and I urge

and I want to see, not just lip service but real action.

On the issue of reconciliation, Mr Speaker, I think this is of paramount importance to Solomon Islands. For Solomon Islands to go forward in social and economical development there must be reconciliation between the two large islands of Malaita and Guadalcanal. Only by reconciliation can we move forward with no hindrance to social and economical development in our country.

I am pleased that the Prime Minister in his statement said that he will set up a truth and reconciliation committee. Let me tell you a story. I went to South Africa in Pretoria and I saw the Truth and Reconciliation Committee. There are millions of people in South Africa still going through the truth and reconciliation committee. How is this not done here in Solomon Islands with a very small population? Can't this be done? I urge the Prime Minister to go ahead with the setting up of the truth and reconciliation committee. Please do it as soon as possible.

The Government must also consider and seriously consider the submission by the Guadalcanal Province on reconciliation. This has been submitted sometime ago, and is yet to be looked into and so I would like this government to look at it and seriously consider the submission by the Guadalcanal Province on reconciliation.

On the issue of land, for us in Central Guadalcanal, and I believe the rest of Solomon Islands, land is our wealth. On top of this land we grow our food, root crops and trees. On top of this land we build our house that we call home. On top of this land flows river for our water. Underneath this land we have our mineral resources. So land to us on Central Guadalcanal is valuable and I believe the same can be said by the other islands.

I challenge the Minister of Lands and Survey to act and put into action the committee that has been set up to look into the sale of land on Guadalcanal, and to act on the wishes of the people, not only Guadalcanal but Solomon Islands.

Mr Speaker, I believe one of the object causes of the ethnic tension is land. The previous government has done nothing about it

and I urge the present government to resolve the land issue not only on Guadalcanal but in other islands as well.

Mr Speaker, I would like to see the government to make it a policy to register all customary land not only on Guadalcanal but in Solomon Islands so that people do not steal land, people do not sell land, people do not argue and fight over land because land is properly registered according to the tribes that own it.

Sir, I also ask the Minister for Lands and Survey to look at squatters, illegal settlers at the fringes of Honiara, the customary lands on Guadalcanal and make drastic action.

On the issue of mines and energy, I urge the Minister to quickly appoint the Chairman of the Task Force of Gold Ridge to advance negotiation with the landowners and government on issues of royalty, relocation and other vital issues. I believe there is a Cabinet paper in place that the government needs to act on it in relation to mining on Gold Ridge.

Sir, I also urge the Minister of Mines to seriously look at not only exploring minerals on Guadalcanal but also in other islands. Invite investors; invite exploration companies to look at resources on the other islands. And to you landowners; please allow your land for explorers to come and explore them so that they tell you what kinds of resources are in your land.

Sir, on the issue of law and order and RAMSI we have all seen what happened on 18th, 19th and 20th April 2006. I urge my friend, the Minister of Police and National Security to look at upgrading the standard of protective equipment for our Police Force.

We have seen our local Police inadequately equipped to control the crowd, not only here in Parliament House on the 18th but also in the streets of Honiara. The Government must also re-look at the term of engagement of the PPF in relation to controlling and defusing of violent crowds to safeguard properties, assets and lives from destruction.

Mr Speaker, I challenge the Minister of Police and National Security to assure the nation of the true policy of this government on RAMSI. The big industries are watching because if RAMSI leaves there will be no assurance for the safety of their investments.

Mr Speaker, we must not hide the fact but tell the nation because the nation wants to know the government's policy on RAMSI.

At this juncture, I would like to thank RAMSI for not only bringing law and order into this country, Mr Speaker, you yourself were involved in this and I thank you for your work. RAMSI has also brought about changes in the institution and mainly in the institution of finance.

On the issue of State or Federal Government, one of the demands of Guadalcanal is to have a state federal system of government. The Minister of Provincial Government must work hard towards achieving this because not only Guadalcanal but I believe Western Province and Malaita would also like to have a state federal government. It is the cry of my people and our wish to attain the state federal system of government.

Sir, I challenge the Minister of Provincial Government & Constituency Development to look at the resolution that is table before you, the leaders of Guadalcanal, the Summit of Guadalcanal Leaders at Balasuna have been tabled before the last Government but nothing has been done. I would like to challenge this government to look at it seriously and reconsider the resolution.

On the issue of agriculture, I would like to challenge the Minister of Agriculture to be more proactive, in not only assisting people in our rural area but to also train and inform the about the issue of agriculture.

I believe there is a Rural Agriculture Project coordinated by the Ministry funded by the World Bank. This must reach the rural people, not only of Guadalcanal but throughout Solomon Islands.

In concluding, may I say that the 50 Members of Parliament are elected to govern this country. Whether we are in the government side or in the Opposition side our duty to this nation must not be overtaken by our personal agendas.

I call on all the MPs to leave behind their differences and work towards betterment of our country. We must cooperate and respect one another as national leaders of this country. The people wanted change but let me say to the nation that if you want change you yourself must

change your attitude. Taking the law into your hand will not solve the problem but will only create more problems.

The nation and people of Solomon Islands want good government and Mr Speaker, I appeal to all the 50 MPs to work in partnership toward achieving this. We work towards better social and economic benefit and well being for the country and for the people of Solomon Islands.

And finally, on a sadder note and as a Christian, it saddens me to see the writing on the walls at Chinatown of rude remarks about the MP and the Member of Parliament for Marovo. Mr Speaker, the MP for Marovo is a chief and I am sad as a MP to see those writings in Chinatown. They swear at him. I imagine that if this kind of word has been written for some of the MPs here, I believe their people would have aggressively reacted and come to ask the government for compensation. I ask the government to seriously look into this and resolve this issue because I think the people of Marovo will come and ask compensation to the government because their MP has been sworn at and rude remarks made about him. I call on the government and us too to look at this and assist where we possibly can.

Mr Speaker, with these few remarks I would like to thank the Clerk to Parliament, the Parliament Accounts Department, those at the Kitchen and Staff of Parliament for looking after us in the few days we are here.

With these, I beg to support the motion.

Hon MANETOALI: Mr Speaker, thank you for allowing me to contribute to this sine die motion moved by the honorable Prime Minister.

First of all Mr Speaker, I wish to extend my appreciation, acknowledgement and thank my good people and supporters of Gao/Bugotu constituency for selecting me to be their parliamentary Member for the next four years. Thank you for their trust and confidence.

It is a great honor to be the chosen one out of the 15 candidates who contested that election process. To the other 14 candidates who contested with me, I would like to extend my acknowledgement and sincere appreciation to all of them for their great effort. I am looking forward to working close with them for the

betterment of our constituency and the nation as a whole.

Mr Speaker, I would also like to appreciate past parliamentary members of Gao/Bugotu constituency. Being the present Member of Gao/Bugotu I wish to thank my predecessors for their leadership during their respective period of time. I have great respect for them for their contribution to this nation, Solomon Islands. And thank you former Gao/Bugotu MPs for the road that you prepared for me to work on and lead our people of Gao/Bugotu and this nation in a direction acceptable to our Father in Heaven and his children here in Solomon Islands.

Mr Speaker, Solomon Islands is governed by the National Constitution, the highest law of the land, and hence I wish to reiterate the preamble to the National Constitution, which reads: –

We the people of Solomon Islands proud of the wisdom and the worthy customs of our ancestors, mindful of our common and diverse heritage and conscious of our common destiny do now under guiding Hand of God established the sovereign democratic state of Solomon Islands.

In the preamble Mr Speaker, there are three main things that I wish to dwell upon. First of all, ‘the wisdom and the worthy customs of our ancestors’, secondly ‘under the guiding hand of God’, and thirdly ‘the sovereign democratic state of Solomon Islands’.

The first ambit deals with the wisdom and worthy customs of our ancestors. Mr Speaker, today we have the chiefs, elders and traditional leaders who are custodians of our traditions and customs, and most of them are found in our rural areas. They have been governing our villages and communities on issues affecting our rural people. They are doing tremendous and marvelous job governing our rural people, hence I would like to acknowledge their daily tireless effort in their dedicated service to our people.

The second part of the preamble talks about the guiding hand of God. The churches in Solomon Islands have played a vital role in maintaining peace and harmony in all sectors of our society and they have been continuing praying for the government and national leaders.

Most of the speakers so far have thanked the churches for their prayers. To thank the churches for their prayers is not a new thing. The churches have been thanked over and over again. However, people in the rural areas have been struggling to complete their permanent Church buildings, which after even more than 20 to 30 years are not yet completed.

Our people in the rural areas need to complete their church buildings so that they can sit comfortably and continue to pray for national leaders. I live it to my colleague the Minister for Home Affairs as food for thought.

The third part of the preamble talks about the sovereign democratic state of Solomon Islands. Mr Speaker, this talk about the government of Solomon Islands. Solomon Islands is a democratic state and the government is for the people of the people and by the people. This means the people of everywhere within the territories of Solomon Islands both in the urban and rural areas. All the people of Solomon Islands are represented in Parliament by 50 elected members.

The Parliament is the highest law making body in Solomon Islands. It is the place to enact, amend or repeal laws of this country. For example, it is only in Parliament that we can review or repeal the Mining Law so that we have the Minister responsible for Mining revisits the Mining Act.

Solomon Islands, Mr Speaker, gained Independence in 1978 and became a democratic state of its own, until today that is more than 27 years. My people of Gao/Bugotu still continue on with their normal subsistence life style. Employment opportunity is rare because of not enough economic development taking place. Consequently school leavers are flooding Honiara looking for employment to which none is left for them. The result of this is frustration and dissatisfaction amongst the minds of our young people.

Mr Speaker, economic development must reach our rural population so that our

young people can actively participate and contribute to the economy of this country.

Education today is not for people in the rural areas. If we look at school fees it is unfair to our people. People in rural areas are not able to pay school fees for their children in high schools and as a result cannot complete their education. To make it worse there is no source of income for parents or guardians to pay those very high school fees.

Education today, Mr Speaker, is for those whose parents and relatives are in paid employment and not for people in my constituency where there are no employment opportunities for them.

Mr Speaker, before I conclude my speech, I wish to inform this House and clarify what was stated by the MP for East Are Are yesterday in his contribution to the sine die motion about the Speaker and the Chief Justice not attending the swearing in of the former Prime Minister, the MP for Marovo.

Mr Speaker, I understand that the Speaker had clarified his position yesterday on why he did not attend the swearing in of the former Prime Minister, the MP for Marovo. Mr Speaker, in the case of the Chief Justice, information I have from the Court is that he did not attend the swearing in of the former Prime Minister simply because he was not invited.

Mr Speaker, while the Chief Justice usually attends such occasion as a matter of mutual respect and commitment between the branches of her democratic government, he attends when he is invited. On that occasion the Chief Justice was not invited and so he did not attend.

Mr Speaker, the judiciary will continue to remain independent of parties and political issues and continue to accord members of the other branches of government due respect. Mr Speaker, I hope this clarification will put to rest any adverse inferences the public may sought to draw from the comments of the Member for East Are Are.

Finally Mr Speaker, on behalf of my people of Gao/Bugotu, I extend my congratulations to the Member of East Choiseul for his election to be the Prime Minister of Solomon Islands. I also extend my congratulations to the Speaker for his unopposed

candidature to the position. I also extend my congratulation to you Deputy Speaker for your successful election to the position that you are now in, as Deputy Speaker of the National Parliament.

I also congratulate the 50 mMembers of Parliament for their successful election to this honourable House.

Thank you, Mr Speaker, for my contribution towards this motion. I support this motion and I beg to take my seat.

(applause)

Hon ULUFA'ALU: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for according me this privilege to participate in this motion of sine die for the first time in this eighth session of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, I would like to foremost thank with gratitude and appreciation the people of Aoke/Langa Langa Constituency for having broken our history which is a member of Parliament can only serve two terms in that constituency, but I am here today in my third term for that constituency and so we have broken our record for the last 32 years. And so I wish to thank and congratulate my people of Aoke/Langa Langa for that.

Mr Speaker, I also witnessed six former Prime Ministers on the floor of Parliament. In fact five are here, Mr Speaker, including the first one as the Speaker himself, and the fifth one is now the Deputy Speaker. Again precedence has been set in that two former Prime Ministers are the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of Parliament.

Also in the same context, Mr Speaker, we are seeing three former Prime Ministers sitting on one side of the House and two former Prime Ministers sitting on another side when you consider yourself, Mr Speaker, as a former Prime Minister. So we have in this House somehow some sense of responsibility by on the floor of Parliament.

Unfortunately, Mr Speaker, there are only three, three term MPs in this Parliament. One is from Ranongga/Simbo, another one from Aoke/Langa Langa and the third one from North New Georgia. Amongst us, Mr Speaker, there are no fifth terms or fourth term members but there are a number of third terms. Many more

on second terms and half of the House are in their first terms.

We have, at this particular eighth session of Parliament, reversed history again. The last seventh session of Parliament saw 32 new MPs came into the House. This session saw 25 new MPs came in. And so history again is beginning to be reversed. Voters are beginning to see that there is need for some degree of continuity, consistency and so forth. These are achievements that do not come overnight. These are things that take time to build. In fact the capacity of the legislature should be built over the years.

I begin to see a lot of MPs who are no longer like us in 1976 when some of us were just 24 years of age, 25 and 26. Now we see more mature MPs in this Chamber and more highly educated MPs in this Chamber. These are matters not built overnight but over years.

Mr Speaker, I do hope those of us including yourself who have served in this Parliament for a number of years would be very resourceful to the new comers. I would like to ask the new comers to learn from the old ones so that they can be better than the old ones. If the old ones continue to be better than the new ones, then I think we are heading nowhere. Mr Speaker, that is my plea to honorable members of this Chambers.

Mr Speaker, may I on behalf of my people and my voters thank you, the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker for your elections to those offices both of you former Prime Ministers. That is a big achievement for the Chair.

I also wish to thank all the new MPs for having made it through this time. Some of them may have been trying for three, four or five times before they get through. That is the process of democracy. Some of us may be were fortunate that we tried the first time and have gone through. But let me warn the new ones who came through for the first time that it is also easy to go out. Old tricks are built up by old wolves, and so please learn from them how to stay longer in Parliament than one term so that we can build the capacity of this legislature for the benefit of the people of this country, especially our children, our grandchildren and those yet to be born into this country.

Mr Speaker, I would like to thank you for your success. On behalf of my people I also wish to thank the old MPs who have made it back. Please continue your membership in the club and join the club. Whenever you get hurt because of what is said on the floor of this Parliament, Mr Speaker, let us keep it to the floor of Parliament and not outside the Chambers. That is a sign of maturity and a sign of being able to do things without being heated up and argue outside the floor of Parliament. I had a show down one time with the former member and late member of East Makira outside of the High Court Building that used to be Parliament. That is the only time my memory can remember being in Parliament.

On another occasion Mr Speaker, one Minister walked over Her Majesty Queen's table in the Cabinet Office, and the President, the late Member for West Makira had to order him off from Her Majesty's table. These are episodes that should help us understand the difficult tasks we have been called upon to do.

Debating on the floor of Parliament is not a question of saying what we want to say. It is saying what we want to say because the country needs it to be said, and it is not just getting a few punches here and there on other colleagues. However, that is democracy and so if there is a slip of the tongue then excuse us for that.

I hope Mr Speaker, being one of those distinguished MPs, you are now in the Chair to control us. Congratulations to you.

Mr Speaker, I would like to congratulate the election of the Member for Marovo as Prime Minister. Many of us almost forgot he was a Prime Minister, and a Prime Minister who has also scored records in the history of this country. It probably would be in the Guinness Book of record. So he was the Prime Minister for a very short time.

I would like on behalf of the people of Aoke/Langa Langa congratulate him for being elected to that office for a short time. More importantly I would like to congratulate him for humbly bowing to the pressures of democracy, and to the requirements of the principles of democracy, by bowing out courageously. It is not an easy thing for us to do this but he has demonstrated maturity and he bowed down with

grace to the forces of democracy. Whatever the circumstances may be, it has gone down in history for historians to research it and to establish the facts surrounding it.

It will not help, Mr Speaker, on this floor of Parliament for us to point fingers accusing each other of what had happened. It will not help this floor of Parliament. It will not help Honiara. It will not help the Chinese Community. It will not help the country if we continue to exchange punches accusing each other of what had happened. What has happened has happened and there is nothing you and I can do to reverse it. But what we can both do is use that as reference so that it does not happen again.

What is it that we should do to make sure it does not happen again? That is the question we should be asking ourselves. What was it that happened and what should we do not to make it happen again? Are there valid reasons for that? If we take a historian point of view in determining what had happened, it is something that has been building up for sometime.

Mr Speaker, it was through our programs and our partners that we have set our in the last two years to educate our people telling them that they have power to change the government. That is what we have done. And RAMSI under the civil program spent two years educating our people about good governance, the principles of good governance and how people can change governments. It has been doing that for two years.

Mr Speaker, also in the vein is the "Winds of Change" which is a part of the Moral Rearm International. I met this group the first time in Papua New Guinea in 1970. This group was also responsible in a meaningful way to educate our people about the power of people to change governments. However, the process of changing government was not properly taught to the people that there are democratic ways that people can change a government.

However, Sir, the heart of those two programs is the objective of governance, which is good governance embracing transparency, accountability and foremost responsibility. Those are the hearts of those problems. It is the youths of this country that went around all the

provinces, all constituencies educating people about good governance.

In fact Mr Speaker, just to cite an example in the Aoke/Langa Langa Constituency, I won the election because of the youths and the women and not the men. That shows a shift has happened to the politics of Solomon Islands. Politics has shifted from men dominated campaigns to female and youths dominated campaigns.

Sir, when I look around this Chamber I can see the evidence of that where a lot of MPs elected to the floor of Parliament came from women and youth supported candidates. That is why you can see a lot of much younger people on this floor of Parliament. Whereas those of us whose campaigns were men dominated are getting fewer and fewer. So there is a shift in the political scene of this country from that of men dominated to women and youth dominated. And each year it is increasing and becoming more apparent in the last election and will continue to be so in future campaigns.

Sir, why, we may ask? Why is it that women and youths have taken over? Well, it is very simple, Mr Speaker. Women and youths are the ones wrestling with the future whereas us the men we are happy with whatever the status quo is. We do not wrestle with the future. The women are the ones who are burdened with the responsibility in family households of looking after the kids. We men just produce the children and leave.

It is the youths who look at us the daddies and say they can't be like the daddies, they must be better than the daddies, and so rightly the youths were more enthusiastic about improving this lot. Hence Mr Speaker, the youths and the women begin to look at the centre of things and the center of things is politics because in Solomon Islands we make politics more important than the economics of survival. In fact we thought that the economics of survival is subjective to politics. If there is good politics, you will survive better. That is how we wrong place such things and that is how it continues in this country.

Why, Mr Speaker, and we need to ask ourselves why? Why are we putting the wrong emphasis on politics and not the economics of survival? Why? It has something to do with the

way this country is made up or created. And when you look at it, it is true. This country was created for none other than foreigners because it was them who created it, and so they created it for themselves. That is the truth. The universal law of ownership is when you do something for yourselves.

Sir, this country called Solomon Islands was created by our former master, the UK for none other than itself. Mr Speaker, and that is why the three pillars of this country in its creation, as far as we Solomon Islanders are concerned, are the wrong pillars. What are those three pillars? The first one is divide and rule. The second is alienation and third is dependent growth. Those are the three pillars that we Solomon Islanders have.

So what do the foreigners have? The foreigners have diversity in unity for nation building. Foreigners, instead of alienation they have legalization. Foreigners, instead of dependent growth they have independent growth. Those are what they have. But what we have are the wrong ones, and we have been in that position since independence. That is what is called in today's modern language imperialism, neo-imperialism, neo-colonialism. And so we are those.

Mr Speaker, so why are we going to do about it? Well, reverse it Mr Speaker, reverse the pillars, the cornerstones that found this country. We reverse it so that instead of divide and rule it is diversity in unity for nation building. And instead of alienation it is legalization so that our way of life is the law of the land. It is just simple as that. And instead of dependent growth it is independent growth for Solomon Islanders.

In fact that is the beginning of dependency. That is why every year, for those of us who are fortunate to be in this country at self-government and independence, we have seen this country grow from a worse colonial situation to I don't know what you can say about it, which colonial are you going to pass on to Solomon Islands. It is the dependency for foreign aid growth beyond imagination. Why? Because the model is dependency growth where everything we do in this country is done for them. Therefore, when people see what was going on, we taught them about good

governance, we taught them about transparency, responsibility and accountability. We even taught them that they have the power to change their destiny, their life, their government. That is what we taught them. Aren't we?

Sir, who is pointing fingers at who? We are all supposed to be pointing fingers at ourselves. Mr Speaker, and all our friends that preach about good governance like the United Nations, the Forum and you name them, they teach our people about a half cooked situation, and they got it confused. That is why.

Surely, Mr Speaker, the Black Tuesday cannot be planned by anyone. That is for sure because if it is planned the intelligence we had in this country is so good that it can tell and authorities would have prepared for it. Mr Speaker, we have CIA in this country, we have ASIO in this country, we have New Zealand Intelligence in this country, we have all sorts of intelligence in this country. Hire them under one disguise or number. So they would have known about it. But why were they caught flatfooted?

Mr Speaker, the Commissioner of Police, like some of us still maintain did not know what to do in four hours. The Police did not know how to react, and so how can you in this Chamber accuse each other. How? Are you looking for excuses because we fail to do what was supposed to be done in the first place?

Mr Speaker, some of us still got it right. The independence that we have was not right. We just took independence by taking an Arai kwao, get a black paint and paint him black and say he is now black. That is what we have done. That was why some of us boycotted that independence.

Sir, today the Constitution that we so proudly called ours is still the Order in Council. Which Council is this? It is UK. Even the basic instruments that we have as an independence order is still Order in Council of the UK.

So now how many years? It is now 27 years, and what have we done? We have done nothing. Why? It is because we did not know what we were taking over. We just took over something that belongs to somebody, and so we are actually renting it for them.

Mr Speaker, it is dependent growth because everything made in this country was

made for UK at the beginning. The coconut plantations, the logging, the cocoa are to maintain the markets in Europe especially in UK. That is why I am saying it is dependent growth. And whether they pay one cent for one metric tone, it does not matter.

The basis of us is that we have been alienated from the gift of God. The gift of God is our way of life. And what is our way of life? It is sweat, own and enjoy. So which is the one we have now? We have forced labor.

How did they get us into forced labor? They put a head tax on us, and they say if we do not pay tax we will be put in prison. So the only way we can pay tax is to leave our freedom and go and become slaves for them. We labor for them, work for them and then they will pay us 10% of what we are really worth. That is the 10% that appears in the Bible - force labor, slavery.

The Children of Israel in Egypt, in Assyria, in Babylon is where the 10% came from, and it is still applicable today. It is the rule of the day, and it is the rule of the Second Order - the beast like sheep animal with two horns. What is that beast? It is military might that is dominating the world today.

But mark my words, Mr Speaker, mark my words that the tiger-like beast with eight (8) heads is coming and is going to swallow the sheep like beast because the sheep-like beast is military might and military might cannot fight garment- factory makers. That is the third order, that is the economic might that will rule this world, and we are witnessing some of it. Have we forgotten the Bible? Have we forgotten prophecy? Is there at any time words in the Bible are wrong? Not even one letter is wrong.

Mr Speaker, you are more Christian than some of us, but may be you do not understand what you are reading.

That is what is going to happen. It is the one China policy, and I have no fear in telling the truth before this Chamber. That is the economic might. "It is not by might nor by power but by my Spirit says the Lord. So that is the next one, it is economic might. It is trade, it is investment, it is not a nuclear bomb. That is what is going to happen, and it is going to happen, but lucky for us, Mr Speaker, because that beast is going to rule for only one decade. It

cannot rule forever, but for only one decade, which is 10 years and then the real thing will happen. You mark my words too for that.

I have no fear in standing on this floor of Parliament announcing this in this context because I am proud to be a testimony to it.

Mr Speaker, so let us forget about divide and rule, but let us talk about our diversity because it is diversity that is the essence of unity. If there is no diversity there is not unity as well and if there is no unity there is no work done. So it is diversity.

It is the fact that you are different from me and I am different from you is the way we need each other, and that need of each other is what should make us do things in our endowment as we are endowed through though the gift of God.

Mr Speaker, when somebody joked on this floor of Parliament about me dedicating this country to God during SIAC's time, I am pleased that I did it. I dedicate it to God, unfortunately I dedicate a country that is deadly, that is sinful and dirty. Hence God cannot take it in this context but God has to cleanse it, and no wonder we have been cleansed.

You cannot give something dirty to your boss. No, the boss must clean it first, and so he washed us. But that is us Solomon Islanders. The other part of the triangle is not yet cleansed, and that part represents our other colleagues, the Chinese. That is the foreign part which had been cleansed recently. And the third part has now been completed. We are the politicians have been cleansed, and so the triangle is complete.

Mr Speaker, I am surprised that the MP for East Choiseul is now the Prime Minister. Could it be true he was used by the power of the Almighty to complete the cleansing process? Is anyone taking a good look at this that an invisible hand is in these things?

Mr Speaker, somebody on the other side rang me up and told me have I quickly forgotten what the MP for East Choiseul did to me. I said goodness me, but life must go on. You cannot hang on to what happened in the past. Use that as your reference so that you do not do it again and forgive your brethren and move forward. Some of you big man on the other side rang me

up, I think it was five of you saying the same thing.

I do not like to point fingers but you would know who you are by me just saying this. What did God do? God hate sin. But how does God make sure that people do not sin. He hates sin and that is why he loves sinners. When you hate something it is an act, by how do you stop that man from that act. It is by loving him.

Isn't that the basis of God's love where you hate the act but love the doer? Is that not what some of us are trying to do Mr Speaker, that action were not good, but not the person. So how could you stop the person from doing that act? The only way is show him your heart, be kind.

Sir, some of us talked about the MP for East Honiara saying to me 'don't you know what he did to you'. But I told them that the MP for East Honiara is our St Paul on the road to Damascus. So he went to an old man to clean his eyes. That is what happened. When we are converted we must accept that in the conversion there must be a cleansing process, and some of us are living testimony to this.

Mr Speaker, I have one leg now, I have diabetes and I consider this as part of my cleansing, and thank you Lord for not taking me. He still leaves me to do what I do not know. But may be what I am doing now is what He wants me to do. So let us be humble and meek.

Mr Speaker, we talk too much about reconciliation but when we talk about reconciliation we are looking at the mammon because it is money that reconciles. Hey, that is the reason why many reconciliations of the past did not work. Why? Because it is the money, it is the mammon that has been reconciled and not the heart and not the man. It is not money that made man. No, it is man who made money and so human being should be centre of everything.

That is why our budgeting process was wrong because we set the budget on what we can afford. We did not set it on what the needs are. But it is the needs that should determine the budget, and not the other way round.

This government, Mr Speaker, will assess as accurate as possible the need. It is a question of determining the need and being able to say which one is a need and which one is a

want. We have always confused those two terminologies.

Sometimes for other people needs become wants and wants become needs. So first of all we have to agree on what a need is and what a want is. Once that is determined in a quantified and qualified way we can then know what the budget requirements would be. I think that is the essence of the Prime Minister's statement when he moved the motion of sine die.

However, Mr Speaker, we seemed to be very fond of, I do not know which standing orders will say about this, because we are now in the eighth session and the motion of sine die and the content in which the debate has been conducted should be restricted to matters of the meeting of this session. But the way my colleagues on the other side have been talking is like talking about the last session, which is the seventh session. Can we bring matters of the seventh session into the eighth session Mr Speaker? That is a technical point on Standing Orders and procedures between sessions. There is no bone of contention against what honourable colleagues have said. That is one area we have to look at.

Mr Speaker, if we are saying the same things over and over and over again, that means something is wrong. Because if we are saying new things all the time then it means we are making progress. But if we are saying the same things over and over again then it means we are static or progressing backwards and that is why we are repeating ourselves.

Mr Speaker, in the context of the history of this country, I am not surprised that we are saying the same things because we are going in a vicious circle, and the circle is getting smaller and smaller as the population grows and grows.

In fact, Mr Speaker, may be two third of the population now have nothing to do. They are not productively employed. Only one third is productive. That means conning becomes a way of life. We con each other every day, and it is becoming a way of life and hard work is missing

Mr Speaker, just look at the whole public service, people are not honest in their work. I saw this just after a few days in the office. You do not have to be in the office to see it. You walk to the market and other places and

you will see all would-be employees roaming around. Far worse, Mr Speaker, is the casinos attracting everybody to go there.

Sir, let us do something about this. It is work that is called for. Everybody must get a job. Anyone who is fit to work must work. But how are they going to work? Because they think the government will give them work and because they think companies will give them work. They forget about our old people before when there was no government and no company and yet they still work. We are being sucked into something that is not truly ours because we are used to slavery. We are used to slavery and that is why being slave is the way of life. No wonder none of those people whom Moses freed in Egypt, including Moses entered the Promised Land. Why? Because slavery became a way of life and it is hard to live in a free world and so they all have to die before those who were born in freedom entered the Holy Land, and Joshua became their champion.

May be that should happen to Solomon Islands. That should happen to us because we really do not know what freedom is now. For hundred and twenty years Mr Speaker, we have been living in slavery. In fact slavery became our way of life. And when we are tired of being slavery, Mr Speaker, we think stealing is part of that way of life. Yes, it is. And when it spreads like an epidemic it is called corruption. When it happens among the bosses it is called networking. And when we hold guns it is called terrorism.

How? Those wrong ways of life are now in Solomon Islands now, and the rightful ways no longer there, which is sweat, own and enjoy. That is no longer there. But that is the only one that God sanctioned. So what are we going to do?

Here we are arguing about which group should form the government? Forming the government to do what! Just to carry big titles around and say this is the government. Is that what we form the government for? Is it just to carry the big titles around with all its liabilities?

Forming government is not the answer. The answer is how we can use diversity in our unity to do things? That is the way. And how can we recognize the gift of God? God's gift does not change. Do you remember that? Only

you and I always want the shortcut or think that we know better than Him. But it is the same gift He gave to our ancestors, grannies and fathers. It is still the same gift. But someone came in and say, no that is not the gift, I know your gift. How do you know my gift?

This is a relationship between man and God. In fact relationship is the beginning of respect to God. It is not religion. The earliest way we worship God is our relationship between man and God. In fact, Church begins amongst sinners, poor beggars. That is where God is.

And what are we the 50 MPs doing about that? Tell me, what are we doing about it? Others have to tell us what to do, and if they tell us what to do, it must be right. And when we tell ourselves what to do it must be wrong. Goodness me!

We do not believe that because it makes us not people made in God's image. But we are His image. He told us to get out of the fence and be free and live the truth because in truth is freedom and freedom is true love.

Honorable colleagues, if we can only allow our hearts, our soul, our mind, our body to be govern by truth then truth will set us free, and that is where true love is. Then the truth and reconciliation that will take place will fathom Solomon Islands as a candle in the darkness for the world to see but only if we stick to the truth. And there is no half truth, there is no quarter truth, there is no one-eight truth, but truth is truth and we have to pledge ourselves to live by the truth. And to do that let us start telling each other the truth, let us start telling each other the truth, especially telling our constituency the truth.

Mr Speaker, over the years constituency need is now taking precedence over national needs. And because constituency needs are taking over national needs, the country is becoming more and more fragmented. There is no coherence, there is no consistency and there is no nationalism. Nothing. Every one just talk about the constituency as if the constituency is the nation. But that is not the case. Constituency is the base upon which you are elected as a national leader. Constituency is only there to determine membership into the legislature. It is not here to be determined as the nation. That is why issues of national interest

have been sidetracked and issues of constituency have been promoted. That is why Ministers go and get ROC money and spend it in their own constituencies. My goodness!

Why is that happening? The base of determining leadership into national leadership has become the nation itself and so there are 50 nations now in this country.

So let us go back to the basics. In fact, it is the basics that have been confused. Because of what? While our constitution is based on the Westminster System, the prerequisite of running a Westminster system is non existent in this country. And what is that pre-requisite? It is strong political parties. Today we do not have that system but we have parties for convenience.

Mr Speaker, in fact some MP candidates of Liberal are now on the other side and some on this side. Like you, Mr Speaker, said so for PAP. Is that a sign of political party which is the basics of the Westminster System? No. So we have the Westminster system in place but we do not have the machinery to operate it.

No wonder we are accusing ourselves because some candidates who are now MPs stood for two or three political parties. That is something we have to address. If we want the Westminster system then let us do it. Do not do it half baked or else go back to the governing council system where the 50 members of the legislature are also the 50 executives, and then there will be no argument. And the system is the committee. It is the committee of members of Parliament that are running the ministries. If there are 10 ministries then it is 10 committees made up of five MPs for one committee to run the ministries. May be if we go by that system there will be no corruption because it will be difficult to corrupt five MPs, and not all of them will be subjected to corruption, one or two of them will say no to it. But may be when it is one man or one minister, it is easy to be corrupt. When it is done at that level it is not called corruption but networking. That is it.

Sir, I think we should look at the governing council system where the same legislature is also the same executive. There are only 50 of us, so why not do it the Melanesian way. The Melanesian way is sit around in committee, discuss it and come to a decision and then implement it. What is so holy about the

Westminster system when none of us knows how to operate it? Why can't we go to what belongs to us? That is the Melanesian consensus, and that is committee. The 50 MPs are the legislature and the 50 MPs are the cabinet through select committees.

Mr Speaker, I do not want to talk very much. I just want to thank my honorable colleagues for giving me this opportunity. I will certainly have my time during the speech from the throne, which is a major speech issue of this new government.

Sir, colleagues from the other side, don't think of taking, don't talk about it, but let us work together and we will come up with something that will engage all of us in the true Melanesian way rather than the Westminster way that no one understand.

With those few comments, Mr Speaker, I beg to support the motion.

Hon GHIRO: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the chance to contribute to the motion of sine die. Mr Speaker, first of all I wish to sincerely thank the voters and people of Central Makira for their confidence in me to again represent them for the second time in this honorable House. Thank you, and may we continue to work together as one people in our next three and half years.

Mr Speaker, on the same token I wish to thank the Government of the day for its confidence in me to be awarded rewarded a portfolio of Ministerial for the Department of Home Affairs.

The Department of Home Affairs, unlike other ministries and/or departments, centers on the majority of the entire population of Solomon Islands, and more especially the Churches, the children, the youth and the women. Equally important are the Electoral Commission, the National Disaster Management Office and the Civil Affairs Division that regulates the livelihood of our people. If we do not live up our policies, we should be blamed for legislating such policies that facilitate to disintegrate this nation of Solomon Islands.

Sir, a change of government therefore does not only mean a change of hands in ruling this nation. It should also include a change of

attitude, a change of behavior and a change in approaching our numerous needs and problems.

One of these needs is the decentralization of socio-economic development. And being a farmer myself, I strongly believe in developments conceived in the rural areas. Adequate funds should therefore be focused on developmental projects in the rural areas, not in the urban centres.

Mr Speaker, in spite of a strong desire for a bottom-up approach by succeeding governments in addressing some of our developmental issues, the recipients of such programs and/or approaches, the rural populace have never been consulted. This fundamental aspect of development in this nation, Solomon Islands, is not being fully realized by us, the leaders. As a result, most of our development policies were and are not very effective.

Sir, what transpired on Tuesday 17th April 2006 should not be blamed on anyone in particular, but everyone including the 50 Members of this Parliament, including other social and religious leaders in this nation. It is therefore a very sick sign for Members of this Parliament to be heard arguing in this House than regulating appropriate legislations to address the very needs and problems we are faced with.

Sir, in summary I wish to reiterate that the floor of Parliament is the only venue available to us, as a team to make appropriate laws for the betterment of our people, the people of this nation. It is not the place for bickering, finger-pointing and individual gain and benefit. Let us therefore work together as a team to unite our people and move forward from hereon.

Mr Speaker, I am going to be very brief in my speech because other things will be covered by my other colleagues. Thank you very much and I support the motion.

MOTIONS

Hon Sogavare: Mr Speaker, I beg to move that the House do now adjourn.

The House adjourned at 4.05 pm