

NATIONAL PARLIAMENT OF SOLOMON ISLANDS

DAILY HANSARD

SECOND MEETING – EIGHTH SESSION

WEDNESDAY 4TH OCTOBER 2006

The Hon Speaker, Sir Peter Kenilorea took the Chair at 9.30 am.
Prayers.

ATTENDANCE

At prayers, all were present with the exception of the Ministers for Lands & Survey, and the Members for West New Georgia/Vona Vona, and Small Malaita

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

4. Mr KEMAKEZA to the Minister for Finance & Treasury: Can the Minister for Finance confirm to Parliament that the Family Charity money has been traced? If so, how much and when will payments be made?

Hon Ulufa'alu: Mr Speaker, the answer is 'no'.

Mr Kemakeza: The same Minister assured Parliament that the money came in and went out the next day, and now he is saying 'no'. Which of his answers are true?

Hon Ulufa'alu: Mr Speaker, if the honorable Member wants to know then he has to ask himself that question. In the press release made by the honorable Prime Minister on 1st October, there will be a Commission of Inquiry set up to look into this matter. That has been made public already and so if there are relevant information that honorable Members of this House have including the MP for Aoke/Langa Langa then they should furnish the Commission of Inquiry with those information.

Mr Kemakeza: Mr Speaker, if the honorable Minister for Finance wants an answer from the

MP for Savo/Russells, the finding is what the Governor of the Central Bank said that the inquiry made by the last Administration found there is no money for the Charity Fund in any of the Commercial Banks and also in the Central Bank. That is the answer of the previous administration.

This question was raised because the MP for Aoke/Langa Langa who is now the Minister confirmed to this floor of Parliament that there is money. It is because of that answer that this question was raised for the Minister to inform the floor of Parliament and to the members of the Fund and to my people of Savo/Russells who also paid their money to confirm what he previously said on the floor of this Parliament last time.

Hon Ulufa'alu: Mr Speaker, the MP for Savo/Russells is referring to what was said in the last session and not this session of Parliament.

Mr Kemakeza: The same person who made that statement last time is now the Minister of Finance. I believe he has records but since he said 'no', Mr Speaker, I would like to ask a further question. Where did he get his information of the past in relation to him being now the Minister for Finance?

Hon Ulufa'alu: Mr Speaker, information will be furnished to the Commission of Inquiry as proposed by the Prime Minister. That is where such information can be furnished and also where the information by the MP for Savo/Russells would also be furnished whatever they may be.

Mr Kemakeza: Mr Speaker, before I thank my colleague, the Minister for Finance, I would like to make it very clear because the same issue was

also brought to my administration last time. I am asking this question purposely for the Minister and the Government to inform the people that there is no money, and that is the answer to everyone expecting money from the Charity Fund. The Minister of Finance, the MP for Aoke/Langa Langa is now saying that there is no money. With that, Mr Speaker, I thank the Minister for his answers.

6. **Mr KEMAKEZA** to the Prime Minister: Can the Prime Minister inform Parliament of the Government's present position on the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) program in Solomon Islands?

Hon SOGAVARE: Mr Speaker, there is no change to the position of the government to the position taken by the Parliament in 2003.

Mr Kemakeza: I would like to thank the honorable Prime Minister for his answers.

Questions No 18 and 19 deferred

BILLS

Bills – Second Reading

The 2006 Supplementary Appropriation Bill 2006

Hon ULUFA'ALU: Mr Speaker, I rise to move that the 2006 Supplementary Appropriation Bill 2006 be read the second time. The Supplementary Appropriation Bill before this honorable chamber is seeking additional funding to complete the requirements of this fiscal year for 2006.

Mr Speaker, a total sum of \$72.6million has been sought under this supplementary appropriation bill. On the recurrent \$9.5 million has been requested and on development for SOPAC \$0.5 million, which makes it to \$10 million.

In addition to that \$10 million there is also in the Bill pressures that have come about during the course of this fiscal year and this is the first Parliament meeting for this Session. And as a result there would be a requirement of

\$42million thus bringing the total to \$52 million. In addition there is a new funding being proposed for poverty alleviation of \$20 million which will be the basis of the new millennium fund. Here Mr Speaker, we are sure that our good friend, the ROC would provide the funding of \$20 million which will be about \$400,000 for each of the constituencies.

The object of this particular fund is to carry out the process of legalization of our constituencies' entities so as to qualify under the laws of the land. At the moment this particular aspect of our society is not legalized hence legitimate but not legal hence void in law. This means it has no value but is dead, and therefore something that is dead cannot grow. No wonder our lifestyle is very difficult to grow because it is void under the present laws of the land.

The \$400,000 hopefully will aid the constituencies to be able to establish the legal structures. In other words, legalizing the legitimate structures they have at the moment which will include land holding. That is the new drive way we are hoping this new funding will provide the base to the bottom up approach to development.

Mr Speaker, \$20million would be made available making the total supplementary appropriation to \$72.6million that Parliament is being asked to approve.

Mr Speaker, to provide further explanation to this matter, honorable colleagues would note that in the Committee of Supply there would be a corrigendum to correct some errors in the Bill itself so as to make it conform to the practices that we have. Therefore, if honorable colleagues are having difficulty with this at the moment, it shall be corrected in the Committee of Supply when a corrigendum will be made available this evening to MPs.

Mr Speaker, that is being sought for here and I am pleased to inform this Chamber that this additional funding will not put a big strain on the budget so that it becomes a deficit. In fact it will be still a balance budget as envisaged in the original 2006 Appropriation Bill.

Mr Speaker, I am glad to inform the House that measures we have taken to optimize our revenue collection has achieved their desired objective but we still have a long way to go

because of debts we accumulated over the years. We still have a long way to go. I would like to appeal to honourable Members of this chamber and other corporate citizens to observe that under no circumstances shall we practice the usual exemption to the Goods Tax and import duties and all that. We will do our best to live within what we have henceforth the principle of giving to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God.

Mr Speaker, do not give to Caesar a zero value because that is not fair. So I am asking the honorable colleagues as well as their friends and our people to observe the principle of giving to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God. I am asking this Parliament so as to enable us restore financial credibility that will make this country grow forward.

With the legalization process we are providing funds for, Mr Speaker, we do hope and pray that we have now, which is 90% of what Solomon Islanders have at this point in time is of no value to Solomon Islanders. Only 10% of what they have has value because it is officially registered under the laws of the land. In other words, Mr Speaker, like I said yesterday we are trying to evoke, and in fact we have been evoking the anger of the Almighty God by denying the truth about ourselves. And the truth about ourselves is that we are what we are. What we were and what we are and what we will be we are. That is what we should be all striving towards and not trying to be somebody else when you are not that somebody.

We should be using the \$20million provision to legalize the legitimate structures in our society, our practices, our norms, our values. Because only then we are compatible with the will of the Almighty Father and unless we do His will there is no other way. There is no other way. Like I said yesterday there is no other way. You are the way, the truth, and the life but there is no other way.

Mr Speaker, with these few comments I beg to move.

(applause)

The motion is open for debate

Mr HUNIEHU: Mr Speaker, thank you for allowing me the floor of this parliament to contribute just very briefly to the supplementary appropriation bill.

Mr Speaker, as this is the first supplementary appropriation presented by this government, it should have reflected its rural focus and commitment to this country. I fail to see whether this is reflected in these expenditures that were just explained by the honorable Minister of Finance.

Of course, we have a history of supplementary appropriation in this Parliament and government, and it is the result of under budgeting on various government expenditure heads which requires Parliament to approve further funding. At the same time most of the supplementary appropriation bills is the decision of the Cabinet. After the budget has been passed, Mr Speaker, there are new expenditure items that need to be incurred to continue with government services and therefore, the Cabinet would then approve further spending which requires a supplementary appropriation bill like this one.

Sir, the supplementary appropriation bill underpins the fiscal policy and practices and the fiscal behavior and action of any government. It can be seen here where the focus of government expenditures are. It is very, very clear in the authorized expenditures and is very clear where this government is leading us into the future.

Whilst this government had unleashed its statement of policy focusing on rural development -rural focused, I fail to see these commitments reflected in this 2006 Supplementary Appropriation Bill 2006.

The Finance Minister may have talked about the \$20million new millennium but this is a bilateral grant with the Republic of China. There are no new real increases. It is a bilateral grant labeled here under a new scheme called the millennium fund. Whatever happens, the \$20million is going to be expended on rural projects anywhere. The only difference is that it increases rural constituency commitments from \$400,000 to now \$1million. But it is a same fund, there are no new funds added to the rural people of this country. But yet, Mr Speaker, when you look at agriculture development, tourism industry, renewable energy, fisheries,

infrastructure, forestry, ecclesiastical development, land reform, Mr Speaker, these are not reflected in this budget. But these are the key sectors the government needs to focus and spend its money on.

During the last budget the previous administration were told that there was a surplus of \$200million. Where is that surplus now? Where has it been spent Mr Speaker? Is it spent on rural projects or government operational activities Mr Speaker? Unfortunately, Mr Speaker, when we talk so much about rural development government actions are pointing differently.

We continue approve increases in wages for Public Servants, for Permanent Secretaries, for Members of Parliament. Are these the new political directions that we talk about in our rural focus and in our bottom up approach? And how deep is your bottom up approach Mr Speaker? How deep is that bottom up approach? It is not reflected in the supplementary, not one bit, it is not reflected in here.

Minister for Planning (*interjecting*): Next year. This is just a supplementary.

Mr Huniehu: Next year is next year, I want to see it right now. We are talking about today, we are talking about the supplementary appropriation bill now under discussion.

I would have thought we should be overspending on the agriculture sector and so asking Parliament to bless the expenditures, but that is not to be seen here. I would accept more increased expenditures on tourism, renewal energy and fisheries, but these are not to be seen and not reflected here. We are only seeing \$40million to be spent on emoluments. Is the new focus increasing our own salaries and paying little attention to the rural people? That is not how we should be providing leadership for change and yet this government calls itself the Coalition for Change. Change to where? You are navigating us to the reef.

Mr Kemakeza (*interjecting*): Change to hell.

Mr Huniehu: That is where you are leading us, that is where you navigating us Coalition of Change. Where are the changes here Mr

Speaker? I would have thought that any changes we make here must reflect our desirability to improve the living standards in the rural areas, the impoverished. That is why we have employed the Secretary to Cabinet, an expert in rural development. But none of his wisdom is reflected in the first supplementary appropriation, and I did not expect anything better in the next budget session next year. I don't think there will be any change. We started off doing many wrongs Mr Speaker. We have started wrongly. We have decided to increase our own pay, which means paying little attention to the little people of this country who are the producers of commodities we export. These are the people, the 5,000 villages in this country that produces the copra, the cocoa and timber that we export. We are paying lip service in this Parliament. We are doing things for ourselves again without doing much for those people. I hope the Minister of Finance will take this very serious.

I have been a long advocate of renewable energy and at the moment I want to repeat myself that more than 30% of our import is fossil fuel. There is no reflection in this supplementary appropriation bill to address the need for this country to become energy efficient. The price of fuel in the next 10 years will be around US\$120 per barrel. That is what experts predicted, and it will be selling in the rural areas at \$100 per gallon. Where are we putting our bets on this issue? Is the Minister addressing this in this budget? We must start now. It is very important that we start right now. I thought that a supplementary appropriation bill is where the Cabinet should be introducing such programs as and when the time comes. Unfortunately most of these costs were for holding of meetings, some more meetings overseas. What sort of direct benefits do these meetings have for the rural people in this country? What sort of direct benefits? They come here and draw up communiqués and off they gone tomorrow and nothing happens after. This is what happens after an international meeting is held. The host countries are only given a thank you for doing the best for them and nothing happens.

Whatever we do, Mr Speaker, it is the rural people that must be the cornerstone of our

plan. Mr Speaker, if I can express this statement that our situation in relation to our foreign relations is not very conducive to further any increased assistance that we might require from our development partners. We must have a good relationship and maintain good relationship with our development partners because they are part of our development process.

We are not an island in the sky. Many people would like to over emphasis sovereignty in this country but little do they realize that more than 60 to 70% of our budget is derived from those foreign people whom they view as may be over selling their products in this country. No, Mr Speaker.

The diplomatic stand-off between Solomon Islands and Australia will have negative impact to the rural people of this country. In order to build a stronger nation this is where we must address right now, and this is the issue of the day.

We are talking about millennium funds Mr Speaker, we may have started now, but the need is for the millennium funds to be increased for the betterment of the rural people. We cannot increase the millennium fund if we continue to have stand-off, diplomatic stand-off with people who are pumping their tax payers' money into this country.

Many people are over emphasis indigenism, sovereignty. This is where we must exercise a fair bit of flexibility. If we don't then we will be falling victims of our own self in the leadership that our people depended upon so much to improve their standard of living in the rural areas.

Sir, I don't want to speak any longer, I will be making some more comments at the committee of supplies when the figures are discussed much more in detail.

In conclusion the message that I have been trying to express here is that we must do the best for the rural people of this country.

What has happened in the last 4 or 5 months we have been saying the right things. The government has been saying the right things, which is rural focus but it was doing the wrong things. It said the right things in its policy statements, and in its programs of actions, nobody is disputing that. But their actions, there

doings, the way they conduct themselves does not reflect what they say.

I always said many times that Solomon Islanders are good at saying the right things and doing the wrong things. Little do we realize that the whole of Solomon Islands agree with me now that this government is good at saying the right things but doing the wrong things. I hope the new government for change, the Coalition for Change will reassess its priorities, will reassess its conducts, will reassess its relationship with our overseas development partners and will reassess its commitments with our people by allocating more resources to the sectors that will help our rural people more.

I hope that the next budget next year, if this government survives the vote of no confidence on Friday, it will bring more welcome news to the rural people in Solomon Islands Mr Speaker.

Sir, I support the supplementary appropriation bill.

Mr ZAMA: Thank you Mr Speaker, for allowing me the floor. I will be very brief in my contribution to this Bill. At the outset Sir, I would like to thank the Minister of Finance for putting this Bill to Parliament.

Mr Speaker, I do share the comments raised by the Member for East Are Are. And I don't want the government to take me wrong here. I have been a very strong supporter of the government and I have always been very vocal on issues raised in Parliament especially when it comes to government spending.

This Government came into being more than six months ago. It has delivered some of the policies it came up with and some of the policies are exactly the right policies at the right time in the development of our political history.

Mr Speaker, I have read through the Bill and it would appear to me that unfortunately the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Planning do not seem to have any control over the drafting of this Bill and do not seem to be taking control in the direction as to how and where money will be spent.

I have only read this Bill yesterday but with my experience in reading bills, I noted this Bill as being poorly drafted. It also raises the

question whether this Bill has gone through the Office of the Attorney General.

I have looked through the Bill and unfortunately in my view it could have been better presented. It is quite unfortunate that the Bill has been presented in the way it appears on floor of Parliament. But that said, on the other end I do not seem to really see, and I continue to share the comments raised by my colleague of East Are Are that whilst the government came up with very good policies, more so focused, people centered and growth oriented, those policies do not seem to be reflected in this supplementary appropriation bill.

I am raising this issue, Mr Speaker, because this Bill is the only instrument by which the government can legally spend money and unless the policies are translated in this instrument it is quite unfortunate that those policies cannot be transformed into workable programs.

We only have three months remaining to spend this money. Three months is a lot of time for people in the rural areas. Three months is a lot of time for people cooking copra, cooking cocoa, people who are going out fishing and cutting timber. Unfortunately, these policies by the government which have been very good on paper are not seen on this Bill.

Mr Speaker, if we look at the Bill itself on page 4, some of these heads appear as funny, and that is why I raised the comment that the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Planning do not seem to have control over the drafting of this Bill. Just look at page 4, for example, under the heads - the recurrent pressures. If you look at the heads at the bottom of the same lines 'all heads', according to the Standing Orders Mr Speaker, this doesn't quite reflect what is required of the Parliament.

Some kind of new terminologies have also appeared in the drafting of this Bill Mr Speaker, and that is why I am raising it.

Mr Darcy: Point of order Mr Speaker. I thought the Minister of Finance in moving the second reading has clarified that there will be a corrigendum to be produced to correct the point that has been raised. I thought it is appropriate to raise it at this stage so that we do not continue

to mislead and misunderstand each other on the debate of this Bill.

Mr Speaker: The Minister of Finance in introducing did refer to a corrigendum that will be forthcoming at the committee of supply stage.

Mr Zama: Mr Speaker, I have taken note of what the Minister of Finance raised in those comments but it is a matter of concern for Parliament, for this legislature. In future when we bring in bills to Parliament we must first of all make sure that it is checked and straightened. The corrigenda will come but if you look at previous supplementary bills that come before Parliament they were presented very neatly. That is the issue I am trying to raise here. I am also not in favour of officials driving these bills to Parliament. I have been very well informed when the bill appeared in Cabinet it appeared neatly but when it appeared in Parliament it is not neat as is what appeared.

But Mr Speaker, I will support this Bill as a matter of ongoing concern and as a matter for government to spend to 31st December 2006. I support the Bill. Do not get me wrong that I am just raising my concerns here as a Member of Parliament and a lawmaker. That is where I am coming from so that what we raise here on the floor of Parliament reflects the integrity of this Parliament. That is the concern I'm raising here. I'm not raising simply because I oppose it. I'm not opposing the bill. I support the bill so that government can spend up to the end of this year. But I think there we can do a better job as a government. There is a much better job we can do.

I have read through the bill and what would appear is that we are offloading. The government or the officials are simply offloading what they have spent over the recent months through the provision of the contingency warrant. That is what simply appears on the Bill.

There is very little the government will spend. As the MP for East Are Are had raised very little on government policy is being reflected on this bill here. That is the unfortunate part of it.

Whilst I support the Bill to allow the government to spend it will be spending on a

growing concern simply to get this government or the Finance to spend until December 31st. But to allow the government to make new spending to reflect its policies, there is nothing in this bill on that unfortunately. That is why I am bitterly angered because I have put a lot of emphasis on key sectors to drive the economy but they are not reflected here. I am simply expressing my concern as a supporter of the government and a person who believes in rural development. That is simply where I am coming from.

Mr Speaker, I think we could have done a lot better in terms of presentation. I want the government to take total control in terms of drafting and in terms of making sure our policies are driven and reflected in the budget because the budget is the only working tool of the government, and unless these policies are reflected, I am sorry regardless of how sweet or good our policies they cannot be implemented.

Mr Speaker, with those few remarks I support the Bill.

Mr KEMAKEZA: Mr Speaker, I too would like to contribute very briefly on the bill. In doing so, I would like to thank the hardworking Minister of Finance for seeing it fit in bringing this 2006 Supplementary Appropriation Bill 2006.

Before I touch on the Bill, the Minister said there are no other ways but only one way. But I say that there are ten ways, the Ten Commandments, and the two very important ones are "Love your neighbor as yourself". Do not create enemies. The second one is "Do not take the name of the Lord in vain". These are two very important ways, but there are ten and not one as mentioned by the Minister of Finance.

Mr Speaker, my observation of this bill and in the light of what the Minister mentioned, I am very happy to see that we go in the direction of 50 constituencies. However, what the two previous speakers, the MP for East Are Are and Rendova/Tetepari mentioned are true, and I do not want to repeat what they have said except a few points that they missed.

First, in order to legislate the structure we need some regulations or rules or amendments in the Act because there are only two authorized tiers of government, which are the National Government and Provincial

Government. The same government, the same ministers, the same Minister of Provincial Government removed number three – the area councils.

In the absence of this, and in the light of what the Minister said there should have been some amendments coming with this allocation to legalize it as he rightly said. I am very pleased with this allocation but what are the set of rules that we the 50 Members of Parliament are going to follow? What would be the set up so that the \$20million we wanted to go down to the 50 constituencies is legislated as set by the Minister of Finance? That is the point I would like him to tell me or tell the floor or this nation when he replies.

The second point is exemption. The 50 constituencies automatically qualify for exemption as long as there is approval from the Clerk because the money spent from RCDF or micro or this money for that matter should be exempted because it is government money. The Government never taxes itself. The Minister also needs to clarify this point.

But there is smoke inside the bushes that even the new Minister of Planning who was last time supervising Finance Minister (acting) for a while and also the substantive Minister of Finance are saying there will be no exemptions from day one. However, it seems that exemptions are flying left, right and centre nowadays. I have records and will prove this on the floor of Parliament.

What is happening here is that we are saying one thing and doing another thin. I thank the MP for East Are Are for saying that. We are very good at saying something and doing the opposite. That is another point the Minister touched in his speech and that is the reason why I must tell it out.

Another point that qualifies previous speakers who both missed this very important point is that we are now in the first year. In the second year our people would want to see something. In the third year I tell you is preparation for election and there will be no Ministers here. Everyone of us will go home to talk to our people. Where were you in the last three years? You better get home. We do not have enough time. The fiscal measures stated by the MP for East Are Are should already be here

in this appropriation bill so that it goes in line with the policy directive of the government for change.

Sir, the other thing is that three quarter of this money has already been spent. I want to ask the Minister in his reply whether you have changed the rules now because in the previous administration you cannot spend the money until you bring it to Parliament. Now it is different. You spend the money first and then you come to ask Parliament for its blessing. You are going back to the old way once again. You hate the old way and now you are repeating the same old fashion because three quarters of this money has already been spent by the bunch of you going overseas and getting new cars. Some Ministers are garaging more than one car, and some have three, and four cars. What qualifications do you have, what other entitlements do you have so that you have many cars? Don't tell me, no, I've seen it. Goodness me! You are only entitled to just one official car. Or is it one for domestic except for the Prime Minister who is entitled to three vehicles. So many new cars. Is that what you call political new direction? This money is already three quarter spent.

Sir, I further endorse what the MP for Rendova said that this Bill is poorly drafted. It should not find itself on the floor of this Parliament. Where is the Bills Committee and the Public Accounts Committee? The Public Accounts Committee should automatically reject this Bill. This Bill should not have found its way into this House. And if you say it is in the corrigenda where is it. The corrigenda should be attached to the Bill before the second reading. Don't tell me the procedures. The paper is here but where is the corrigenda so that we can properly debate. We are debating an ill prepared bill.

Mr Huniehu: Point of order. As the Chairman of the Bills and Legislation Committee, this Bill came through the backdoor. We did not see it.

Mr Kemakeza: Mr Speaker, if it is not done procedurally you should reject this. If I was in your chair I would have rejected this bill straight away.

Hon Sogavare: Point of order. Supplementary appropriations bill over all these years have never come through the Bills Committee.

Mr Kemakeza: I do not remember what the Prime Minister is saying. If it is there then he must correct his statement. Every bill must go through the Bill's Committee.

I was sitting in the kitchen yesterday evening after Parliament and I heard these people talking about going to discuss this bill. Has it been discussed at all? If not, how come it finds its way into Parliament? However, we are cowboys, so just go ahead!

Mr Speaker, as I said the money has been spent already and there is no way that anyone on this floor of Parliament will object it. But a word of warning that the policy directive is not seen here and in the reply of the Minister, because of one Minister and one department from Planning he must confirm to this Parliament that the European Union Micro projects have closed by last Friday. What is this a sign of? I want you to confirm this to Parliament. I know the Minister of Planning is fully aware of this. Things are gradually taking up their cause.

Here we are talking about our development partners coming to assist us, which I am very grateful for and I congratulate the ROC. I thank the Prime Minister for continuing with that very important relationship but things are creeping behind the doors.

Sir, I support the Bill only because the money has already been spent but next time as mentioned by the MP for Rendova/Tetepari, the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee that he should also scrutinize this Bill as a very strong backbencher of the Government to ensure that such a bill comes into this House in the right way, the right manner, the right formula and must be procedurally done. Here he is complaining about the Bill. Next time, as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, take control on behalf of the two Ministers because they have not done their homework and that is why this Bill passes through because they may have not looked at it properly.

With this, Mr Speaker I support the Bill.

Mr FONO: Mr Speaker, thank you for allowing me the floor to contribute briefly to this 2006 Supplementary Appropriation Bill 2006. From the outset I would like to thank the Minister of Finance for bringing this Bill to ask Parliament to rubberstamp, support or endorse and approve this Bill which much of the money already spent.

Sir, apart from the contingency warrant as it appears on page 3, Mr Speaker, other spending would seem to be illegal because the Parliament has not given its approval but the government continues to spend.

Mr Speaker, as a member of the Public Accounts Committee, I totally rejected this Bill yesterday on technicalities already highlighted by other speakers. For example, some of the spending here do not have any heads at all. Although shared by all other ministries, at least in previous presentations of supplementary appropriation bills, something is allotted to every ministry as well so that when it comes to the committee of supply speakers can make reference to heads. As it now appears here on page 4 some of these items do not have any head at all. To me this does not reflect a thorough consideration of this bill at the Caucus or Cabinet level. This surprises me because we have very able Ministers in Cabinet, some of whom are former Permanent Secretaries of Finance who should have scrutinized this Bill thoroughly.

Another technical problem I see is that the explanatory notes do not have heads as well – on page 7 & 8. So I do not accept the actual presentation of the Bill at the Public Accounts Committee yesterday. We also questioned as to why there was no corrigendum attached to this Bill before it comes for its second reading.

Similarly, Mr Speaker, the terminology ‘additional pressures’ or ‘recurrent pressures’, the word ‘pressure’, my background is accountant too but this is the first time I see the word ‘pressure’ used here as it is not an accounting term.

I asked the good advisors, which we have a number of them at the Finance Ministry to look for any other accounting terminologies. This is my third term in Parliament and it is the first time I see this word ‘pressures’. Is it air pressure or what sort of pressure? Mr Speaker, I

would like the officials to replace that terminology with an accounting term. These are the technical difficulties why I did not accept this Bill at the Public Accounts Committee meeting yesterday. I would like officials to come up with a redrafted bill so that it does not confuse us when it comes before the committee of supply.

Turning to the principles of the Bill and the speech made by my good friend, the Minister of Finance in moving the Bill, Mr Speaker, I can see the importance of such a supplementary appropriation to come before the House because we are now in the final quarter of the year and spending have gone beyond what have been budgeted for. The rationale behind this supplementary is very much supported to enable the government continue with its services to our people.

However, Mr Speaker, as also highlighted by other speakers, the government is now in its sixth or seventh month and therefore whatever budgets it has, it must reflect the policies of the government. Policies are mere policies that must be translated into actions, and that is why a budget is very important. That is one of the reasons why we in the Opposition issued a statement prior to this meeting expressing our disappointment over the delay in tabling the budget this year.

Six months, Mr Speaker, is more than enough time for officials and Ministers to put together a budget for 2007 reflective of your policies. We are surprised why well paid accounting officers cannot put the budget together. Is it because there is fear donors are not coming out to make any commitment to the government’s budget because of the current political stand-off that we are now experiencing, may I ask Mr Speaker?

The reasons for not putting together the appropriation bill 2007 to be debated at this meeting of Parliament is not acceptable. Our general populace would like to see the budget for next year reflecting the bottom-up approach or rural development strategy the government is producing and has been talking so much about, which influenced a number of members from the Opposition side going to join the government because they have seen good policies. My goodness!

Mr Speaker, I am surprised as though the bottom-up approach is a new concept. It is not. Previous governments have been doing it as well. And Mr Speaker, you know very well being the founding father of the nation, I think during colonial times until now we have had some developments in the rural areas as well. So for us to say this new roadmap that has been talked so much about like the Minister for Agriculture has alluded to in this House, is really not acceptable because it places very little recognition of successive governments since independence, which have also tried their best. In fact, on Malaita roads were constructed after independence, which is rural focused. And that is not a new thing.

I am saying this because since I entered Parliament, I am now implementing my third constituency development plan where it is the communities that identify their priorities. That is a bottom-up approach.

Mr Speaker, when you look at this millennium development budget of \$20million, which some called 'poverty alleviation', where are the guidelines and criteria on that policy? I want the Finance Minister to distribute in our pigeonholes this week the guidelines of this millennium development.

I have been saying this at the media when some Ministers have already announced to their constituencies that this year Parliament Members are going to receive \$1million. We have been waiting for the guidelines to that funding since. Why did you not produce the guidelines or criteria on how to access this millennium development fund?

You know what, Mr Speaker, what they are saying is creating very high hopes and expectations to our people in the constituencies. The people of some of the Ministers who have never visited their constituencies are now coming to Honiara asking for the \$1million given.

Mr Speaker, I want the Finance Minister or the Planning Minister to distribute the guideline policies on this millennium development fund. How do we access that? What will it be used for?

Mr Speaker, much has been said about policy statements. I think what the government needs to look at now are strategies on how to

implement the policy statements. Much of this rural constituency development fund is very interesting. I understand it was introduced in 1989 with \$200,000 per year. Listen carefully to me Solomon Islands. In 2003 it increased to \$400,000 per year, which means that as from 1989 up until last year 2005 each constituency should have received \$4.2 million. People in the rural areas have you seen any changes in your constituencies?

Sir, I entered Parliament in 1997 and since that time \$1.6million was given out. Not even a single project can be seen. If \$1million is given this year Mr Speaker, we are looking at \$5.2 million since 1989 up until this year if it is true that \$1million will be paid out to constituencies again. That is a lot of money Mr Speaker, and honorable colleagues to develop the constituencies that are very small. You could improve their living standards by giving them good social housing. Like I have seen recently the Minister of Mines already paying roofing irons for his constituency. That is very good. We need to improve our people's standard of living in the rural areas. People of Solomon Islands, as at the end of this year if \$ million is paid out, \$5.2million should have been paid since RCDF was introduced.

I am coming to my point Mr Speaker. The strategy in which we leaders implement the projects needs to be reconsidered again whether or not to distance Members of Parliament from the funds and use government agencies to implement the projects. Look for a better alternative. Now that some officials get their hands on other funding that come through departments, it is also frightening. Like what we have seen at Commerce and Agriculture Departments. There must be a better mechanism to implement projects in our constituencies so that this funding is tied up in social services projects like education, health, clinics and water supplies so that it improves the livelihood of our people in the rural areas.

At the same time Mr Speaker, look at a mechanism that is empowering people in the private sector. We have also forgotten the formal sector too, Mr Speaker, the 'hen that lays the golden eggs' because it is the one driving the economy. But our private sector has not been assisted with this sort of funding.

We only look at the informal sector, we only talk so much about the informal sector but many of the projects that are established today in the next few months we look for them.

What I am saying here Mr Speaker, is that it is well and good to provide millions of dollars for rural constituency funding but we need to re-look at a mechanism whereby social services projects or income generating projects are established and sustainable for improvement of the livelihood of our people. Otherwise as records have shown since 1989 up until 2005 there was already \$4.2million paid out through RCDF (Micro Projects recently), which is a lot of money for the smaller constituencies that its impact should have been felt.

What I have observed, Mr Speaker, is that much of this money, although we have heard about as huge, is used on consumable items. People come to Honiara and ask for fares to go back home and you pay them. That is why we need better guidelines, better criteria on how to implement these projects so that it goes for tangible projects in our constituencies.

I am saying this, Mr Speaker, because once we have clear guidelines funds would be used to implement projects according to each constituency plan.

Mr Speaker, I encourage new Members of Parliament to draw up constituency plan so that we look at different improving the sectors like education, health, infrastructure so that we try and use this funding on projects and not used for consumable items. Otherwise at the end of the four years there is nothing happening in our constituencies. That is basically the strategy or mechanism the government needs to put in place Mr Speaker. Otherwise we might hear of \$20 million but it only goes for consumable items and no improvement of livelihoods in our constituencies.

Mr Speaker, that is an area I want the government to really look at. I believe we have our expertise, our advisers to look at that so that they advise government to look at a best mechanism on how to implement this rural funding, otherwise our people are hearing about this funding but nothing is happening in their respective constituencies.

Mr Speaker, on the overall budget allocation, I have no problems with that, which

were also expressed in our meeting yesterday, the Public Accounts Committee. It is the technical areas of this bill that I want the Government to address. In fact if I were the Minister of Finance, I would have asked the officials to redraft this Bill to make it much easier for us to go through at the committee of supply.

With these few remarks Mr Speaker, I support the bill.

(applause)

Mr NUIASI: Mr Speaker, thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on this supplementary appropriation bill 2006. Before I speak on this important supplementary appropriation bill, I would like to thank the Minister of Finance for seeing it fit to present to this honorable House additional funding we need to expend until the end of this financial year.

Mr Speaker, I think rather than confusing ourselves with a normal budget we should see this as a supplementary budget that the government is asking an additional funding to expend what it sees as outstanding issues that needs addressing this financial year.

Mr Speaker, a lot of us have been talking about policies and guidelines to which we need to present them. As the honorable MP for West Are Are I do not expect much to be allocated to my constituency as yet in this supplementation. Because it is like a new owner of a house coming into a house and starting to clean it up. Therefore, Mr Speaker, a lot of outstanding issues that we are asking for but there is no funding for, are issues that are outstanding which the government needs to address as from now until the end of the financial year. Therefore, Mr Speaker, one can see that a lot of this funding have already been spent, and a lot of this funding that have already been spent are funds that are essential needed to be spent and the government has to do so in line with the relevant regulations or laws that are in place.

Mr Speaker, it would be unfair for us to say that the Government is not doing anything because as we all have experienced the Government has been trying to put in place its

policies, its guidelines, and more importantly to see where it can start from.

Looking at this supplementation, Mr Speaker, we are addressing some very important issues that need to be addressed now before we can start with new programs to be financially backed up. For example, the salary of Public Service is a long outstanding issue and unless we give them incentives, production that we expect from public officers will not be as of expected of the government. Likewise, the salaries of MPs that we have been talking about are salaries that have been overdue and we are implementing issues the last government has put in place but has not implemented.

Mr Speaker, the \$20million millennium funding is only here to start us off and to see how best we can utilize that funding in our own constituency. As leaders we should not only blame government for not giving us guidelines. We should also contribute towards the guidelines and work together so that we are achieved what we need to achieve for Solomon Islands.

Mr Speaker, as a new MP I need not to repeat history. I am here not to talk about the past but I am here to go forward and start to see what will be for the future of this nation as an honorable MP. Therefore, Mr Speaker, if we are fair and if we are genuine with ourselves it would only be good if we put our heads together and discuss things together especially on such important bills such as this supplementary appropriation act. And then we should be contributing towards the effectiveness or efficiency used for the funds as we see.

Mr Speaker, looking at these provisions, I think the technicality of it needs to be looked at. But one thing I can see here is that there is lack of qualified accountants in the ministries. This is the only area I think the government should look into to try and employ qualified accountants to sit there and implement things as required by the government.

Having said this, Mr Speaker, I would be very brief in contributing towards this supplementary, and I would like to thank the Minister for Finance for seeing it fit for us to clean up all these outstanding issues so that may be next year we could start with our program of action.

I am also surprised, Mr Speaker, when I heard that the Chairman of the Bills and Legislation Committee and the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee have not sighted this Bill. I think there is no use sitting waiting there for information to come. As responsible officers or honorable Members who vested with responsibilities, we should follow up and see where these things are, so that we too can contribute as the responsibility has been vested on us to see that things are done according to our expectation.

Therefore, it is only proper for every honorable MPs to work together to find out where we can help, where we can fit in, in this honorable chamber or in the Ministries or in the Provinces for that matter and contribute towards the betterment of this nation.

Mr Speaker, rather than going into detail about this supplementary appropriation bill, I support the Bill.

Mr RINI: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the floor to debate the 2006 Supplementary Appropriation Bill 2006.

Mr Speaker, when I look at this Bill it only shows two things. Firstly, there was no proper coordination in the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Finance, the various departments concerned and the Attorney General's Office in the preparation of this Bill. That is what can be seen. With all the experiences of the Ministry of Finance, the Prime Minister's Office, and even the Attorney General's Office, we can just see what they have produced. It is a shame on the government.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, when I look at this Bill it shows two parts. I do not have any problem with the first part. The first part is the Government seeking to legalize spending under the contingency warrant, and that comes to \$10 million. That is quite normal. In the main budget the government approves the contingency warrant and later on if heads are overspent then the Government can supplement spending from the contingency warrants. So I do not have any problem with the first part.

The second part that I have a problem over is the additional \$42.5million under the heading of 'additional pressures'. What sort of pressures are these? What sort of pressures are

we talking about here? These are illegal spending by the government. They are illegal spending by the government and they are now trying to come into Parliament to legalize this spending.

Mr Speaker, when this government came into power it was talking about corruption, it was talking about changing the system and that's why it has the name 'Grand Coalition for Change'. It came in and changed the whole system again.

The funds in this supplementary appropriation bill, Mr Speaker, must not be spent first unless they come before Parliament. When accounting officers saw that their heads will run out before the end of the financial year, they prepare supplementary and bring it before Parliament so that Parliament appropriate the heads to enable the services of the government to continue. That understanding was taken by the previous administration. No monies were spent until passed by this parliament. Now this government came in and changed this by going back to the old system where funds are spent first before coming to ask the Parliament to legalize the illegal spending it has made. That is what is happening here.

Mr Speaker, I am surprised that in the Translation and Implementation document of the Government launched in August this year, it talks about the programs of the government starting in May this year up until 2010. If you look at this budget there is nothing on that. Some programs in the document I referred to should start this year. But these programs are not even in the last budget or in this supplementary. That shows no coordination in the Prime Minister's Office where the policies are developed and in the Ministry of Finance where funds are allocated for implementation of the policies. I am surprised Mr Speaker, that none of the programs stated in the document launched in August this year is seen in this supplementary, nothing.

Mr Speaker, when you look at these pressure expenditures, which I called illegal expenditures, \$30million is for salaries. Is that a pressure, pressure from who? There is \$26million for Permanent Secretaries and Public Service and \$4million for Members of Parliament, which comes to \$30million for

personnel emoluments. That is all we come to create. Our people elected us so that we come here to pay ourselves. That \$30million should have gone to the bottom up approach the government is talking about. There is not even a cent in this budget that goes to this policy. Nothing.

Mr Speaker, that \$42.5million under the pressure heading is the amount the previous administration put into development budget for rural development.

If you look at last year's development budget, \$44million under SIG funding the previous government puts to rural development, it put to the Ministry of Agriculture for cocoa rehabilitation, it puts to forestry for replanting, it puts to the Ministry of Commerce for starting of business, it puts to the Ministry of Tourism for our people to engage in various businesses instead of relying on handouts that this government is trying to do.

Mr Speaker, I am surprised that this money was budgeted for last year for rural development and yet when this government came into power it spends it on services and salaries.

Mr Speaker, again when you look into this supplementary it only reflects the government's attitude of talking about something but doing a different thing altogether.

Mr Speaker, the only amount you will see here is this \$20million, and this \$20million is not a new amount. This amount was negotiated by the previous administration with the Republic of China, and so it is not a new amount.

Where is that \$44million that was budgeted for last year for rural development? Yesterday we heard the Minister of Agriculture talking about his department's priority project, the Auluta Oil Palm Project. But Auluta is not even included in this budget and yet it is a much talked about government project. The Government is saying that this project is its priority. It's a priority project of the government. Is it priority for nothing? There is no money for that priority project. It is not even in the development budget.

If you look at the development budget, the Auluta basin, the Auluta oil palm project is not in the development budget of this year. No

wonder why when Ministry officials are making payment to the Ministry Finance, the Ministry of Finance does not facilitate the payments because it is not budgeted for. It is not in last year's development budget, not in this year's supplementary budget. How can the ground breaking ceremony take place in December when there are no funds for it?

It shows very clearly too that this budget did not go through the Cabinet because if it had gone through Cabinet the Minister of Agriculture could have asked for his allocation of the oil palm project. Or perhaps the Cabinet was discussing a different bill and the officials came up with a different bill which eventually ended up here on the floor of Parliament. I have just heard the Minister of Agriculture complaining that the Cabinet approved the project but why was it not included in this supplementary. In your discussion of this Bill at the Cabinet was it not brought back to Cabinet for finalizing?

Mr Speaker, even in the Governor General's speech the government focused on three very, very important issues, which are new political directions, raising issues and identified prospects. These are very, very, important issues which are not even reflected in this supplementary. There is nothing in this supplementary to reflect those three issues.

This supplementary is only full of \$30million in salaries, foreign missions, overseas trips of the Prime Minister costing a million dollar. Where will the Prime Minister go in the next three months so that he asks for another million dollars? Security services, general owners implementation \$2million. That is a big amount of money. I can see \$2million spent on reviewing of the GO's but not the implementation. The civil servants were paid already for implementing the GOs or who are we paying this \$2million? Or are some foreigners coming to teach us how to implement the GO?

Electricity and water, telephones, Mr Speaker, I am surprised. There is nothing here for rural development, nothing on the bottom-up approach. Nothing.

What we are doing here is only giving very high hopes to people in the rural areas. We come out in the newspapers, we come out on the

radio saying this government is going to do this and that, the government is now embarking on this project but those are not reflected in this supplementary. These are just bare statements. There are no funding to implement those policies and projects.

Mr Speaker, on the \$20million millennium development fund, as I have said earlier, the last administration put funds in order for our rural people have access to this fund. Our people come to the Ministry of Agriculture because they saw the \$3million on cocoa rehabilitation and so they want to know how to access the fund. They were told there is no funding. They go to the Ministry of Forestry wanting to know how to access the \$4million on replanting because they would like to plant trees. They were told the Cabinet has to decide on the mechanism on how the fund is to be disbursed. But Mr Speaker, in reality these are just excuses, all the money has gone which is reflected in this budget.

Mr Speaker, I must stress here again and I am happy that the Minister of Finance has said that a corrigendum is going to come to correct the mistakes on this bill. I am happy he mentioned that because if that is not done then we should not accept this bill to be brought into Parliament. Now that he said a corrigendum is coming, I will reserve some of my points, queries and question when we go into the committee stage of this Bill. With these remarks Sir, I support the Bill.

Hon SOGAVARE: Mr Speaker, I would like to talk in support of this bill moved by the Minister of Finance. I am going to be very short in my contribution because most of the points have already been raised. Basically those who have spoken continue to repeat the same points and so I guess I can read where the Opposition is coming from.

Mr Speaker, the Opposition is like a boxer entering a ring and started throwing punches that do not reach the target and yet he still throws the punches. That is what it is like. In fact we are making mountains out of nothing. Mr Speaker, debate on supplementary appropriation depends on which side of the House you are sitting down. When we were on that side of the House we also fired you. We

really attack you saying the same things that you are now saying to us. Now that you are sitting on that side of the House you are firing us back because some of you are now in your third term, some six terms in the House and so we are hearing the same things. So debating supplementary appropriations is not a new thing. It is time for political groupings to try and score political points. We are not interested in scoring political points.

The point that was kept repeated by those who have spoken is that the government has been saying a lot of things. Yes, we have been saying a lot of things. The budget we are talking about here, which needs supplementation, is your budget. This is the budget of that side of the House. If we understand what supplementary appropriation is all about is exactly what the law says it is. It is your budget. We are trying to implement the programs that you are putting on us. It is just that we come in at the wrong time that we could not come up with our own budget and so we need to take up your budget.

The Government is talking about totally redirecting the direction of development in the country and so we are tied up. First you know that the budget is basically law and so we need to comply with it. We are stuck up with our program that we wanted to implement but we cannot and so we can only operate through the law on what it allows us to operate.

Mr Speaker, this hot air "where are the things you are talking about", well, you will see it in the 2007 budget. That is where you will find it. If you raise the concerns you are raising next year when the 2007 budget is tabled here then this side will have cause to answer you on those issues you are raising. This one is your budget that we are trying to fix.

Sir rural focus is a very big turn around. It is not a swing or slight jerk. It is a turnabout. The economy is going like this and you turn its head, and swing it like this. So it is quite a drastic change in the approach. Not only talk about it for the last 28 years. We are now seriously talking about setting up a framework that will actually drive this thing forward and so it takes time to settle these things. We are just five months old buddies. This Government is

just five months old and it is already facing a no confidence motion.

Mr Speaker, I just don't know where the line of thinking is here. The Ministry of Finance and Planning are working on this framework, and as soon as that is finalised the Cabinet will be looking at it, and then everybody will know how this bottom-up approach is going to work.

Of course, we have been talking about it for the last 28 years. That is only talking. This government is now trying to look at how to really do something that we have been talking about over the last twenty years.

The Member for East Are Are raised this issue about the \$200million surplus. We are also worried. The other side of the House is talking about surplus, and we have been asking where the \$200million surplus is when we were on that side. We are still asking that question. Those of us on this side of the House are asking that question. I guess that is an issue that you yourselves can sort out.

On increase of MPs salaries, if anyone of you Members do not want that increase say so and return the money so that we can give it to may be other places.

Members of Parliament in this country are underpaid. If you compare us with small countries in the Pacific like Tuvalu, before this increase they are paid higher than Solomon Islands Members of Parliament.

We are under pressure. There was much talk of leaders as corrupt and leaders facing charges of corruption, we are blamed as being corrupt, that can happen to Members of Parliament because they have to accommodate the needs of their constituencies. We are trying to address that, and for us to come on the floor of Parliament and try to shoot down the government because it is trying to address some fundamental issues, Mr Speaker, I do not think is straight. We are just making points because we are on the other side of the House.

Mr Speaker, I do not wish to talk very long on this. On other issues that Members have raised will be answered by the Minister for Planning and the Minister of Finance. They will enlighten the House on some technical questions that some Members have raised in this House.

Yes, we can confirm the \$1.75million to the constituencies, and we thank the Republic of

China for that. In fact it is the only donor that comes positively to assist the government in its programs. This is towards the \$200million micro project, \$400,000 RCDF and another \$400,000 on millennium development and poverty alleviation assistance. Then we have the \$75,000 that comes under the Parliament Office, and so it is \$1,075,000. That is quite a lot of money going to the constituencies.

There was this talk about funds in the Commerce, Tourism and Agriculture. You know what? The way those funds have been disbursed is really not right. There are investigations going on this time, and that especially reflects how we set up those systems. This government does not want to repeat that. People are paying themselves. The officers are paying themselves, the officers working in those ministries. There are some serious revelations that are starting to come up on how the so called funds that are established for supporting rural people are disbursed. This government is concerned about that and so it wants to set up a proper framework where the money is not taken up by people who live here, but it goes down to the rural areas. This is what this government stands for.

Yes, we acknowledge the fact that it is in the budget but the way it was disbursed was really not straight, and it borders on criminality on the way those funds have been implemented.

Mr Speaker, I do not want to spend more time on this, but I would like to say that I support this Supplementary Appropriation moved by the Minister of Finance.

Thank you very much.

Mr LONAMEI: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the chance to talk on this Supplementary Appropriation Bill presented by the Minister of Finance this morning.

Firstly Mr Speaker, I am going to be very brief and very short because most Members who have spoken have already spoken on the good and bad sides of the bill.

Mr Speaker, talking about the bottom-up approach and putting more emphasis on rural development, we all want that idea and so we must support it.

On the bottom-up approach, Mr Speaker, to me I translate it as to mean fairness.

Fairness in everything that we give whether it be money, resources, the types of development and infrastructure. These things should be divided equally or fairly to all the constituencies in the country.

Mr Speaker, when you look at the Supplementary Appropriation Bill, one of the things I see that will be fair to everybody is the \$20 million millennium fund, a new item in this supplementary appropriation bill.

Mr Speaker, we are very good in saying that money like this and that is going to come, making people to have high expectation. But now the fund is not available. We are now just discussing it for approve.

Mr Speaker, a lot of people in the constituencies have already come asking MPs about the \$1million. They want the money. Mr Speaker, I think it will be this time that this money will be made available. I think we should come up with policies on how we are going to spend the money. I think it would be better if the Government or the Ministry of Planning come up with the criteria. If you want us to plan it ourselves then inform us properly so that I can start drawing up my own criteria on how I am going to spend this money.

Mr Speaker, others have already raised the RCDF, the micro project and now this millennium fund that MPs are going to receive. The constituencies that have a good Member, the people will benefit from these funds and they will appreciate these funds. But the constituencies whose Members are not good and do not recognize their people, no matter how many millions are given in the form of the RCDF and micro projects, the people are still going to say that they are not seeing anything or there has been no better things happening in the constituencies.

I think we need to have policy guidelines that all of us will work according to. I think that was the point raised by others in here. Mr Speaker, I think for fairness of this money that is going to come, I think all the 50 constituencies will have a very good fair share of money to spend on our constituencies.

Mr Speaker, the Government has said that a lot of improvements and many of the things we are talking about will be included in the 2007 Budget. I would like to say that any

developments, for example, cocoa, coconut and others should be equally distributed to the constituencies so that every constituency should at least have a cocoa project or a coconut project or something like that. I think many constituencies are really missing out on areas like this.

The same is on tourism, Mr Speaker. I see in the Supplementary Appropriation Bill we are discussing now we are going to approve \$309,000 for the MSG Meeting that is going to be held on Buala, Isabel. Mr Speaker, other previous MSG Meetings held in Auki, Gizo, I heard and know that millions of dollars were spent on those MSG meetings. For Buala MSG Meeting, it is only \$309,000. "Million dollar lelebet".

If we had asked the MSG Meeting monitors, they will tell you that the Buala Meeting is the one they will never forget with this \$300,000 only. I heard the delegates saying that if they were to come back for another MSG it must be Buala again.

Mr Speaker, I think for fairness of the things we are talking about, if millions of dollars are spent in Auki and million dollars in Gizo, why not spend million dollars too in Ysabel?

Mr Speaker, I am going to talk again during the debate on the Speech from the Throne in regards to fairness when I will elaborate further on what I am trying to say here.

With those very few and short remarks, Mr Speaker, I support this Bill so that the government can continue with its services and projects.

Mr SOALAOI: Thank you Mr Speaker, for allowing me the floor of Parliament to contribute to this supplementary appropriation bill. I would I like to stress it again that it is supplementary.

Mr Speaker, first of all I want to thank the Minister of Finance for the supplementary appropriation bill and I think this a timely bill. To me Mr Speaker, when I look at the heads under this supplementary appropriation bill it reflects a very nature of the 2006 budget.

When we have such supplementary appropriation bill Mr Speaker, it simply means that do not make any proper estimates in this budget. And I would like to say here Mr

Speaker, that it is not good for you to say all sorts of things in this House. To me this bill it looks very simple and I think it is good that it is simple because there are people here who cannot even understand simple things.

When we talked about the technicalities of this supplementary appropriation bill, I note all of us know that the purpose of this supplementary appropriation bill is for legalizing the spending of the government.

And I have a lot of trust in the experience of the Minister of Finance then I don't think there is any illegal or any corruption in this supplementary appropriation bill as I have already heard some of the statements are not good in my ears.

Mr Speaker, what I would like to say is I think its hypocrite critical for someone to standing up and say, MPs salary is not appropriate at this time when you are a Member of Parliament. The public knows that you are not saying the truth when you are a Member of Parliament and you against increase of Members salary. And I believe our public officers and the public also knows that it is only natural for decision makers to facilitate for increases of other officers if they are well paid Mr Speaker. I don't think somebody in a decision making level body will be willing enough to facilitate any demands from lower officers if you will see himself or herself is underpaid Mr Speaker. I also believe the increase in Members of Parliament salary will improve or will help Members of Parliament to give to the people what belongs to the people.

Mr Speaker, what has been happened in the past I don't want to dwell on it but I just want to mention the reason why most members of Parliament have to choose RCDF Mr Speaker, is because the constituents is asking money from them everyday without knowing that pay day is only twice a month, and it is not every day.

So Mr Speaker, what you usually find is that members of Parliament misuse the RCDF not because they want to misuse it, but because they do not want to turn back their constituents because members do not want to lose in the next election.

Mr Speaker, like I already said on my contribution to this supplementary appropriation

budget, I don't see anything wrong or anything suspicious in this supplementary appropriation bill Mr Speaker, except that I think we need to know the reason why we have a supplementary appropriation bill because we cannot move programs or we cannot move on without this supplementary appropriation bill.

Let me re-emphasise it once again Mr Speaker, Sir, that the reason why we have a supplementary appropriation bill shows that the current budget which we are operating in fails to make accurate estimates so that is why we have to supplement.

Mr Speaker, I hope this is very clear and I am not saying any parables here. The other thing in this supplementary appropriation bill, I am very delighted that there is a \$20million allocations for a millennium development fund which will be used in the rural areas and that is one beautiful thing about this supplementary appropriation bill.

And I think our people will receive this with open arms since this \$20million can be spent in the rural areas Mr Speaker.

I fail to see Mr Speaker, that we need to say a lot of things especially the new spending in here. If I weigh it there are 11 heads and about three quarter of it simply there is a need to make a supplementary appropriation like I already said Mr Speaker, if we don't do it then where else do we get the money to carry on the normal business of the government.

Had the former Finance Minister and my good friend the former Prime Minister coordinate well on this current budget I think there would not be any supplementary appropriation or maybe the supplementary appropriation bill might be less than \$72million as this one in here Mr Speaker.

Lastly, before I finish Mr Speaker, I would like to say that the reason why we don't have the budget debated in this sitting is that I don't know about others but I understand that this is not the right time as we have only been in power for 5 months, and I am urging all members of Parliament to understand the amount of work that needs to be done when you have the new administration, new Permanent Secretaries and if we continue to act anti government then we are not providing any direction for government to follow the right part.

All my good members on the Opposition side as far as I know he was supposed to be an alternate government. Mr Speaker, the way I see it today start come yesterday when I heard some MPs contribution. Not the alternative government we have on the side looks like we have anti government no more.

How will you playing the as a watch dog or somebody for you directing the government for running this country, the thing we can do better than that if we work together and this is I am urging all of us to work together for the good of this nation.

I believe Mr Speaker, and I know that if during the time we like to implementing the policies that are in the interest of the population, some of our people which are been in the policies for quite some time and just for interest for one person, it will not good to him yea Mr Speaker. And I think not every good policies will be receive with open arms and I understand why there is a lot of criticism against this bottom up approach.

Let us differentiate between talking about rural development and doing it I think we been talking about it for the last 28 years

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Hon Soalau: rural development and doing it. I think we have been talking about it for the last twenty years. Mr Speaker, excuse me, I was born when our country was born, and I would just like to say that if this government wants to do it rather than continue to talk about it for another four years, we really need understanding and support both from the Opposition and government officials to push this bottom-up approach forward.

Without saying much Mr Speaker, I would like to conclude by supporting the motion.

(applause)

Mr HAOMAE: Mr Speaker, my contribution will be very brief. I am duty bound at the outset to thank the Honorable Minister of Finance for

bringing this important Supplementary Appropriation Bill to Parliament for its deliberations.

I will offer a few observations on this bill. The objective of my observation is to be helpful to the government.

The first observation is that this bill is a last meeting bill. I can bet that the corrigendum to this Bill is being prepared on the drawing boards of the Ministry of Finance as I speak, and that is why I think this Bill is a last minute bill and is injustice to the dignity of Parliament, if I may say so.

I think this last minute bill comes about because the Ministries appear to be building separate empires within the government circle. One ministry is doing its own thing and another ministry is doing its own until they are no longer working together as one government for purposes of advancing the policies of the government to be in place.

For purposes of coordination, I would like to press on my friend the Prime Minister to coordinate the ministries and departments so that they work together and not building of empires like an empire in the Ministry of Mines and Energy and so on. That is just an example and I do not want to pick on any particular ministry. But I want to offer that particular observation, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, I want to know whether the salary of teachers is in this bill to increase the salaries of the public servants. I have just returned from Small Malaita last Friday, and the teachers in my constituency are not teaching the students because they are concern about their conditions of service.

What is happening? I understand that the last government has sorted the terms and conditions of teachers already. Up until now nothing has been done. Why, Mr Speaker? It is the Ministry's problem or what? I want to know whether any increases are included in this bill.

I know that there has not been any agreement yet in place, and I want to know from the Minister of Education what is happening here. If this is not sorted out soon our children will not be going to school, the primary schools. That is my concern.

I wonder whether discussions by the government with appropriate authorities

representing the teachers, the conclusions or agreements are reflected in this supplement. I am very concerned about this Mr Speaker. I do not know about the Members who do not go to their constituencies. But I have already said that I have just returned from the Small Malaita Constituency, and I feel sorry for the children in primary schools in my constituency that they are not at school.

If that situation replicates the situation all over the country, Mr Speaker, then I am very sorry for our children throughout the four corners of this country. I want you to address this problem as soon as possible. What is so fussy about it? The Police, the Nurses and the public servants have already been addressed so why not address the teachers. Or are teachers second grade public servants. We must address this very quickly and I ask the Government to explain whether any agreements ready so far pertaining to negotiations between teachers and the government is reflected within this supplementary. Otherwise I do not have any problem with this Bill. It is just a straightforward bill. Part of it is already dead and we are now doing a postmortem of it. But I want the government to explain why the situation on teachers are dragging on so long and whether any agreements in place is reflected in this Bill.

Sir, in any case I have no choice and so I support the Bill.

Mr Speaker: Just a point of order. With all due respect to the honorable Minister for Finance, he may be in breach of Standing Orders 37(d) making unnecessary noise when someone is talking.

Hon DARCY: Mr Speaker, first of all I would like to thank the Minister of Finance that in spite of his physical health condition he was able to bring this Bill to this House.

Mr Speaker, when I heard a lot of things being said by some of the speakers in relation to the debate of this Bill, I wonder whether or not we really understand what is being put forward to this House now. As the Prime Minister has rightly stated, this Bill is just to supplement the Appropriation.

The Appropriation Bill for this year is something that those of you on that side of the House have already passed. What we are basically doing here is bringing in a bill to supplement what has been seen now as inadequate provisions in the budget or it may not have been provided for in the Budget. And there are constitutional basis for these items.

The Constitution provides power and what will be the make up of a supplementary appropriation. I would like to remind this House of those provisions in the constitution. The first provision is section 103(2) of the Constitution, which provides for a supplementary appropriation to be brought to legalize and authorize the expenditures that are provided under a contingency warrant. If you look at it, this contingency warrant is in relation to expenditures that have been put in the appropriation act and may be because the provisions in there are not sufficient and therefore the contingency warrant is there for the Ministry of Finance to execute an additional provision of expenditure to be allocated to that particular budget. That is the basis of a supplementary appropriation.

The second provision for a supplementary appropriation is section 102(3) of the constitution. It reads, "If in respect of any financial year it is found that a sum appropriated by the appropriation act for any purpose is insufficient or that a need has arisen for expenditure for a purpose for which no sum has been appropriated by that law, a supplementary estimate showing the sums required shall be included in a supplementary appropriation bill for appropriation. That is exactly what we are doing here.

As soon as this government comes into power we found that the sums or there are certain expenditure levels that need to be, and it is essential for the purpose of running of the government but is not provided for in the Appropriation Act and therefore, the law says you have to bring it to Parliament in the form of a supplementary appropriation. Those are the two basis of the supplementary appropriation.

If you look at the make up of this bill you will find that that is exactly what is being shown here.

Mr Speaker, in terms of the execution of the contingency warrant, if we had done our estimation properly at the time when we make up the appropriation act, there would not be any need for a contingency warrant. If you look at the expenditures we are required to supplement by way of contingency warrant, those activities have been set by the previous government. They have agreed upon them and instead of providing the appropriate provisions for those expenditures in the budget, they have under estimated them, and therefore, when the time comes for us to deliver the expenditure we find ourselves in a situation that there is a shortfall in the provision, and therefore we have to execute the contingency warrant to provide for them.

We can be critical about these expenditure but these expenditures are not ours. For instance, Forum Economic Ministers Meeting, which is a very important meeting we have hosted organized was well implemented, it went on very well. That was a bid made by the previous government. But when the time came for us to host that meeting there was insufficient provision in the budget to provide for it.

You cannot say why has this government brought this supplementary to supplement that particular head. There is a need for it and that is why we have to provide for. But who planned for that expenditure? It was the previous government.

I am saying this just to show that we have to really understand what a supplementary appropriation is. I am saying that there are constitutional bounds of how a supplementary is made. And there are only two provisions in the constitution that allows us to do it. Section 103(2) of the constitution in relation to legalising a contingency warrant and section 102(3) in the case of a new expenditure we find that during the course of the year there has to be expenditure expended to carry out those activities but there are inadequate provisions of expenditure for those purposes.

Mr Speaker, I feel it is important for us to understand this so that we do not go outside of the way we talk. I would like to refer to the way, for instance the MP for Savo/Russells who said that he sees this bill in two contexts. One – we must not create enemies, and secondly we must not use the name of God in vain.

Mr Speaker, this bill does not in any way create an enemy with anyone. It is basically bringing in something the Constitution says it must be done in this House, and that is to legalize a contingency warrant, and extra expenditure must also be brought into this House. That is all.

This Bill does not say that we want to gear up some kind of war against somebody somewhere. No! I do not see that in here. Nothing in here too shows that this Bill in a way is trying to portray that this government in a way is taking the name of the Almighty in vain. No. Nothing at all.

When this kind of debate happens in this House, we are basically getting ourselves away from really the subject of the matter that is being presented in this House. I feel very sorry when we started to hear all these things because it really put us in a very awkward situation to be seen by people, our public and our citizens in the way we debate in this House.

But let me just say about some of the points that have been raised in relation to guidelines in the way that we should be setting out the funding. Mr Speaker, people have been saying about so many funding that have been made and geared towards rural developments, and some mentions have been made about allocation to tourism, forestry, cocoa and copra, small business assistance, which are all aimed at promoting rural developments.

Of course, Mr Speaker, in the current year's appropriation act we have seen a lot of these funding geared towards rural development. The sad thing is that right now as we are speaking, there is an investigation going on in a good part of some of these funding as the Prime Minister has been saying. And in fact some of those initial findings borders around criminality and this is why we have to be very careful in the way we bring in this kind of scheme into this House, in the way we want to try to appropriate them to deliver to the rural people.

This government is very careful about that. Guidelines will be given out as and when decisions are made. As soon as Parliament passes this supplementary appropriation bill, guidelines will be put out on this new Millennium Development Fund so that we do not fall into the same pitfalls that we have fallen

into in some of these previous rural development funding arrangements Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, something has been mentioned about the situation of why is it that we have seen the pressure for expenditure on the salaries of public servants. Mr Speaker, the composition of the public service in Solomon Islands includes the public service in the general cadre, Teaching Services Commission, those recruited under the Judicial and Legal Services Commission and Prison Services Commission and so on. If we come in here and say that teachers are not included in the public service emoluments then that is wrong. In fact they are included.

It is not the question of funding that is the question here. It is really to do with negotiating and agreeing on certain formulas on the demands that have been put forward by the unions and the Teaching Service Commission. But in terms of provisioning it is included and therefore the MP for Small Malaita should be rest assured that as soon as those negotiations are concluded, the provision that is before us in this Supplementary will enable that new scheme of service to be implemented.

Mr Speaker, on the question of the format there will be a corrigendum brought in, and it is quite normal that any changes to a bill can only be made, not in the second reading, but it has to be in the committee of supply. That is why the corrigendum has to be presented at that time so that the appropriate changes we have to make have to be made, but it does not change the allocations in the bill.

What we are basically saying is that the formatting of the bill has to be made in the right way so that it can be properly understood as and when the bill is put into operation. Therefore that will be made as and when we reach the committee of supply stage.

I think with all the comments that have been put together this Bill is well understood and I don't intend to dwell much on it. The two points I would like to raise is that the constitutional basis of a supplementary appropriation are those two parts - section 102(3) of the Constitution and section 103(2) of the Constitution.

With those remarks, I support the Bill.

Mr TOZAKA: Mr Speaker, as a new Member of Parliament, I still have to learn the nuts and bolts of the procedures and systems in Parliament and so there is not much choice for some of us to be able to constructively and meaningfully contribute as other Members.

This Bill has come at hand to some of us just this morning. I did not have the time to be able to go through it to be able to make constructive and meaningful contribution. We have already heard the level of debate on this Bill. There were some comments made that this bill is very simple and therefore it should pass through this House without any problem.

Mr Speaker, as I understand it anything that comes into this House is not simple. They are very important and so we are supposed to attach importance to this Bill.

Mr Speaker, I too like other honorable colleagues who have spoken do not have much choice in supporting this bill. My people of North Vella have given me the mandate to be very responsible in my capacity as their Member representing them on this side of the House, but to give leadership face on the policies of the government. And I have honorably been doing this particular task that I have been given to support the new policy directives of the government.

Sir, most of the debate on this bill I think came about basically because our people including ourselves know that according to the ministerial system of government this is normally the time to debate the national budget. This is the day to do that. They expect that this time we should be debating the national budget, a budget that should be reflecting the policies of the government. My people are very happy and pleased with the policy directive of the government almost 100% based on turning our direction from where we are now back to the rural areas. That is what is called the bottom up holistic approach Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, when I come here after visiting my constituency, I am expecting a budget so that we can start afresh next year. I accept the explanation by the honorable Prime Minister of the awkward situation this government is in when it came into power because a budget was already approved. And that is the budget of the previous government.

Sir, I would have thought therefore that priority should be made for us to come up collectively. The debate on this small piece of administrative bill should not have come had we come out with a national budget.

Mr Speaker, the inability or the lateness for us in producing a national budget for our country is very disappointing. I am very disappointed. And if I am disappointed and my people of North Vella are disappointed it is not good.

Mr Speaker, most Honourable Members and Ministers from the other side know very well that the situation we are in is not new. The overlap situation between this present government and the outgoing government that produced this situation warranting the introduction of this supplementary bill is not new. At that time we do not have the capacity or we do not have the manpower capacity that the government of today has. The luxuries of manpower that we have in the departments. I am amazed that we have the capacity. We have the skills it is here with us, it is in our hands. The question is why are we not producing, why are we not delivering or not producing? What is the problem? It is six months or five months now since this government came into power. The Honorable Prime Minister will know himself as a former Permanent Secretary. We have been given less time, but because of our commitment, of our discipline and of our allegiance, we have to do the job and come up with what the government has directed today. The very big question here is that the harvest is ready, the people in the rural areas are ready to start working.

We cannot produce because the budget is not ready. I do not want to speak at length on this Bill as it is merely an administrative piece of bill that we have just to prove. But I just want to say it is sad that we are supposed to be debating a government budget together with its policy directives, and that is possible.

Mr Speaker, as other MPs have already said it is important at this crucial time of our country, it is very important that we revisit once again our government machineries. They are important. Government organizations are variables or means of moving the government as has been highlighted in this honorable House.

Most important of all is coordination and leadership. These are important components. We need to give leadership face on this situation. We cannot just play politics and continue debating and boast here. There is no time for boasting here. There is no time to boast. We are in a time that we have to work together.

Sir, I would like to support this bill. As I said we cannot object it because most of what is in it have already been spent, and it is a spending bill and so I would like to accordingly support it. Let it be down in the records that I am supporting this bill with disappointment that the budget proper is not ready and is not late and we are not in a position to oppose it. Thank you.

Mr TORA: Mr Speaker, thank you for allowing me this chance to take the floor this morning to contribute briefly to the 2006 Supplementary Appropriation Bill 2006. Let me first of all thank the Honorable Minister for Finance and Treasury and his officials for making this document possible to be tabled in Parliament for endorsement or blessing.

Mr Speaker, much has been said about this Bill by both sides of the House. Sir, without prolonging the debate on this Bill, I would like to contribute briefly of my observations on this bill.

The first observation is consultation. In my view, there are lots of criticisms and arguments about this bill this morning because of poor consultation between departments and the appropriate committees. I wonder whether there are any inputs from the departments on the draft before the bill is finalized finalization ready for the Minister to table in Parliament.

In my view, I believe there is no input and that is why you hear criticisms in the debates by this side of the House. Criticisms, as we all know, are sometimes constructive criticisms and some are not. I would like to ask the other side of the House, the Government to take note of constructive criticisms made about this Bill. It is very important to take note.

To admit mistakes is another thing. Sometimes we human beings know we make mistakes but do not want to admit it. This is a good advice to the government side that if there are any mistakes, anything we may have cited

that are not in line with the thinking of the 50 Members of Parliament for the good of the people in the rural areas and this nation as a whole, before this bill is to be tabled in Parliament it must be well scrutinized by appropriate committees or authorities.

Mr Speaker, I wonder whether this bill is properly scrutinized before it is brought into Parliament. There are lots of loopholes in this bill that needs patching up before it is brought to this House so that it narrows the debate on this very thin, six pages paper. This is because it means a lot to us.

Sir, I do not object the Minister of Finance for bringing this bill to Parliament because he must do it for the sake of delivering goods and services to our people. Mr Speaker, we have heard a lot of criticisms about this bill from this side of the House. That is usual, and we must accept it because without constructive criticisms we cannot learn or realize the mistakes we make.

Like other speakers have said in their debate this morning, there is something missing in this bill - something that would benefit our people in the rural areas, like agriculture and so forth.

One of my colleague MPs mentioned something about the teachers' salaries and the Minister responsible for Planning and Aid Coordination told the floor this morning that the salaries of teachers is included. I am going to keep his words because most teachers are still in Honiara trying to get some financial assistance to support themselves and their families. They should by now go back to their respective schools to teach our children. I wonder whether the Minister responsible for planning is telling the truth in this Honorable Chamber for saying that the salaries of teachers is included. If it is included in the bill then well and good because that is an incentive to our teachers to enable them teach our children.

Mr Speaker, I do not have anything to object this bill because it must pass this morning and it must go through the procedures so that the government can continue with its services. But again I want to reiterate that in future any criticisms of this bill by this side of the House must be accepted so that we can correct it. So that when we bring in any bill of this nature in

the future both sides of the House are happy because it will benefit respective constituencies or people in the rural areas. Of course, not forgetting our city, Honiara or our urban centres, they too need to be developed because these centres are where our young people will come in. That is why it is important to decentralize development and finances to the provinces so that it holds back our young people in the provinces. Instead of coming to Honiara seeking employment they go back to their provinces.

Mr Speaker, let me reiterate what I had just said. Consultation is very important. Permanent Secretaries go back to your departments and talk with your senior staff. What about the Department of Infrastructure, do you have money to subsidize all local ship-owners so that sea fares and freight charges are affordable to our people, our travelers.

Today, Mr Speaker, our people find it very hard to bring their produce to Honiara or the market centres because of very high freight charges and unreliable shipping services to the rural areas. Some provinces have their own shipping services, other provinces don't, and this is where the government should come in to look at these kinds of services. Some provinces that do not have reliable shipping services have a lot of copra. They produce copra, cocoa and timber but because of poor shipping services they just sit down, and are not able to pay their children's school fees.

Just a reminder again that I would like to see in future national budgets an increase allocation to Infrastructure Development so that it can subsidize our local ship owners. We must help them because they are carrying out services instead of the government. They are doing it on our behalf - they service our people.

Mr Speaker, nothing is wrong with this bill as it is done according to the constitution. Otherwise I want to see a well prepared paper before presenting to Parliament, and that is why you hear a lot of criticisms from this side of the House. If it is straight and nothing wrong with it or everything that 50 MPs would like to see for their own constituencies are included, then I do not think the debate on this bill will take a whole day.

Mr Speaker, with those few remarks, I would like once again thank the Honourable Minister and I believe may be after two or three more speakers he should wind up the debate so that we can continue with other business.

With those few remarks, I support the bill and resume my seat.

*Sitting is suspended for lunch break at 12 pm
until 1.30pm*

Hon TOSIKA: Mr Speaker, I too would like to contribute to the debate on the 2006 Supplementary Appropriation Bill 2006 moved by the Minister for Finance. Before doing so, I first of all would like to thank the Minister for presenting the Bill to the floor of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, if we look at the RCDF (Rural Constituency Development Fund) together with the Millennium Goal of \$400,000, which is just recently introduced under this bill, a Parliament Member will be entitled to get \$3.2million per year. This will go towards all developments in our respective constituencies.

My opinion in here is that the present government has, in the next three months, placed as important to see that all MPs should actively participate and involve the constituency with this \$400,000 to see people starting to do things in the productive sector, like cocoa and copra in most of the constituencies.

Mr Speaker, from past experiences we have been giving free handouts to people and there is no production taking place in all the constituencies. For example, if you open a market for people in the respective constituencies by buying copra and cocoa with this fund (this can be a revolving fund for all the constituencies) you will see a turnout in rural development and also the millennium goal fund. Take for example, North Malaita where I come from but I am representing West Honiara, cocoa and copra is the main stay of the constituency.

If we would like people to participate in the productive sector, it means we set a buying point and our people from elsewhere would come in to buy copra and cocoa.

At this point in time whilst we are talking, there is a European group who is now already engaged in buying copra in North Malaita. If these funds are really used for that

purpose, you will see people clearing up their cocoa farm, clearing up their coconut plantation and actually participate to increase the production of those products. Allow people to sweat to receive money and not just free handouts. If that is happening everybody will contribute towards development in the constituency because when they get money from resources like copra and cocoa they will inject their funds into other areas like running a canteen, running a bakery or even running an industry they have seen in their vision that they have the capability to venture into.

Sir, I am a new Member of Parliament and I see this as a growing concern for all of us. That when the RCDF is dished out to MPs and soon the Millennium Goal, which we will be dishing out to people very soon you will see people coming in, trying to force their way in just to give them what they wanted and after consuming it, the money is gone.

My thinking is if we want to see this money evolve for the next three years we have to put it into the productive line where there is an input transformation and an output, otherwise even though we might talk about this over and over again, there will be no increase in production, there will be no participation by rural dwellers.

Sir, the bottom up approach must begin from a constituency set up. A person has to have a vision and the vision must be part of that person before he can have an innovative mind and discipline to go forward. If a person has no skill, no vision how can he fulfill the desires that he wants because there is nothing implanted into his conscience to see that the future is there for him. At least in most cases it happens. You just give money to people who vision, and even we ourselves do not have visions for our constituencies.

Unless and until such time we have a vision and we accept the visions of those people, we can put it into a vibrant strategy to organize ourselves to see development activities happening in our constituencies. We have talked about all these for the past 28 years now and little seen in those constituencies.

Sir, I urge all parliamentarians that as soon as we receive the \$400,000 under the

millennium goal poverty alleviation, I hope we will not do the same with it like the RCDF.

I am surprised that some Members who have been in Parliament now for quite a number of terms are questioning where the development fund is. Don't you know that you have taken the Rural Constituency Development Fund all those terms? Don't you realize that those funds are for rehabilitation of our people to ensure they participate in the productive sector?

I believe if all of us had injected that money into the productive line, we will see a difference in our constituencies throughout the nation. For example, if each Member gets \$1.6million, 50 Members would get \$80million per term and if a Member is here for 10 years you would have received \$320million for four terms. If you are here for four or three terms it means you would have received \$240million. So this is quite a substantial amount of money that we have been injecting into the rural sector already. But we haven't seen any positive outcome of those money.

I urge all Members not to point fingers at each others but try to coordinate ourselves into a community or a constituency whereby we would fully realize the importance of those monies so that we can develop our constituency into a vibrant and self reliant constituency.

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

In the absence of the mover of the motion, the debate on the supplementary appropriation bill is adjourned for the next day.

MOTIONS

Vote of Thanks

The debate on the motion to thank His Excellency the Governor-General for the Speech from the Throne by the Deputy Prime Minister continues

Mr NUIASI: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for allowing me to briefly contribute to this very important Speech from the Throne delivered to us by His Excellency, the Governor General.

Mr Speaker, I for one as a new MP is gaining experience and when this Speech came

in front of me, it was to me an overview plan of the government of the day's program of action that it intended to carry out over the four years that it would be in office.

Having looked through it, Mr Speaker, I found that the speech was eloquently presented by His Excellency, the Governor General. It detailed programs to which the new government is intending and it contains areas which the government intends to work on. To me the speech itself is very clear and understandable.

Mr Speaker, as it is a report we cannot expect detailed information about the government's program of action. It will be very brief, but brief as it is, it gives me an overview and it gives me an outlook of what is and what will be happening over the next four years.

Mr Speaker, the speech in itself is very clear and I would like to thank His Excellency for presenting a clear speech that has detailed and contains the programs and activities the government of the day intends to present.

Mr Speaker, all of us are talking about the 85% population in the rural areas. As a new MP I have always said that I will not talk about the past. My interest for being a MP in this honourable House is for me to rather see all parliamentarians, whether we be from Opposition or from the Government side, I consulting each other. In this regard, Mr Speaker, I would find it very easy to work along with the National Parliament.

Mr Speaker, it is surprising to me to see us pointing fingers at each other. I think that is not a Melanesian way of working and doing things together. In the societies we come from things are talked about together regardless of differences, regardless of what area they come from, their difficulties and differences are talked about together and a solution arrived at whereby leaders and chiefs will work on and peace prevails.

Likewise, Mr Speaker, I am thinking along this line if we parliamentarians could think like this. As all of us are Melanesian in our own society having our cultural background which we were brought up in, it will be only good that we should all put our heads together to discuss issues of concern for the betterment of Solomon Islands in the next couple of years.

Mr Speaker, I am not accusing anyone but I am a man of my own principles. What I would like to see regardless of which government comes into power is that there are funds available to develop West AreAre Constituency.

In think over the past years we have been neglected. Not one single development is even established in West Are Are. To date we are trying our best to identify and to come up with some programs to be presented to the government so that at least we get a share of the cake as well with others when it comes to rural development or for that matter industrial development.

Mr Speaker, people in my constituency were happy when they heard about the Warokai Industrial Centre. To date nothing has been heard, and I am sorry to say that we have been left out again to make way for major development in my constituency.

I am not too sure what is wrong but as far as the landowners are concern they are more than willing to offer their piece of land for the development. However, Mr Speaker, as I have just come in I'll follow up this issue and see where this issue has been laid and may be persuade it so that development takes place in my constituency.

Mr Speaker, having no difficulties and finding no difficulties in reading this speech, and having a clear mind with this report, I am asking all honorable Members to support the speech and give time to the government of the day to establish and ensure these policies are put in place by having a budget that would reflect all these program of actions.

Without further ado, as I have already said I would be very brief, I would like once to again thank His Excellency the Governor General for having presented this important speech and to ask each and everyone of us the parliamentarians to work together so that we put in place in 2007 an appropriation ordinance that would reflect what we are concern about, the rural development as far as I am concern that is where I want things to happen and to start off.

People in the rural areas are the resource owners and unless we give the opportunity to start exploiting their own resources and identifying projects that are conducive to their

living, nothing much will happen. If we give them the responsibility in identifying all these things, they will see that these people will feel owned and they will just be proud as anyone to implement and to work with the national government in trying to achieve objectives the government puts to them. There will be a difference.

When we talk about changes, to me changes do not happen when we talk about it. Changes must happen with us the parliamentarians as individuals. We must accept each other, we must accept ourselves to work together before we can change or we can redirect developments in our own constituency Mr Speaker.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker Sir, I have no difficulties as I have already said, but just to say thank you and I support the speech that has been presented to Parliament. Thank you Sir.

Hon SANGA: Mr Speaker, I rise to contribute to the debate of this motion. I wish to thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to contribute to the debate. But before I do so let me say that His Excellency has graced this Parliament with his presence. He has delivered a splendid speech and I wish to thank him on behalf of my constituent for his kind words.

Mr Speaker, I will be brief and will confine myself to His Excellency's remarks on the Public Service. But before I do so, I wish to say something generally about the speech. Sir, a lot has been said already about that speech during this debate. Many have spoken in support while others either made very useful observations or were quite critical. Some have claimed that the issues contained in the speech are no different from what they were doing in the past. In fact one particular speaker said that the issues raised are no different from what they were trying to also address in previous years.

Sir, no matter what angle the speakers might have come from, I nonetheless wish to commend them for being able to recognize the issues. However, Mr Speaker, I wish to make this observation. What we need to realize is that in the last 28 years or so of political independence, what each successive governments have been good at is answering the questions 'what' and 'why'. They championed

identifying what they perceive as problems. They were good at stating what they want to do. They are good at arguing for and giving reasons as to why they want something done. When it comes to the question how should we organize or strategize, this is where the problem lies with the past governments.

How to get things done is past governments have limitations on. Past governments did very little so that the approach has always been top down. Past government readily accepted what was proposed by donors.

Mr Speaker, when we scan the very important programs in the past such as cattle-under-trees, the multi-million dollar rural services project, the many fisheries centres throughout the country, to name a few.

We find that there were misfits between the projects and the context within which the projects were located. There was lack of enthusiasm from local stakeholders or if there was any at all, the excitements were short lived. If you ask what happens to this multimillion dollar projects, no one in the present generation would know something about them or trace their remains.

Mr Speaker, if I were to make any observation at all, the speech from the throne merely reinforces this Government's effort to try and address the issues that this country has been struggling with for the past years.

Really Sir, this government is trying to say that how to get things done is through the bottom up approach strategy. People in certain quarters might say this is rhetoric, but I would like to suggest that this Government has for the first time in the country's history come up with a strategy on how our people in the rural areas can be effectively empowered.

The Government acknowledges in a tangible manner that our people in the rural sector are the ones that own the resources. They must be given the opportunity to be active players in development. They must access finance, they must not be alienated or sidelined and be spectators with arms folded. They must get involved and not just watch while others seem to be enforcing things on them. They must be supported and the Government is creating opportunities to empower them. This is where this government is coming from.

Mr Speaker, I would like to say although this may sound good and appears attractive, our own people must respond to this.

First, we as Parliamentarians must provide leadership. A lot of resources are now being shifted under our care and therefore we must be honest with our people and guide them in identifying what is best for them. We must also be careful not to use people's name to qualify usage of funds which are due to them in order to amass huge assets which we later may claim as our own.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, our own people must be willing players, they must free up resources, they must be reasonable and nurture the efforts. They must have a new mind set and have good attitude towards business. They must not kill the business when it is still not making any dividend.

In essence, Mr Speaker, my observation is that what the bottom up approach is all about is partnership between government and resource owners. It is about creating opportunities for our people and empowering them.

Mr Speaker, I said earlier that I will confine my contribution to the Public Service. Sir, it is common knowledge that the Government relies on the Public Service to deliver its policies. His Excellency in his speech has put it quite consciously that the Public Service is the conduit through which services are delivered, and yet over the years the Service received a lot of criticisms from the public and at times from this chamber. There were negative comments on the Service than praise for the good work that Public Servants have done.

Mr Speaker, I think it is fair to say that it is the Public Service that has provided services to citizens. In the difficult years it is true that services were at the lowest, but in spite of very limited resources, many Public Servants have shown resilience, commitment, and dedication despite being under very difficult situation. Some risk their lives for standing up to try and enforce the rules of law and good work practices.

Mr Speaker, now that we have come this far, it is the Government's intention that we revitalize and improve the service. Sir, we would like to look at the reforms and with the assistance of RAMSI we will take the lead in

mapping out the kind of reforms that are envisaged.

In this regard, we will look at the structures. The new direction is to support the government's bottom up strategy. The obvious thing is therefore to review the structures in order to facilitate government policies.

Mr Speaker, such review is likely to affect areas that will support our effort to empower the rural sector. That being said, I would like to personally incline to see that an overall review of the government ministerial structure should also be done. This is to allow for redirection of resources to provinces to improve advocacy for each province so that each province has a voice directly in both the Cabinet and Parliament. We have to respond in reviewing and improving processes, systems and procedures of the government.

Sir, the new development approach will engage rural people, but I think we have to realize that we have obstacles such as low literacy and ignorance about government workings. Therefore, a lot of processes and procedures may have to be simplified in order for rural people to understand and be more responsible.

Mr Speaker, we must also acknowledge that although we will pay more attention to the rural sector, it is important that issues of good governance must be heeded. That is, there must be transparency, there must be accountability and people must be responsible for what they have been empowered with.

Mr Speaker, it is also important that we maintain a public service that is capable of delivering quality service. Sir, capacity building will still be an important issue for my Ministry. It is not enough to remain with the conventional way of doing things.

Sir, we have to respond to the changes that come with new technologies and we no longer are on our own in this regard. We have to take onboard the changes that come with globalization.

We have to be innovative and look at new ways of providing service. We will be looking at adopting e-governance to speed up how services are to be delivered. The recent commitment with the ROC Government

amongst other things to introduce e-governance is really welcome news.

Sir, on the area of reform, we will continue with the reform program that is ongoing. In fact we are lucky to have the RAMSI Government machinery working closely with my Ministry. Sir, we will soon address areas that will improve the management of the Public Service.

Now that the Public Service Commission has delegated some of its powers to responsible officers, it maybe timely to look at whether we should give the Commission a management role. Better still, it would be compelling on the government to review the Constitution with the view to have only one employing Commission rather than four (4) as at present.

Sir, we are currently looking at areas that will take care of the welfare of public officials and their social security when they are retired. Sir, this government has recently addressed public officers' salary. Contrary to what others have said that MPs are getting higher pay, whilst that is true, these speakers have failed to tell Parliament that this government has had to correct the silo situation created by the former administration. And we have to resort back to the unified salary structure which should cater for all professions within the Public Service.

Sir, that aside I wish to state that we are also in the process of upgrading terms and conditions of Public Officers to take account of the changing circumstances. The point I wish to bring home is that this government sees the importance of fairly rewarding its workers if the rural development strategy is to be pursued passionately by public officers.

Sir, public officers have been criticized many times for bad work attitudes. I wish to say that I do not like to defend such officers in Parliament, but I wish to say also that this government will not tolerate bad work attitudes. We will try to arrest bad work attitude.

This Government would also like to insist that public officers must take pride in the fact that they are working for the government and the people of Solomon Islands. This government must insist that any officer who conducts himself or herself in the manner not

worthy of that privilege status must not be expected to remain in the service.

Sir, on the same vein, I would also like to state that this government will not tolerate corruption within the service, and in that regard the government will want to see that those who have been implicated in the various Auditor General's report be dealt with in accordance with the laws of the country.

Mr Speaker, with those few remarks on the Public Service, I wish to thank you again for giving me the opportunity to contribute to this debate, and I wish to support the motion.

Mr KENGAVA: Mr Speaker, thank you for giving me this opportunity to also contribute in this motion to thank the Speech from the Throne. First of all, on behalf of people of North West Choiseul, I would like to thank his Excellency for the kind, encouraging and hopeful words, which goes to underline the Speech from Throne. I would also like to thank the Prime Minister and his government for seeing it fit to allow this speech to take place. I also thank the Deputy Prime Minister for moving this motion.

Mr Speaker, the Speech from the Throne, in my view, is a historical one because the last one was made eight years ago. This is the first one after the ethnic tension. In this period when we are trying to rebuild the nation, our beloved Solomon Islands and to have the Speech from the Throne presented to us to the Nation by the Head of State is a way of telling people of this country that we are still one people and one nation.

Mr Speaker, I think the Speech from the Throne merely presents the government's mission and vision in a more royal, traditional and somewhat conservative approach. Although I would say the speech is quite late, nevertheless the intention of the speech was made and presented on Monday this week.

Mr Speaker, I think the Speech from the Throne was made rather quite late because one can understand why because the government came into power due to unforeseen circumstances. One can understand that, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, I would like to touch on something, which perhaps many of my

colleagues might disregard. That is, the presentation of the Speech from the Throne was rather spoilt by the rain. If we had followed the program fully on a sunny day, I am sure it would have been more splendid with the Police Band, the royal parade and everything. However, that was not so because of the weather. To me as a man who comes from a particular part in Choiseul, from a culture way where we have various gathering, big events, holding feasts or time to mourn when someone dies, if that day is ruined by rain there are two things that came to our minds, superstitious probably, I am not sure but it is a cultural belief. One, we would say the Spirit of our ancestors really support this particular event and so they are crying in their favor. Secondly, it is a sign of bad luck, misfortune to come. Maybe the spirits of our ancestors were angry because we did not do the event properly.

Sir, I only hope that the rainy day on Monday does not mean the second option that the situation must be controlled so that what was presented throughout the speech is implemented for our people.

Looking at the speech, some observations, I would like to say that the terminology and words used are too abstract by ordinary people. And I for one is trying my very best to get the meaning of the speech because words such as pillars of democracy, sovereignty, empowerment of the people, constitutional reform, all those terminologies were used in the speech, which makes me wonder whether people in the rural villages will understand what it means. But I for one who represents people in the rural constituency, I know that ordinary people would like to hear more on where the next wharf will be built, when is the copra price will rise, where will the roads be built, where will the next school and clinics be built. These are the languages and words that people in the provinces are ready hear.

However, Mr Speaker, the Honorable Minister of Finance took some 15 minutes yesterday to explain the intention of the Speech to us. For it is the Government of Change, it is a Grand Coalition change, our government must change the mission and vision of this nation. That was the intention of the speech. And I would like to thank the Minister of Finance for

taking time to explain what the Speech is intended for.

Mr Speaker, I think the promises and plans put on media are what the rural people want to hear, want to see now put in place. It is very important that we must implement the speech more in a concrete manner, take what was put on the media but was raised in conferences, seminars, and presentation and make it into a reality. As I said earlier people down in the villages are more interested to know where the next wharf, road, clinic shall be built. All the terminologies of sovereignty constitutionality, and freedom have no meaning to our people, it is only for us politicians.

There are three aspects of the Speech I would like to comment on, and these are the rural development policy aspects. It is very important, been repeated many times over the media by various people and so we all know what this is all about. The bottom up approach is to redirect the development of this nation back to the rural sector.

However, I would like to stress on a point I raised sometime on the media that whilst it is good to embark on this rural development policy, we must make sure the provinces are part and parcel of this program. And the provinces mean not only the politicians, the decision makers to come and understand the policy but must go right down to administrators' right in the provinces. Those whom we expect to implement the rural development policy. The administrators, especially the key divisions in the provinces, the workers manning the agriculture division, the workers manning the fisheries division and the workers manning the forestry division in the provinces Mr Speaker.

Sir, I would also like us to encourage small businesses to be established in the rural areas as part and parcel of rural development policy and we must reestablish the cooperative division in the provinces. We must reestablish the business division in the provinces so that we can help poor families start their own canteen, own a petrol depot, small businesses, groups that want to form cooperative run their farming, piggery etc. There is no use telling politicians in the provinces this is what we want to do and they do not know how to implement it because

provincial workers are busy running their own businesses too.

I know as well as many of you know, Mr Speaker, that some seconded officers when coming to Honiara are doing two jobs. They come and run their own private business and at the same time attending government business. What is the government doing to address this particular problem? This is a violation of General Orders (G.O) for seconded officers to run businesses whilst at the same time serving the people of this country.

Sir, if you want the rural development policy to be implemented, to be a success then you must crack down this kind of practice by officers down there in the provinces. You must restructure, strengthen and give strength and capacity building to the various divisions in the provinces because those are the divisions that will actually implement the government's program. Those are the divisions that will actually work so that we would not have a lot of questions raised to the Minister of Agriculture like yesterday on why is it that the Agriculture Extension Service is not performing. Sir, it is not performing because the Agriculture Division in the provinces is not restructured, is not strengthened. But this is a must in order for the rural development policy to become a success. I am very much concerned because I come from a province where I know this is happening.

Mr Speaker, a promising aspect of the Speech, a second point I would like to stress on is the State Government System. I think it is a relief to know that Government has plans as presented here in the Speech from the Throne that by mid-next year we should be able to have a complete Federal Constitution for Solomon Islands. My only hope is that we do not treat the Federal Constitution as something we hope people of this country will forget or will treat lightly if they know that the rural development policy is active in their area. No. Economic activity is one thing and political decision is another. We cannot sacrifice economic development for political development. They must go hand in hand because people want it that way. I only hope that the decentralization process in the policy of the present government must not compromise with the idea of

introducing State Government in Solomon Islands.

From our own point of view, I can see that is the where the future of Solomon Islands lies. It is unity in diversity. We cannot prolong the wishes of the people. And I am encouraged to note that the current government is prioritizing this particular aspect of development in order to make Solomon Islands remain united but under an agreement of Federal System.

The third aspect I would like to stress on, Mr Speaker is the educational progress that is taking place in this country. I think we must emphasize more the importance of education and I would like to see the government to even increase the 2007 budget on educational development. This is where the future of this country lies. It is where we must tell our people that we are one people, one country. Education is where we can develop nationalism, patriotism, and nothing else.

I would like to see the government coming to a point where it stops building community high schools because community high schools encourage regionalism in the various provincial areas. When there were no community high schools in existent except for Church schools, it encourages people throughout the country to come and mix together in one place, boarding together. That is how we understand each other. That is how I come to know a man from Shortlands, man from Guadalcanal, and a man from Malaita. When we grow up knowing each other we are from one nation.

Sir, the Community High Schools whilst they serve their purpose of enabling education reach as many children as we can, the negative side of it is that it restricts our children not knowing children from other provinces. The education must look at probably encouraging at a particular point in secondary education that there must be a boarding school.

Provincial secondary schools or national secondary schools must be developed so that we can revive again the lessons that the missionaries, the colonial governments that built King George VI School have developed in bringing people throughout this country to come to know each other. I believe this is one reason

why we come to mistrust each other. Young people of today tend not to trust each other.

I can recall before when you walk through Honiara you can easily tell your ex-school mates, you wave your hands and say 'hello friend what time did you come'. Today, that is not the case. You just sit down and watch other people.

Education is an essential part of developing this nation so that we become more understanding, avoid mistrust etc. And therefore I am very happy to note that the Speech from the Throne mentioned that the Solomon Islands College of High Education would be developed to become a University.

I can assure you, Mr Speaker, that the College of Higher Education is ready at any time to be converted into a university. All the machineries, all the manpower, the set up, everything is there ready. Only what it needs is the will power of this House to pass an act to turn the College of High Education into a university tomorrow.

I am also happy that the USP wants to extend its figures throughout the region. Whilst I accept USP wanting to establish a fourth campus here in Solomon Islands, it reminds me of the school of Marine where it was supposed to be established here but in the end it ends back in the Laucala Campus in Fiji. Let us hope the same thing is not repeated. We will encourage USP to try its very best to come and establish this fourth campus Mr Speaker.

Sir, I for one would like to say that education is the right of our young people in Solomon Islands. We should not worry about the politics of the university because since it is a regional one it must be all over the place. No! It must also prioritize the rights of our children to be educated right up to the university level.

I would like to urge the government to encourage the USP to quickly set up this fourth Campus. If the USP is dragging its feet in establishing a campus in this country, I would like to encourage the Solomon Islands Government to quickly establish its own National University in Solomon Islands.

Mr Speaker, those are the three most important points I would like to stress which encourages me and I would like to expand on it for the sake of telling this nation how I a

representative of the people of North West Choiseul is happy about those particular three areas raised, but with suggestions on how to improve it cautioning the government.

Mr Speaker, I would like to make some points of concern. A concern which is not very much anti-government as the Minister of Health raised today when he debated financial matters, but I think it is a point to raise for taking note in our attempts to try implementing the policies that we are telling this nation.

These points are areas which I thought should be stressed more, should be raised more from the Throne because it concerns everybody in this country and yet it was treated very lightly. The Speech touched too much on institutional matters, policies, visions and not the practicality of them. One of them is the Integrity Bill. This was mentioned on Monday but I would like to hear more of when is it going to be tabled on the floor of this Parliament and what is it going to be like.

The Integrity Bill, as all of us knows, if put in place in this country will be the future in resolving how we choose our leader - the Prime Minister. It would also create political stability in the sense that there would not be any vacuum if there are motions of no confidence or people moving from party to party.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, the integrity bill will also create the growth of political parties. I know many young people in this country are interested in joining political parties in this country. You only need to read the newspapers to will see how many young people are politically minded in this country. But we must create the avenue for them by encouraging the growth of parties in this country, which is an ingredient of parliamentary democracy. We must do that and the sooner we do introduce that bill the better it is for Solomon Islands, in my opinion.

Another area I do not hear from the Speech from the Throne, and which I said to myself that probably we are thinking too much about the future that we forget about the present, and that is, rising unemployment in this country especially in Honiara.

There was nothing stressed in the Speech from the Throne on how we can address unemployment which is now becoming a

problem in this country, especially in Honiara. How are we going to do that Minister of Commerce and Employment? I think the Mayor of the City Council raised this issue as well when he was elected that it is his number one goal to address the problem of unemployment in this city. I hope the Minister and the Mayor work together and come up with a strategy to address that problem.

But this is not only for Honiara. It happens all over the country in every provincial urban centers you will see unemployed youths there. This tells us something that we are not addressing the immediate needs of this country. We are still planning, still dreaming, still having visions, still preparing as the Minister of Agriculture said it will come next year, you will see it in the budget next year but when next year comes what happens to people with no jobs in this country. It will increase more and more and so we must start to do something.

Mr Speaker, we must turn a blind eye to unemployment. And I as someone having the privilege to contribute to this motion would like to say, may be food for thought for the government to have a look at or I am just thinking of bringing a motion to Parliament on this matter. We cannot wait for investors to create jobs in Solomon Islands. Even our attempt to send people to work overseas is not yet forthcoming

Sir, to wait for investors to create jobs would mean following the conditions and interest of the investor. If 10 investors come into this country, which is now happening, and eight of them want to stay in Honiara and two want to stay in Gizo, what about those who want to find jobs in Choiseul, where will they find employment. That is the reality about investors. They cannot come and go to every provincial centers. They go to where there are infrastructures like electricity, roads, water and all the amenities that make the directors, the managers feel at home. So we have a big work to do, a big job to do so it is a long term problem. Aren't there other ways of creating employment for the many unemployed youths we have in this country. What about looking at creating short term employment schemes, legally established short term employment scheme. By this I mean we should make an act

to meet an immediate need to make employment for young people in this country. Come up with a law that should allow us give employment schemes to young people to work, but they don't have to pay NPF, they don't have to pay taxes.

As the Honorable Minister of Finance said yesterday the answer is with us on this floor of Parliament. We make a law passed here in Parliament allowing short term employment for young people while waiting to find a permanent employment can be done. They don't have to pay NPF, they don't have to pay taxes so that they can find something to do both gaining income, be useful, training until they find permanent employment in the private sector.

Sir, this has been done in many countries around the world to meet the problem of unemployment. I know the Minister of Commerce is listening very attentively. If you are thinking of embarking on this idea, and you need a consultant, just see me.

Mr Speaker, we must tackle the problem now. Don't wait for 2007. I think this is the other area I want to raise as it is not mentioned specifically or not emphasized so much in the Speech.

Another third area I would like to stress on before I resume my seat, Mr Speaker, is on what I term as the destabilization of government machinery.

We are always worried about political stability. Politics must be stable so that the government is in place so that things will move on. But we forget sometimes that the administration, the government machineries must be stable too. I only want to ask a question on this matter that we must be careful not to destabilize the government machinery that we have for reasons that only ourselves know.

We must be careful not to destabilize the judicial system. We must be careful that we do not destabilize the Public Service by appointing political appointees that raises a lot of question. We must be careful that we do not destabilize our diplomatic relations with other countries. Because in the end, I can say that we are going to be the losers in the international scene. Locally, yes we can be the winner but internationally Solomon Islands will be the loser. And it is not good for our people to

embark on such actions that destabilizes our machinery.

Mr Speaker, stability must take place both within the country and also outside Solomon Islands, our relationship with other nation.

The way we are going, Mr Speaker, is creating uneasiness for our people. We are creating questions and worries amongst our citizens in this country. If we spend 50% of our time trying to sort out a problem that deals with international matters, we would not have the time to address the rural development policy. This is a fact, and this is what is happening now.

Mr Speaker, the government is so busy dealing with how to resolve this political row with Australia that it has no time to deal with domestic matters now. Quickly resolve this row with Australia so that you have 100% of your time to deal with the rural development policy so that people in the villages can see, hear or listen and see the fruit of what we are preaching from the throne.

Mr Speaker, in conclusion I said what I want to say on very important matters that I feel needs to be said on the floor of this Parliament and as the Parliamentary Wing Leader of the Peoples Alliance Party, a party that once flourished, became a leading party leading this nation in the very beginning of Independence, the same with the party led by you Honorable Speaker. I think it is very important that we bring to mind one essence that must center around political parties, and that is the importance of our people. Whatever we do, whatever our undertakings are, we must put our people first and our own interests second. By doing this we will be able to redirect Solomon Islands to make changes, changes not to destabilize the country but changes to make our people progress and turn Solomon Islands into a more powerful, one nation, one people.

With these comments, Mr Speaker, I support the motion.

Mr GHIRO: Thank you Mr Speaker, I rise to join my other colleagues to firstly thank His Excellency the Governor-General of Solomon Islands Sir Nathaniel Waena for his challenging speech to this Honorable House on Monday 2nd October 2006, and to briefly contribute to my

colleagues' response to the speech. However, before doing so may I take this opportunity to once again congratulate each and everyone of us for being able to make it to the last honorable positions we now hold a elected members of this honorable Parliament and as leaders of this country and his people. I say this because it is indeed a great achievement. However, I wish at this point, to remind ourselves that what comes with these personal achievements are responsibility and accountability. As leaders, the Bible says, we are watched by hosts of witnesses everyday, thus our credibility is on the line upon our assumption of the positions we now hold as leaders of this country and our people.

Against the understanding Mr Speaker Sir, may I now turn to the theme of 'creating a new and better Solomon Islands' as leaders who now have the opportunity to do so. However, may I remind this honorable House that my response will relate directly to the issues read in the speech that recount to portfolios of my Ministry.

As the Minister responsible for ecclesiastical matters, youth development, sports, children rights and human rights and other vulnerable groups, I take this very seriously. The challenge is, 'what can I or my Ministry do to contribute to creating this 'new and better Solomon Islands?'

Mr Speaker Sir, I strongly believe it is time as leaders begin to trust our civil society to help the government to create this new and better Solomon Islands. This country belongs to every Solomon Islander, including leaders and every individual citizenship of this country, therefore, it is only proper for us to ensure that every Solomon Islander is equipped to contribute positively to the course of creating that new and better Solomon Islands.

Much has been said locally, regionally and globally on the subject of empowerment of the civil society and or as commonly known in Solomon Islands the 'community'. Whilst this maybe early said, numerous attempts in the past have failed, due to some obvious/non-obvious reasons.

The Grand Coalition of Change Government this time round is serious about revisiting the concept again and this is

highlighted in its Policy Statement and the Policy Translation and Implementation Document. What this entails is the continuous reform of Public Service that will eventually result in having lean but effective, efficient, ethical and professional organization which is vested more with regulatory powers than service delivery as has been the case for the last 28 years.

Mr Speaker Sir, change of mindset from central government being the service provider and deliverer to being the service user, is a must if we are indeed serious in creating a new and better Solomon Islands.

What this implies Mr Speaker, Sir, is the civil society can and must be trusted to take over the production and delivery of much-needed services to our people in our communities.

Serious consideration must therefore be given to the ensuring the capacity of the civil society is adequately built and strengthen the level whether their ability to plan, coordinate and manage the production and delivery of services effectively, efficiently, ethically and professionally. The Civil society, in this context Mr Speaker sir, includes NGOs, the private sector, Churches and other well established organizations as non state players.

To do this effectively Mr Speaker, an appropriate mechanism must be develop to ensure the principles of good governance and not undermined in any way. To that effect Mr Speaker Sir, the Ministry of Home Affairs is currently working on a framework that will see the stakeholders activities are 'mind-streamed' into the normal government structure that has the community at the base, the provincial level, the national level and the regional international level. From the top down you would have the international provincial and community. This is also in line with the Pacific Plan 2005 to 2020.

The Ministry is in process of planning a national workshop for the stakeholders before the end of this year. The occasion should give the stakeholders the opportunity to see the plan and contribute to the final outcome. A frame work that is simple but effective and efficient that could be used by every sectoral ministry is very important, and may I, at this point, Mr Speaker Sir, assure the honorable House that indeed my Ministry is confident that the concept

we are working on now does have the potential of have the of meeting that requirement.

Yes, Mr Speaker Sir, Churches are some of the non government organizations that do have well-establish structures in the country and if I may also add, their structures do reach right down to very individual in our villages.

These organizations need to be open up beyond their traditional pastoral (spiritual) focus to embrace other sectors of developments that are cradling some of the serious challenges to their Members today.

Some of the issues include the need for good parenting, health issues that the church often feels uncomfortable to discuss freely, poverty and many more. The challenge is real and we urgently need national decisions from church leaders to allow their followers freely and actively participate in dealing with these issues. Many of these are national issues and require the effort of every Solomon Islanders to tackle.

The grand coalition government is committed and fulfilling the international obligations and this includes full compliance to the International Convention Rights of Children in accordance with the principles proclaimed in the charter of the United Nation and Universal Declaration of Human Rights ratified by the Solomon Islands in 1995.

Mr Speaker, they need to have the active coordination body to oversee the effect implementation of these conventions therefore, justifies the need to establish such a body. Thus, my ministry through the Children's Development Division will shortly be engaging in some serious consultation with other stakeholders on the idea to establishing a National Children's Development Council.

Like the other divisions within the Ministry of Home Affairs Mr Speaker Sir, plans are in place to establish children's advocacy offices in all the provinces. Increased awareness about parents, communities and provincial officials on why children's rights are important must be given priority. Thus, these provincial offices would require qualified staff, and MHA is serious prioritizing capacity building for these provincial offices.

Each of these provincial offices will have their own Coordinating Committees, whose

responsibility would be to ensure children's needs and rights are given priority at provincial and community levels. Similarly all stakeholders must cooperate by pulling all the resources available to them to ensure all human right issues are attended to.

Children in SI include boys, girls, handicapped, disabled and the vulnerable between the age of 1 and 15 years of age.

Pursuance to the requirements of the United Nation Conventions on Rights of Women and linked to eliminate violence against women, the grand coalition for change government is seriously committed to fulfilling its international obligations and answering determination to ensure that relevant domestic laws are reviewed to confirm within international and regional human rights standards. Naturally, the existing international and regional human rights standard will be formulated within the primary level, perspective and will insufficient gender sensitively and sometimes fail to provide protection for the gender specific interests of women.

It is therefore, an urgent need to formulate specific rights for women, particularly in economic and social fields. The need for women to be centrally involving in decision making at all levels and become active partners with the government in the development of the country cannot be undermined.

Men in Solomon Islands are generally good fathers who love their children and care deeply about their welfare. However, there is still room for that love to be extended to permeate their daily activities and family lives. Fathers are challenged to be good examples to their children, most importantly to their sons to enable them to treat and respect their sisters the way they want to treat their wives and children.

Children need to feel secure in their families. They are affected by the way their parents treat them at home. A violent, abusive and unsupportive parents are highly likely to bring up children who are more like themselves. A lot of children today are forcefully pushed out of their homes into the streets because of the violence environment in their homes. They find love among their peers on the streets because they do not find it at home.

Violence, abusive, arrogant, destructive and rebellious children strongly underscore the problem of children neglect in this country and serious action must be taken now. This is a problem that requires the attention to every Solomon Islander. Virtue development is a must action of every good parent.

Youth unemployment Mr Speaker, is an issue every aspiring leader often wants to talk about. Unemployment by definition refers to the idleness, jobless and redundant to sight a few. While this may refer to wages or paid employment it is also incorrect to assume that there is virtually nothing for the youth to engage in.

The Grand Coalition for Change government's policy to encourage the community to actively participate in the development of this country is considered a positive way forward to tackling this problem. This is so much opportunity for the engagement of youth in productive activities.

Leaders of our youth must therefore, be people who are creative, innovative and have a broader view of challenges facing our youth of today.

There are opportunities in the community awareness programmes in every sectoral ministry of the government for which all the youth of Solomon Islands could mobilise and engaged in.

Youth leaders need to be creative, innovative and resourceful to be able to see where the resources are and to tap these resources which are already available and under these sectoral programmes.

However, having said that Mr Speaker, the urgent need is to seriously get some of the major economic developments like the Auluta Palm Oil Project on Malaita and Vangunu cannot be undermined as it will greatly assist in releasing the pressure on people, including the youth who continue to migrate to urban centres seeking paid jobs especially in Honiara.

Mr Speaker, my Ministry is currently investigating the possibility of incorporating the functions of the Solomon Islands Youth Division with the National Youth Congress into a new body called 'Solomon Islands Youth Authority'. The new body will be given powers to make decisions on matters relating to youth in

Solomon Islands, make submissions to government, liaise directly with aid donors and have the power to prioritise youth concerns, in a wide range of issues including areas such as youth credit schemes.

The authority would also be given the responsibility of administering and managing a national youth corporation which intended to require all young people at an appropriate stage to undertake national service through government driven programmes.

In sports development, attention must be paid to the needs of developing our provincial sports infrastructure. National representative in sports at both the international and regional are often confined to the boundaries of Honiara and as such failed to embrace the abundance of potentials throughout the country. All sports must be given equal attention to give our youth a wider variety of sports to choose from and which they have developed themselves into a professionalism.

On the economic development Mr Speaker, land availability in my view remains supreme, and serious attention therefore must be given to both the national and provincial governments to avail financial resources to individual tribal groups who wish to move ahead to record their tribal genealogies and land boundaries.

Equally, important Mr Speaker, serious consideration should also be given to provide similar assistance to the land owning groups of the locations that are already identified for national development projects, such as Bina Harbour, Suva Bay, Wairokai and many other national project sites in other provinces. This will assist the government in solving many of the problems our country is currently facing, which I deliberately do not intend to go into in any detail. Generally the people are ready to actively in the economic development of this country and we as leaders of this beloved SI need to grasp this opportunity.

Finally, I wish to conclude by briefly touching on the need to recognise the role of our traditional chiefs. Since independence, traditional chiefs and their role in the community as custodians of the Solomon Islands cultures and customs have always been but mere words.

Twenty eight years, after independence and still our so called traditional chiefs are yet to be given true recognition as legal custodians of our cultures and customs.

I wish to confirm to this honourable Parliament Mr Speaker, that my Ministry is taking this very seriously and in line with the GCCG policies investigating plans to equip and strengthen the capacity of our traditional leaders, and also examine ways and means that their services can be fully recognised by bringing them into the mainstream.

The potential in peace building within our communities is undoubtedly enormous. The means of positively involving these leaders in the activities is an issue that the relevant sectoral Ministry would have to determine. However, let us recognize our experts in culture and customs and grant due respect to them by fully utilising them in the fields of expertise.

Thank you honourable colleagues for listening, and I resume my seat.

Mr GUKUNA: Thank you Mr Speaker, for allowing me to make a short contribution.

Firstly, Mr Speaker, let me sincerely thank His Excellency the Governor General for delivering this speech.

Mr Speaker, I wish to contribute because this Speech from the Throne is meant to reassure this House and the people we represent out there in rural Solomon Islands that our government is committed to create and I quote from the speech. *“To create a new and better Solomon Islands and for us*

This speech is meant to also give some insights to how exactly this commitment

In other words we

And yes, Mr Speaker, there is a lot of hope in the Speech. Our future is presented in a very glaring manner. We have been late to expect nothing.....

In doing so the content of the speech is an of to present to us the perimeters of the fundamental changes that was promised early this year in what is supposed

And to ensure that we are convinced the government has made sure to the delivery of these promised changes directly from

Mr Speaker, this speech in many ways mounts an admission that this country has failed.

We have failed because we have not and I quote from the speech again *“use all of legislations, policies and regulatory mechanisms in the manner worthy of our sovereignty, a mandate to govern and develop this nation”*

At the same time in this speech also we have been told that in order for us to be able to use our legislation and policies in the sovereign manner for our development we must bottom-up Mr Speaker.

So the catch word this speech Mr Speaker, is this so called bottom-up approach. So this is fundamentally what we have been promised then a bottom up approach. Mr Speaker, I read through this entire speech and I still cannot understand what this bottom up approach is. It is now being seen as the saviour of this country. What I can tell you sir, is that according to this speech we have been apparently doing the wrong thing over the last thirty years. So where is this person who is telling us that we have been doing the wrong thing has been hiding? Why has it taken him thirty years to come out and tell us that we have not developed that is why we have problems?

In other words Mr Speaker, the top down approach which is I take it as the opposite to the bottom-up approach which we have been using will not create a better Solomon Islands. What will create a better Solomon Islands is the bottom up approach, top down approach is not good because it has created a top heavy system which does not allow economic benefits to trickle down the bottom. So what this country now needs Mr Speaker, is a bottom-up approach that will intend toa bottom heavy system, a system that will no longer allow the bottom the way to economy benefits to trickle down.

Also and according to this speech Mr Speaker, we achieved this, and we will have created a much, much better Solomon Islands. Mr Speaker, this I can understand and if this is our joint hope that is fine.

My concern Mr Speaker, is that as I look through this speech, I saw nothing in it but would suggest to me if we are ready to come out. Mr Speaker, you read through this stated approaches in the logging sector, fisheries, mineral exploration, land and the finance, investment and so on and you will see no bottom up approach., it is the same. I have

seen them before. We have read about them before. That is really non incentives in this speech Mr Speaker. The approaches as I have said are the same, except that they have been relabeled as bottom up approaches.

Mr Speaker, one thing that has been explicitly told in this speech is that this bottom up approach will only work in this country under ethical. This is a tough requirement, a tough condition for bottom up approach to work in this country. But first we have to be talking about ourselves and that it is tough because most of us in this House will have to play double standard. Most of us in this House will have to liar and most of us in this House will have to hide our true motives before we talk about bottom up approach.

Mr Speaker, most of us in this House, personally we have to be hypocritical. We have to overstress this ethical leadership matter of bottom-up approach

Mr Speaker, my other major concern is that what has been happening over the last few months appeared to be not in line with the normal ideas carried out in this speech.

Mr Speaker, we have either been sending out the wrong signals or our real motives have been kept away from the speech.

Mr Speaker, is it really true that our trained people in this country cannot implement our approach and they cannot do this for us? Is it really true that the qualified permanent secretaries who have served this country for many, many years are not good enough to implement this bottom-up approach?

Mr Speaker, allow me to ask you again this question. Is it true that this bottom up approach does not need our public service laws? Mr Speaker, some of the people we have hand picked do not even know how to write cabinet papers. Some of them do not have any slight idea of how to write up a policy Mr Speaker, let alone implement it in the public service. Some of them have no performance record with the service. I mean the public service. So what is it that we had just rewarded to the massive pay rise?

I just have to ask you again Mr Speaker, is it true that we really need a foreign lawyer to advise this government of the legality of this bottom up approach.

And what is it in this bottom-up approach Mr Speaker, that really needs a brand new foreign attorney general to advise us on this? Mr Speaker, I put you through these questions because I have a feeling that this speech is incomplete. I sense Mr Speaker, that this speech is not telling us the other intentions of the government. In other words Mr Speaker, with your respect this speech is not forthcoming in my opinion.

One of the reasons why I have to ask you these questions Mr Speaker, excuse me, is that my people had asked me these same questions and I told them, I will ask Mr Speaker, because I do not have the answers. Whilst I do know that this will need a huge amount of money in order to implement this bottom up approach, I also know that we do not have it. We do not have it. The basic truth here Mr Speaker, is that you will need a lot of help from our friends to achieve this bottom up approach. We will not get this money by being embarrassingly undiplomatic. We do not have to challenge our neighbours to achieve bottom up approach. We do not need to intimidate our judiciary to achieve bottom up approach. In fact Mr Speaker, our best approach to achieving bottom up if there is such thing as bottom up approach, is to leave our neighbours alone. Leave our judiciary alone, leave RAMSI and our law officers alone, and leave our public service also.

And more pressing Mr Speaker, is that let go of our new Attorney General. We do not need him. And having said this, I read in the media this morning that we have done exactly that. It is unfortunate and regrettable that we have done so after putting ourselves in the public media with the wrong reasons.

Mr Speaker, there is no need to overstress sovereignty here. Mr Speaker, if the writer who boldly told this nation in this speech, that the way we have been doing business with our neighbours had seriously undermined our sovereignty. Then he may as well tell this country. Tell us that we do not need their aid money, and that this bottom up approach will fully finance without abuse of aid money.

Mr Speaker, sovereignty is something that we all treasure and you suppose too because it gives us an identity as our people of our

nation. With this identity, excuse me Mr Speaker, comes (supposed to come) social security with health. I need not remind you Mr Speaker, of power of sovereignty as spelled out miserably in our recent Mr Speaker, our sovereignty is our sovereignty. Our friends are not here to take it. First of all it is ugly right now, and theirs is much better than ours. It is going to be ours forever.

What we need and contrary to the speech is to follow our friends to help us make it function for us. If we achieve that we can all jump up and down and be protective of our sovereignty.

Mr Speaker, thank you that is my short contribution, and I resume my seat.

(applause)

Mr LONAMEI: Thank you Mr Speaker, for allowing me the floor of this Parliament to contribute very briefly to the Speech from the Throne delivered by His Excellency the Governor General.

Mr Speaker, on behalf of the Premier of Isabel Province, with the Bishop and the Diocese, and also the chiefs and people of Isabel, I want to take this chance to thank His Excellency the Governor General who has visited Isabel Province some three to four weeks ago.

The Governor General himself has already received first hand concern of the people of Isabel during his tour around Isabel Province. They told him already. Mr Speaker, I want to reiterate or repeat the same message the people have given to the Governor General during his tour of Isabel Province on the floor of Parliament now.

Mr Speaker, I think the concerns raised or the message the people of Isabel Province gave to the Governor General during his tour to Isabel Province is very clear. I think the Isabel people want fairness. If Isabel Province is treated like one of those big provinces, and if the government says to the people of Isabel, oh yes, I think we are not yet treated fairly and if they feel like that, how much more would the smaller provinces will be left out or missed out on the services that we have talked about in the bottom up approach that we are addressing now.

Mr Speaker, I think this bottom-up approach that the government is doing now is that we want to treat everybody fairly and equally on the services that the government is going to do to its people.

The fairness in distribution of resources:

- Fairness in distribution of projects and developments.
- Fairness in distribution of infrastructures.
- Fairness in distribution of manpower to every province throughout our country.

Mr Speaker, some of the concerns raised by the Premier of Isabel Province with the churches and chiefs that were highlighted in the function of Governor General, the Premier mentioned that Isabel is the longest island with the shortest road. The shortest road – Isabel Province worked very hard to build this road. It does not benefit from the money passed in this House given to the province to build roads in Isabel. There is million dollars allocated to Isabel in this budget but that fund never reaches Isabel Province. If we are serious about talking of improving rural people, I think the money allocated for the provinces for rural areas must be given to them.

Mr Speaker, the premier said that he has submitted the project to release the fund of \$1million to build roads in the province. The Ministry of Infrastructure informs them to fill up another form and then another one and so the process of filling up forms continues. Why making things difficult for the rural people in the province if it is already budgeted for here. We should give them the money or we help to fill up the forms so that the money can go down to the grass root or to the provinces to improve the development there.

Mr Speaker, the Minister of Infrastructure must release the money so that my province can build the road further more so that Isabel the longest island can also have the longest road.

Mr Speaker, fair distribution of human resources – the Minister of Public Service has made clear the position of Public Service about its workers. Mr Speaker, Isabel Province at the moment is without a Provincial Secretary. The

Deputy Provincial Secretary is just recently appointed. There are no Personnel Officers. There are no medical doctors for the last six months one doctor has just arrived last week but Buala hospital is big hospital. We need another 2 or 3 more doctors for Buala hospital. We need fair distribution of such manpower.

The Ministry of Education – the big Education Office of Buala only have two officers working there. There is no Chief Education Officer, nor Senior Education Officer, nor Principal Education Officer, nor nothing in there. No wonder all Isabel Teachers run away to other provinces. They do not want to teach at Isabel. Those areas needs fair distribution of manpower.

In Agriculture side – the Minister of Agriculture has also advocated the activities that will be done in his Ministry. The Isabel province will also want some shares on the coconut or copra development in future. In all other projects shared to other provinces there is nil for Isabel Province.

Tourism – Mr Speaker, Isabel province too is totally missed out on tourism project. Our genuine people who wants to run tourism when they apply for such project come back and say, because we are from Isabel they do not want to accept our application. If we are genuine about true rural development, true rural bottom up approach should be all fairly treated. No matter you are from Isabel or no matter you are from one of the least province at least fair distribution from the Ministries must go down to those places.

Home Affairs – If there is any money where Home Affairs assist churches, churches in the province want the share of those activities so that the rural people can build church house in the villages. Those are some of the comments on the side of fairness and also concern raised by churches.

Mr Speaker, Solomon Islands is scattered and we need shipping services in order to communicate within our islands. Isabel province owns one shipping company, IDC Shipping company and it operates for the last 35 years until today. There are so many happenings in our country but it struggle through until today.

Government should provide shipping services for our people because that is the only communication that can link whole SI. And if we are truly concern about our rural people to improve shipping services throughout the SI or shipping within SI and if we are not able to provide such services, the government should at least assist the private shipping companies that are currently operating at the moment. They have done a good job for providing services and also running their commercial services. Some of the routes done in Isabel is not economic. It is not economic for the private company to operate there but because of the service to the people of Isabel and because of that IDC continue its operation. No matter the shipping company run lose it just continue its services. The government or parliament should seriously consider such shipping services to help the companies to make money but at the same time they are serving the people.

We should subsidize some of the routes where may be is not economically viable on the business side to assist the local companies struggling to meet their ends and also for providing service to the people.

Forest - Almost every log in Isabel has gone. Such logging is done just to sustain our economic in SI. There is no program for re-forestation and program for replanting trees, if the government can also consider that too. Give us seedlings through our Forestry Officers in the provinces so that they too are engage in reforestation or re-planting trees so that we sustain them or in future we do it again and we can harvest trees in future.

Mr Speaker, through the meetings of the Chiefs and people in Isabel they want RAMSI to stay in our country and they want RAMSI must stay in our country for 30 years or may be if they want to live here or for how long they want to live here they are welcome to do so.

Mr Speaker, the current standoff between Australia and Solomon Islands though we said it will not affect RAMSI but in my view in a way it will affect the assistance of RAMSI to SI. If Australia pulls out the assistance from SI they might also move too, which the people of Isabel do not want this to happen. They want RAMSI must stay to help us so that we must come up strong. At the moment

we have just come back to recovery and we are starting to spoil them. When I watched the TV news this morning we are pouring petrol to the fire and it's getting big. We should try to solve our differences but instead we are back fire to them. We need such development partners like Australia. They offer us aid money which we need them here. Under our bottom up program we need to make friends with Aid donors so that when they offer us money then we can continue with bottom up approach.

If we can solve our political standoff quickly we will continue to be their good friend because as other speakers said we are the ones that will lose at the end because such big countries like that might be able to count us. We still need their assistance. They do not need our assistance.

With my few remarks I once again thank His Excellency for the speech from the Throne and also I want to put it across very briefly few concerns that was raised by the Leaders of Isabel Province. That's all I want to say thank you very much.

Mr Speaker: Before I ask the honourable Prime Minister to may be move a motion of adjournment of the debate of this particular motion, I'd like to acknowledge the presence of the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker of Choiseul Province amongst us in the public gallery today.

(applause)

MOTIONS

Debate on the motion to thank His Excellency the Governor-General for the Speech from the Throne is adjourned for the next day.

Motion of Adjournment

Hon Sogavare: I beg to move that Parliament do now adjourn.

The House adjourned at 4.30pm