

THIRD DAY

Thursday 25 October 2012

DRAFT HANSARD

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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
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Sarufa M. Haro
Principal Parliamentary Reporter

THIRD DAY

Thursday 25 October 2012

The Speaker (**Mr Theo Zurenuoc**) took the Chair at 10.a.m..

WANT OF QUORUM

There being no quorum present, Mr Speaker stated that he would resume the Chair after the ringing of the Bells.

Sitting suspended at 10.05 a.m..

Mr Speaker again took the Chair at 10.20 a.m. and invited the Member for Morobe, **Mr Kelly Naru** to say Prayers:

“Long nem bilong Papa, Pikinini na Holy Spirit, tenkyu Papa God long wampela taim moa yu givim mipela dispela dei long Membas bilong dispela Haus makim ova 7 tausen pipol bilong dispela kantri. Mipela iken kam na wokim disisen bilong gutpela bilong pipol bilong yu. Papa God, yu blesim Sia bilong mipela, blesim Praim Minista wantaim Kabinet bilong em, blesim Oposisen Lida wantaim shadow ministas bilong em na mipela olgeta. Givim mipela gutpela tingting na mipela ken mekim toktok long wisdom yu givim long mipela insait long Palamen. Amen. “

QUESTIONS

Mr MEHRRA MINNIE KIPEFA – Mr Speaker, I direct my questions to the Minister for Environment and Conservation, and I ask the Minister for Mining and the Government to take note.

Mr Speaker, although we talk about possible economic advantages, high-grade ores and sustaining high prices, the most important thing in this country is environmental risk, the welfare and the health of our people.

I want to bring to the attention of this Parliament, the issue of seabed mining, which will be headed by the Nautilus Minerals. We are all aware that the Nautilus Minerals will start early next year, 2013.

(1) Will the department consider some of the repercussions found through the environmental impact studies concerning the extensive aquatic species that is within the ocean floor could be affected?

There were initially no legal codes and appropriate policy in place for the seabed Mining. The Government through the Mining Department and Minerals and Resources Authority granted the Mining Lease.

(2) What body of scientific knowledge about the territorial waters of Papua New Guinea has the Government used to create the necessary legislative, institutional policy and regulative frameworks necessary to approve and regulate Seabed Mining?

The recent landslide in Tambul Southern Highlands, highlights the risks posed by the large extractive industry in terms of creating manmade disasters. However, the Nautilus Minerals will be altering the seafloor morphology in any actively tectonic plate region. Natural undersea tectonic events poses a number of geohazard risks to coastal communities such as tsunamis or volcanoes. The mining of the seabed will only add to this risk.

(3) What mechanisms does the Department of Environment and Conservation have in place if such geological hazard takes place?

The seabed mining will also involve the transporting, stock piling, trans shipment and processing of mineral ores, which will produce million tonnes of toxic waste. All will occur close to remote coastal communities that rely heavily on healthy seas for their diet and income. In the event when the sulfite slurry, which is in the form of zinc and copper is brought up to the ship and if it combines with oxygen, it will release some poisonous and toxic like sulfur dioxide or hydro sulfuric acid, which are detrimental to marine life as well as human health.

(4) How is the PNG Government going to put up the project which is not sustainable as it exploits a relatively finite mineral deposit with a huge gross of US\$1 billion that will only last for 30 months, which contribute a relatively small amount of K41 million to PNG for total tax and royalties of K1.5 million in development fund and few other dozen jobs at

the most to PNG nationals while severe and permanent damages are done to our environment.

Mr Speaker, it will be interesting for the Department of Environment and Conservation to explain to the people of Papua New Guinea, especially people living along the coastal regions of how we can be able to address the first-ever technology that no one in this world has tested or used and know the implications of it, but PNG has raised its hands to test that new technology.

(5) How are we going to address the environmental implications should it occur?

Mr JOHN PUNDARI – Mr Speaker, since this is also my first time to rise from the Chair to speak in this Ninth Parliament, let me take this opportunity to thank my wife and my children who have always being supportive. I also want to place on record my sincere appreciation to the people of Kompiam-Ambum who have once again elected me to this Parliament to serve them for the fourth term.

Mr Speaker, let me congratulate your elevation to the Chair as it is not an easy job, but you have started very well and I know you will do very well. I sincerely pray that the Grace of God will be upon you as you conduct the Parliament Meetings and that this Parliament maintains its decorum, respect and reputation it deserves as the people's House.

In the same token, I also like to acknowledge the Prime Minister in his election to the Office of the Prime Minister. It is a clear mandate of the people. I thank him in appointing me as the Minister for Environment and Conservation.

02/03

Mr Speaker, I thank the Member for his very important questions regarding an investment that we are undertaking and it is an investment that takes us to a new frontier. This investment is a first of its kind and has never been tested anywhere in the world.

There have been a lot of concerns raised in the media about Papua New Guinea being used as a guinea pig for the experimentation of a new investment that has never been undertaken elsewhere in the global community.

I must also say that the undertaking of this investment will also see Papua New Guinea as a leader of a new technology taking us into the new frontier of investment.

Mr Speaker, whilst I want to answer those questions in writing as they are very important, let me say this. the Department of Environment and Conservation goes to a very rigorous process before an Environmental Permit is issued. There is a notification by an

investor that they will undertake a project and they are going to provide what we call the Environment Inception Report after which an Environment Impact Statement or study is done. And this takes a fair bit of time where the impact statements are assessed with independent experts or scientists in the global community.

I believe that the Department of Environment and Conservation through their consideration of the Environment Impact Statements have consulted independent experts before the Environmental Permit was issued. But after all these assessments, it goes to the Environment Council and they consist of different representations from different scientific fields and upon their consideration, they make recommendations to the Minister who then gives an approval in principle after which the Director of the Department of Environment and Conservation issues a permit.

The permit has been issued already to the investor and we are at a stage where the investor is at the present time working on an Environment Management Plan. After the Department receives the Environment Management Plan, it will again be assessed by independent experts and if we do approve it then the investor will go into the construction phase and eventual operations.

I have taken this issue very seriously when I was appointed as Minister for Environment and Conservation. I thank the Honourable Member, and Members on this Floor of Parliament would be aware that I have called for a Forum where we will have some debates on this issue. I know that awareness is being conducted by the investors as well as the Department of Environment and Conservation.

But seeing that there are still concerns raised by the leaders in the Opposition, especially by the Opposition Leader and other leaders of the community, I have instructed the Department to have a forum conducted so that there will be debates. And through the Department, I am asking for people who are experts in volcanoes, marine life, environment and oceanic movement to come and debate and give their views and provide more information about this investment going forward.

Mr Speaker, within the next couple of days, I will ensure that the Member gets a detailed report in regards to his questions but other than that, I thank you Mr Speaker.

Supplementary Question

Mr SAM BASIL – My question is directed to the Minister for Environment through the Speaker, we have had many cases in the past where we have witnessed the Ok Tedi situation and in my district, the Hidden Valley Mining company conducted site testing and despite this, we have had environmental problems.

This clearly shows that the Department of Environment and Conservation cannot efficiently perform their jobs. Now you are standing here proudly saying that Papua New Guinea will be one of the countries that will test the untested innovative technology. You are also saying that you will bring experts to hold discussions. My questions are:

(1) Can you put this project on hold until we fully discuss the outcome and the impact of the damages that may happen?

(2) How confident are you to assure the people of Papua New Guinea, the people that live around the costal areas who will be greatly affected and the tuna industry that there won't be any environmental damage?

Mr JOHN PUNDARI – Mr Speaker, I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for his supplementary questions.

Mr Speaker, I have to be very sincere and honest here. In the last several years, the Department of Environment and Conservation has been under funded and under resourced and as a result under capacitated. It has been very difficult for the Department to carry out its obligated duties and responsibilities insofar as the *Environment Act* and other relevant *Acts* that it manages are concerned.

I must say that our peoples' livelihoods depend on the environment that they live in, therefore, the supplementary questions by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition are serious.

Mr Speaker, I want to inform this Parliament and for the information of the general public that the Department is challenged with the limited resources it has and the capacity it has to be able to monitor and ensure compliance of Environmental Permits and its conditions. With the little resources, however, the Department of Environment and Conservation has been able to attend to emergency situations especially with investments of greater magnitude like the mining industry or the petroleum and gas industries.

I must place on record that at present, my Department is still struggling. I must also inform the Parliament of the the fact that the investors do fund other independent scientists to come and conduct environmental studies or impact statements, and it is not in the best

interests of the people and the country. I believe that as leaders and as a Government, we need to ensure that we conduct separate independent assessments and studies. We can only do that by properly resourcing the Department of Environment and Conservation.

Mr Speaker, we have an answer for that and our way forward is to create a Conservation Environment and Protection Authority Bill, which I will be introducing in Parliament, and I hope and trust that all the Members of Parliament will support that Bill.

03/03

The Bill will ensure that the Department of Environment and Conservation is well equipped and that, it is well resourced. And that it is able to carry out its mandated duties and responsibilities.

Mr Speaker, as to whether I should immediately put a stop to Solwara 1 or the investment considered by Nautilus, I have to get further clarifications from the Department as well as considering the legal implications involved before I give any commitment to the Honourable Member on the Floor of Parliament.

Nevertheless, I would like to ask the Honourable member and any other interested parties and key stakeholders to come and express their views when the forum is engaged.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Supplementary Question

Sir JULIUS CHAN – Mr Speaker, the Minister said that his Department lacked capacity. It seems that we are working backwards.

You have already given the licence and you do not have the capacity to assess the environment. The Minister also said that he is very concerned because the matter was raised by the Opposition and not only by the Opposition but it is also opposed by my Provincial Government in New Ireland.

I for one oppose it and my people also oppose it and we really do not know how the National Government allowed the license to proceed without proper meaningful consultation. The Minister therefore has promised to respond to the Member, and I think that it was a very tactical question from the Member for Obura-Wonenara.

And all I wanted to ask the Minister is this, in the course of responding, can you guarantee the people of New Ireland two things?

(1) Firstly, if you are going to appoint an environmental impact study, it has to be independent and chosen by the Government of Papua New Guinea in consultation with the stakeholders;

(2) Secondly, if you are going to give them the licence, I want a guarantee that in the event of an unforeseen disaster, that company which is exploring to find money for its shareholders will be able to control that disaster.

Therefore, I am asking the Minister if he can incorporate that in the Statement to satisfy us and satisfy the Member for Obura-Wonenara.

Supplementary Question

Mr GARRY JUFFA – Thankyou, Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the Minister for Environment for -

Mr SPEAKER – Governor for Oro, I will have to interrupt you here. We will allow the Minister to answer the questions raised by the Governor for New Ireland first.

Mr JOHN PUNDARI – Mr Speaker, I do not want to waste everybody's time and I am willing to sit down to listen to further Supplementary Questions from the Governor for Oro, so I can answer collectively.

Mr SPEAKER – Let me make it clear, the Minister will sit down later with those who have concerns about this issue and respond to them later.

Mr James Marabe – Point of Order! With respect, the Minister requested you to allow him to take his seat and allow the Supplementary Question again from the Governor for Oro regarding the same issue.

Mr SPEAKER – Thank you, Leader of Government Business, I misheard you Minister.

Go ahead, Governor for Oro.

Supplementary Question

Mr GARRY JUFFA – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to make a couple of points that I think need attention from the public as well as others here.

Mr Speaker, in regards to the activities of Nautilus, Minister, they have misled the Government into awarding the permit because they have not conducted the awareness that they claimed with 24 000 signatures attest to that.

Landowners who are going to be affected in those areas have all stood up and have said that they have never been consulted, and in the instances that they were consulted, they had vehemently and adamantly opposed this project.

Also, is the Minister aware that the machines that were specified and described in the application for the permit and from which, the permit was granted, these machines have been modified substantially. So they are now completely different machines, therefore, a brand new application has to be submitted by the company again because the permit was granted specifically for those particular machines. And not for the new machines that they are now intending to use.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr JOHN PUNDARI – I would like to thank both Governors for New Ireland and Oro for their supplementary questions.

Mr Speaker, like I said earlier, with the little resources that the Department of Environment and Conservation was able to have, I have given serious consideration to Impact Investment Programs and Projects in-country, especially, in the area of mining.

04/03

But that does not exclude the new frontier of investments that we are trying to engage in. Concerns have been raised and I would want to think, that the Department of Environment and Conservation, with the little resources it has, will have seriously committed themselves to the new investment.

Mr Speaker, I will definitely respond in writing to the Governor of New Ireland regarding his concerns of independent experts. At this stage, I do not know. But I will seek advice from the Department of Environment and Conservation whether independent experts were engaged by them to conduct independent studies.

Mr Speaker, as a way forward, I have directed the Department to engage ourselves in public forums and I am looking forward to concerned leaders as well as qualified scientists out there to come forward and participate in these forums.

Mr Speaker, it is a real challenge for all of us so I can understand where the Governor of New Ireland is coming from. But as we face an unknown future, the catastrophic disaster can be the cause and result of this activity.

Any investments, whether it be on land, sea or a new frontier, there are elements of risks that we undertake. Those risks are only accessed through studies and expert advises. As a result, I believe the department has issued a permit to the investor. But, as a responsible Minister, I have directed the Department so that we can be assisted as we venture into new investment. I would want to invite the Governor of New Ireland and his interested Representatives of Landowners to come and participate.

Mr Speaker, the comments made by the Governor of Oro that Nautilus has misled the Departments of Environment and Conservation and Mining and other agencies in that awareness in relation to that project was not conducted.

I believe that statement is misleading because I think awareness was conducted and the Department of Environment and Conservation is aware of that. It is a normal process. Let me also say that if there are any modifications on machineries and equipments to be used in the investment that the Department is not aware of, we will definitely check that out. I am sure the investor will inform the Department if there are any modifications to what has been previously approved.

Mr Speaker, I would like to respond in writing also to the Governor for Oro.

Mr JOE KOIM KOMUN – I am privileged to say that I am here through the people of Anglimp-South Wahgi. I would like to thank them on this occasion for mandating me to represent them.

I would like to also take this opportunity to acknowledge the Speaker who has been voted to take the Chair. I think we deserve a better Speaker this time because it has been public knowledge that this Parliament is a mockery.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the Prime Minister Peter O'Neill. I think he was enormously voted as Prime Minister regardless of what we may think but he mustered the numbers through our democratic process so he deserves the Chair. On behalf of my people I take this time to acknowledge him and I look forward to work with him for the next five years.

05/03

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Member, please direct your question to the relevant Minister.

Mr JOE KOIM KOMUN – I will but let me –

Mr SPEAKER – Who are you directing your question to?

Mr JOE KOIM KOMUN – The Minister for Environment and Conservation and also other relevant Ministers with investment portfolios. Let me make a statement here.

Papua New Guinea is composed of seven million people with so many resources.

We are floating on a sea of oil and we are so blessed with so many mines and agricultural potential because God blessed us with a good climate and arable land.

Our people are predominantly agricultural based because 85 per cent of them are rural people and they know agriculture best.

I believe we can go into mining, oil and agriculture to attract foreign investments to our country to prop up investments and employment.

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Member, put forward your question.

Mr JOE KOIM KOMUN – I am coming to my question. It is that if our honourable Minister for Environment and Conservation, as he said, he will go back to experts to attend a conference to see whether the mine is possible or not but I would think that the buck stops here in Parliament because we are leaders and we should make a decision here.

I think the writing is on the wall, that whatever that is beneficial for the people, we have to analyse the advantages and disadvantages of the project. I think instead of us going back to the people to gauge their views, we, as leaders representing them have to make a stand here and make a decision.

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Member, I must interrupt you here because you are entering into a debate. I must ask you to take your seat and fix your question properly and ask it later.

Mr WERA MORI – Thank you, Mr Speaker, I would like to ask a question and since both the Ministers for Education and Higher Education are here, they can feel free to answer the question.

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Member, you have to direct your question to one particular Minister.

Mr WERA MORI – Okay, since my question relates to the universities, I would like the Minister for Higher Education to answer and if the Minister for Education can also take note.

Mr Speaker, our two major universities, the University of Technology and the University of Papua New Guinea were built before Independence. Since then there has been no major rehabilitation or expansion of these universities to have enough capacity to meet the increasing demand from students entering them today.

As part of our Vision 2050, one of the major drives in the Vision is human capital and for that to materialize, we need to properly capitalize our two major universities.

My question is, when can the Government adequately fund those two universities so that they can be able to meet today's demands?

Mr DAVID ARORE – Thank you Mr Speaker, I'd like to thank the Member for Chuave for his question.

Firstly, before I answer the question, I would like to take this opportunity to commend you on your elevation to the position of Speaker of Parliament. I would also like to take this time to congratulate the Prime Minister on his election as the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea.

Mr Speaker, as rightly put by the honourable Member, since Independence, Higher Education has always taken a very minute attention from the Governments that have led this country.

And so today, I'd like to inform this Parliament that we have approximately 8 000 graduates per year in our higher education institutions. And according to Vision 2050, we would like to increase that output to 17 000 per year. And so because of that, since taking up office, I have been moving around and I have been looking at the different opportunities that are available in this country to see the different options we have to move to increase our student output.

And so the first thing I worked on is that we are in the process now of opening up an open university to increase our output of students.

On the Member's question, I have an NEC submission on the Rehabilitation of the University of Papua New Guinea that has been out forward. It will be a K1 billion programme for the University of Papua New Guinea before the NEC. It is good you brought it up so they can approve it. So I am thankful to you for bringing up the question.

I also have rehabilitation programmes for the Divine Word University, The University of Technology and the other six universities in the country.

06/03

I would like to assure the Member that your concerns have been taken note of and we are in the process of dealing with them.

Mr JOHNSON TUKE – Mr Speaker, I am humbled to be acknowledged to ask my question. I am from a village background and it is overwhelming.

My question is directed to the Minister for Internal Security regarding the massacre that occurred on the 30 September 2012. Up until now the perpetrators have not been arrested and charged.

Up the Highlands Highway you will note that Kainantu is the gateway to the coast and the Highlands and I believe the Members from the Highlands Region know what I mean.

Before this incident is swept under the carpet, I rise to ask the Minister for Internal Security to take note of this and come up with some amicable solutions.

Mr NIXON DUBAN - Thank you, Member for Kainantu, for your very important question. I am not aware of the incident that you have mentioned but I will be more than happy to get a report.

The magnitude of the massacre from your brief to me before Parliament is very serious in nature and I will be directing the Police Commissioner to look into this incident seriously.

Mr JOSEPH LELANG – Mr Speaker, my question is directed to the Finance Minister and I ask the Minister for Treasury to take note.

Mr Speaker, in 2011, the Parliament approved a Supplementary Budget of K781.8 million. However, the 2012 Medium Economic Fiscal Report published by the Department of Treasury did not report on how these funds were used in the first 6 months of this year.

Mr Speaker, the Report contained only three lines and I quote, “the 2011 Supplementary Budget appropriated an additional K781.8 million to fund priority expenditures. As of 30 June 2012 of that K781.8 million allocated K648.5 million or 86.3 percent of that appropriation has been transferred to the Department of Finance for immediate payments into Trust Accounts. A further K133.3 million consisted of expenditure commitments of work that had to be undertaken before the 31 of December 2012,” end of quote.

Mr Speaker, my question is simple, consistent with the *Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2006* which requires the Government to produce reports on actual expenditure that has been incurred in the year and the first 6 months should have been reported.

Mr Speaker, can the Minister inform Parliament when will information of the actual expenditure of the 2011 Supplementary Budget be tabled?

Mr JAMES MARAPE – Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the Member for Kandrian Gloucester for his question and yes, we had a Supplementary Budget that was handed down last year to ensure some of the prevailing needs of Government that were not captured in the 2011 Budget proper were addressed.

Mr Speaker, let me give comfort to the Member by saying that as we approach the end of the third quarter, the review of this quarter will capture all these expenditures and many of the expenditures are in line with some unbudgeted Government expenditures for instance the IDG, the MOA's, the Port Moresby City developments that are taking place today and the conclusion of the 2012 General Elections, and you only heard said yesterday, that the Electoral Commissioner is still requesting for additional funds that he incurred during the elections. Many of these unbudgeted expenses have caught up as we faced the Election year. The Government had to dispense that and they were captured in the 2011 Supplementary Budget that was presented.

Let me assure the Member we will be presenting a Report and we will park them together as we present our end of the year report for the benefit of the nation.

Mr TITUS PHILEMON – Mr Speaker, I take this opportunity to congratulate on you on your election as Member for Finschhafen and later as the Speaker of the National Parliament.

On the same token, on behalf of the people of Milne Bay Province I also congratulate the Prime Minister and the Ministers of Cabinet and the Members of Parliament including the Opposition Leader.

07/03

Mr TITUS PHILEMON – Mr Speaker, thank you for giving me this opportunity to ask my questions to Minister for Police. But before I do, I once again take this time on behalf of the people of Milne Bay to also congratulate the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Ministers, the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Opposition Leader. With this talk, I also like to thank the people of Milne Bay for giving me the opportunity as their Governor of the Province.

Mr Speaker, my questions are in relation to the law and order situation in the Milne Bay town. I am seriously concerned about the increasing law and order problem in township of Alotau because Alotau is generally regarded as one of the peaceful places in Papua New Guinea. However, due to the law and order situation, it is becoming unsafe for visitors and tourists.

Alotau has hosted very important conferences and meetings in the recent past, including the formation of the O'Neill-Dion Government. We also are hosting the coming the National Kenu and Kundu Festival in Alotau and, therefore, we want the Province to be trouble free so that we can stage a peaceful festival next week. We need the Minister's assistance to clear up the criminal elements before the festival is held.

(1) Is the Minister aware of the law and order situation in Milne Bay that is affecting the Chamber of Commerce and the peaceful citizens of Alotau town?

(2) Can the Minister take immediate action against the increasing criminal activities in Alotau town and the surrounding areas?

(3) Will the Minister consider taking long-term action to instill law and order?

(4) Will the Government consider giving assistance to boost the Police operations in the town and the province as a whole?

(5) Can the Minister temporarily deploy the Police Force to Alotau immediately?

(6) Can the Minister ask the Police Commissioner to revamp the Police Force in Alotau to put in place a more effective and efficient Police Force in town and the province?

Mr NIXON DUBAN – Mr Speaker, I thank the honourable Governor of Milne Bay for his questions. Of course, I am aware of the law and order situation in Milne Bay, especially Alotau town. The Governor and the Member for Alotau had written to me highlighting the serious surge in criminal activities taking place there.

Mr Speaker, I have made the decision already and discussed the issue extensively with the Police Commissioner and I want to assure the Governor and the people of Milne Bay that we will dispatch the Mobile Squad for an interim period.

In regard to the long-term issue on law and order, I want to encourage the Governor of Milne Bay as well as all the Governors that we have a huge need in this country to increase police manpower. One of the basic needs is housing and there is a shortage of houses and it is incumbent upon this Government to take some initiatives by way of all the Governors making the accommodations available so that, we can help them by supplying police manpower. In the long run, I believe we all must co-operate and that is the right way forward.

Mr Speaker, I want to inform the Governor and the people of Milne Bay that the mobile squads have been informed and it is a matter between the Minister and the Governor to negotiate and dispatch the mobile squads immediately to address the situation in Alotau.

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Members, Question Time has lapsed.

**AUDITOR-GENERAL OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA –
REPORTS OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS, 2009, PART III –
PAPERS – PAPERS NOTED – REFERENCE
TO THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE**

Mr SPEAKER – I present the following papers pursuant to statute:

Auditor-General of Papua New Guinea- Part III, 2009

- Reports of Public Accounts of Papua New Guinea, on Provincial and Local-level Governments -

(a) Their Business Arms

(b) Funds and Trusts

(c) Hospital Boards and the District Treasures on the usage of District Improvement Program Funds

Mr BENJAMIN POPONAWA (Tambul-Nebilyer – Deputy Chairman Public Accounts Committee) – I move-

That the Parliament take note of the paper and that the Report be referred to the Permanent Parliament Committee on Public Accounts

Motion – That the Parliament take note of the paper – agreed to.

**INAUGURAL MINISTERIAL STATEMENT –
EDUCATION, THE DRIVING FORCE OF THE 21ST CENTURY
– MINISTRY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, RESEARCH,
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY – MINISTERIAL STATEMENT –
– MOTION TO TAKE NOTE OF PAPER**

Mr DAVID ARORE (Ijivitari – Minister for Higher Education, Research Science and Technology) – Mr Speaker, on behalf of the Ijivitari people I want to sincerely thank you for allowing the opportunity to address this honourable Parliament of the Independence State of Papua New Guinea.

I wish to congratulate you for retaining your seat of Finschhafen for the second time and to be elevated to the top post as the Speaker of National Parliament. On the same token, I congratulate the Prime Minister on his election win as the Member for Ialibu-Pangia.

08/03

Mr Speaker, I am grateful to the Honourable Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, Peter O'Neill, for reappointing me as the Minister for Higher Education, Research Science

& Technology. The political party leader for The Triumph Heritage Empowerment Party, Honourable Don Polye and I are grateful for the opportunity you have given us.

Mr Speaker, this is my second term as a parliamentarian and as the Minister responsible for Higher Education, I want to assure you and this Parliament that during my second term, this country will see a revolution in Education.

Mr Speaker, 'Education is the driving force of the 21st Century'. Indeed, as Nelson Mandela put it, 'Education is the most powerful weapon which you can harness to change the world'.

Mr Speaker, if we are to change this country's mindset and prepare it for the take-off to development, I would urge this Parliament to invest massively invest in higher education, technical colleges, universities and people empowerment.

Mr Speaker, the time for talking is over. Now is the time to put our money where development matters the most and that is at the district level throughout the country. In line with the *Vision 2050* and the *Medium Term Development Plan 2015*, I will ensure that each district will have a technical, vocational and university centre so that our grassroots are people empowered. Education delivered to a generation in Papua New Guinea can be our pathway out of poverty. It becomes the engine room of ideas, innovation of imagination of a different national future.

Mr Speaker, the most educated, skilled and trained nations will be the most strongest and resilient economies of the 21st Century.

Mr Speaker, when a province through its district invests in education, it provides structural benefits to the country across the board in governance, productivity, health, gender equality and unlocking the full potential of Papua New Guineans.

Vision 2050, Human Capital Development and to the PNG's future.

Mr Speaker, Papua New Guinea has to succeed in the 21st century. Vision 2050 stipulates that human capital development in the country is the country's number one pillar. The foundation for meaningful economic development is massive injection of financial capital into Education.

Mr Speaker, I want to pledge that I intend to grow the High and Technical Education sector through a three-prong strategy, involving mainly:

- Growing the existing 32 accredited higher education service providers and by deepening their market penetration to ensure every parent at least should have a child progressing to college or university by 2020.

- Expanding scholarship coverage from the current 9 500 students to 20 000, and doubling gross enrolment from the current 28 000 to 46 000 by 2020. Currently we have roughly 20 000 students of which the Natschol only covers 9 500.

- Expanding investments in new buildings and teaching equipment for technical colleges and universities so as to soak up the access high school outputs that is going to result from the current O'Neill-Dion Government's free education and health policies. So today because of the current free education policy, we are building up the education sector at the primary and secondary level, and if we are able to absorb that at the tertiary level is an issue.

- Separating Technical and Vocational Education into an Authority together with National Training Council and put them under my ministry in line with the NEC Decision 54/85 which directed that TVET amalgamate with Higher Education.

- Awarding more research grants to Science & Technology to spur the growth of innovation in this country.

- Working with the Minister for Labour and Employment to create an Employment Service Centre to find jobs for our graduates, both within country and overseas.

Mr Speaker, at the same time, I will ensure that all universities and colleges adopt and adhere Quality Assurance Rating that my ministry has developed.

Mr Speaker, I will be brutal on the Council's who have been summarily responsible for running State educational institutions in the country. Council or Boardroom politics must cease and ensure that the interest of our children is of paramount importance.

Mr Speaker, I will work closely with the following institutions that are under my ministry but I will demand their full cooperation:

- (1) PNG University of Technology;
- (2) University of Papua New Guinea;
- (3) University of Natural Science and Environment;
- (4) University of Goroka;
- (5) Divine Word University;
- (6) Pacific Adventist University;
- (7) Papua New Guinea Science and Technology Council;
- (8) National Institute of Standards and Industrial Technology; and
- (9) National Agriculture Research Institute.

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The University of Papua New Guinea, University of Technology, University of Natural Resource and Environment, University of Goroka, Divine Word university, Pacific Adventist University, and lately, the Lutheran University, Papua New Guinea Science and Technology Council, National Institute of Standards and Industrial technology, National Agricultural research Institute, Institute of Medical Research, National Research Institute and Papua New Guinea Cocoa and Coconut Research Institute.

Other institutions that come under my jurisdiction and other institutions that come under legislative jurisdiction but are beneficiaries of the Ministry funding are; primary school teachers colleges that come under the *Education Act 1983*, technical colleges, business colleges, school of nursing and Don Bosco technical Institute.

Mr Speaker, I wish to provide you with the following critical facts. As I speak now, there is an estimated 800 000 college aged population between the ages of 18 to 25 of our country. Of these, a mere 28 000 are enrolled in our 32 declared higher and technical education institutions.

That is only to say; only 3.3 per cent of our college aged population is currently enrolled. So, again, out of the 800 000 college aged population that we have, only 28 000 are currently enrolled in our institutions.

Mr Speaker, this is totally unacceptable for a 21st century Papua New Guinea. In addition to this, only 9 500 students are supported through the Government's Tertiary Education Student's Assistant Scheme (TESAS), which is inclusive of the re-introduced fortnightly allowances.

Mr Speaker, I want to inform you that recent studies by my Ministry has informed us that the recurrent cost of higher education per year per student is now averaging at K29000 per student as opposed to K15000, which being the assumed unit market cost that my Ministry has been basing its calculations on since the year 2000. This is now seriously out of date, as costs have massively gone up, particularly the cost of air travel in the country.

Mr Speaker, the sad fact is that, universities and colleges have been struggling for the last ten years to find alternative sources of revenue to address their budget shortfalls and hence, increasing debt levels.

Mr Speaker, in relation to the capacity; the University of Technology and University of Papua New Guinea are currently enrolling 2858 and 5043 students respectively.

Policy studies undertaken by the Ministry last year have shown that these two universities in particular, have exceeded their designated infrastructure capacity. This in

fact is common knowledge amongst parents, students, the administration and the general public.

As an example; the University of Papua New Guinea's support infrastructure of dormitories, classrooms and student service utilities can only cater for the original design capacity of 2600 students compared with the current enrolment at 5043.

The continuous growth of enrolment by the universities to meet the Development Strategic Plan 2030 targets has not been adequately supported through budgetary allocations due to competing priorities of government. The cost of funding neglected over the years is declining quality levels in our tertiary institutions, where tutors are now giving lectures to an average of 400 students per class.

Mr Speaker, in short, this is the current situation. There is an overcrowding of students in our institutions, also teachers and learning facilities are not adequate and lecturers teach a large number of students at the cost of the quality of assessments.

Due to lecturers not being paid at market rates and we are not able to attract the best brains from overseas. Infrastructure is also lacking and there is insufficient funding and structural capacity at the ministerial level and this has not allowed for proper quality control checks of institutions and programmes offered.

There are governance issues at certain institutions and certain programmes offered are not on par with government and industry standards. Research in the institutions is not coordinated and lacks sufficient funding support.

Mr Speaker, to address all of the above I have eight immediate tasks that I want to flag to this honourable for your support.

Firstly, I intend to develop the National Higher Education Plan 2013-2023. The last sector plan expired in 2010 and as mandated by the *Higher Education Act 1983*, the Ministry is required to develop the sector plan. Development of that plan is currently in progress and includes strategies too.

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Development of the plan is currently in progress and includes strategies to immediately upgrade the Office of the Higher Education to departmental status so as to:

- (1) Effectively coordinate the business of the Ministry.
- (2) Review the out-dated *Higher Education Act 1983*, so as to fit the current landscape and address requirements of the sector.

(3) Review the current student support scheme (TESAS) to reflect the true market unit cost of Higher Education.

(4) Strengthen the quality of Higher Education so as to meet international and industry standards.

(5) Only support OHE quality accredited institutions.

Mr Speaker, I intend to without delay address the issue of quality within our universities.

Although there are mechanisms in place for quality control, I believe that more must be done within the Ministry. The Ministry is currently in the process of developing a Quality Assurance Manual. I intend to utilize this manual to ensure that every single Higher Education institution and its programs comply with government, industry, and international best practices and standards.

Mr Speaker, the maintenance and recapitalization of deteriorated infrastructure and lab equipment. Through the Ministry maintenance and rehabilitation PIP funded program, State Universities are undergoing maintenance of infrastructure and labs are being re-equipped with much needed teaching and learning equipment.

A total of K80 million has been expended over the last 4 years and has been fully acquitted early this year. An additional K82 million has been appropriated for 2012-2015 to continue this project. Of this, K12 million was appropriated for 2012.

I wish to submit to this Parliament that I can effectively rebuild technical education through my Ministry's Project Unit if my brother Minister for Planning gives me the required PIP funds because I have a proven project management system where funds are disbursed directly to suppliers of building materials and not to the contractors.

I intend to continue rehabilitation and refurbishment of classrooms, libraries, and research laboratories, I intend to rehabilitate staff and student accommodation. I also intend to rehabilitate university clinics and road infrastructure. As Minister for Higher Education Research Science and Technology, I intend to rehabilitate to transform teaching and learning and in the process give a new and encouraging look to the sector in which, our people can be proud of.

Mr Speaker, the development of a University Governance Manual. Universities have over the last 10 years preserved through university student strikes and academic staff revolt. In the most recent case at PNGUOT, the Ministry intervened by sending an Independent Mediation Team to identify issues and recommend the way forward. The

mediation report will guide the Ministry towards development of a governance manual for all colleges and universities.

Mr Speaker, I intend to immediately establish the Research, Science and Technology Council. All policy submissions and necessary requirements have been adhered to and I intend to take this matter immediately before NEC for final endorsement and establishment. I want to give more research funds to all our scientists in this country so they can drive innovation.

I am commissioning a review of the salaries of academic staff through-out the country with a view to improving their terms and conditions. For too long, we have ignored them.

I will be seeking Cabinet approval for a soft loan of K2 billion to drastically revamp the higher education sector so as to meet the demands exerted by an increasing population of 7 million people.

I intend to bring to this Parliament a Bill before the end of the year to effect a minor restructure of the Office of Higher Education to attain Departmental Status at the executive level 5 so that the Secretary for Higher and Technical Education will be directly responsible to the Minister with the Commission becoming an advisory board comprising experts. The Bill will replace the *Higher Education Act 1983*.

Mr Speaker, I want to inform Parliament that in light of these issues highlighted, my Ministry will lead a delegation to undertake a fact finding mission and to seek technical cooperation in higher and technical education with the Government of Malaysia through the Malaysian Ministry for Higher Education in September 2012.

Mr Speaker, I intend to undertake a Memorandum of Understanding on Higher Education between my Ministry and the Ministry for Higher Education in Malaysia. In this memorandum of understanding my Ministry anticipates to look at the following:

- (1) Technical Education Institutions
- (2) Technical Universities Scholarship Training
- (3) Industry Alliance with Malaysia for Corporate Sponsorship
- (4) Open University Learning model
- (5) Research & Development Cooperation (R&D)
- (6) Students Exchange
- (7) Funding Model for financing higher education between the two countries.

In conclusion, it is imperative that the Government through the Ministry arrest the

declining quality of higher and technical education. It is crucial that the Ministry improves its service delivery. Under my leadership, I will strive to ensure challenges are addressed and the system is able to provide the human resources and knowledge required to drive the country to a middle income economy by 2030.

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Sir JULIUS CHAN (New Ireland) – I move –

That the Parliament take note of the Paper.

Yes, Mandela was right, but Papua New Guinea must also know that knowledge is power, more so today than ever before. And we should, as leaders, support the honourable Minister to make sure that Papua New Guinea developed its manpower to be able to meet the currents of an internationally competitive world that we've got to live in.

So, I want to support the Minister and ask the Cabinet, your leader is the Treasurer, because he holds the purse and is not too far off from the Minister for Finance, who sits very closely to the Prime Minister to assist you to make sure that your vision in Higher Education is achieved.

I support your call to Parliament for the Minister for National Planning to release the gift of money, to give it to you, whether you get those millions that you are talking about, that is up to you to play the game in Cabinet.

However, from me as a Governor of a province, I want to praise you for the Statement that you have made. It's been long standing for a long time. We don't seem to be able to depict where we're going in higher education. We have saturated universities.

I welcome the fact that you are going to review the salaries of all the academic people. We must compete in this world. You must pay the price, if you want good people; you've got to pay for them. Nothing ever comes freely. So I support you on that also.

Now I simply want to ask you to come and hone in on two things. One is that Cabinet made a decision in 1997 to have a technical college in Namatanai. Last year, the TVET Division of Higher Education came and I exhausted myself when we broke ground there. My sweat went in vain. Can I ask the Minister to please help me to make me feel that what I sweated is worthwhile?

So if the Minister could take it on board and give me more than sweat, some physical confidence that this 1997 NEC decision for a technical multi-disciplinary college in Namatanai will take off.

In fact, Mr Speaker, you know that I've given away the whole airstrip of Namatanai to the school. So I don't ask you for something for nothing, I've closed the airstrip so you can build the TVET College in Namatanai.

Secondly, I just want the Minister to take on board the fact that the Fisheries College in New Ireland is already part of the University of Natural Resource and Environment. I am asking the Minister to take onboard that it is my view and the view of the government of New Ireland that we would like to grow from that to build a University of New Ireland.

It is already a university and we want to be able to grow it because every province should think of higher education so we could build our people to the state where no one would tend to deviate from the standards that we want the future generation of our Papua New Guineans to go.

I should once again congratulate the Minister, it's a first window to the higher education plan and you have our full support.

Mrs LOUJAYA TONI (Lae – Minister for Community Development) – Thank you, Mr Speaker for according me this opportunity, I'd like to commend the Minister for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology, the Honourable David Arore for your passion in the presentation of this paper.

You've certainly got the focus and the visionary leadership that is required in this Ministry and I would like to, in particular, make mention of your Fifth Initiative in the National Higher Education Plan 3 where you intend to establish the Research, Science and Technology Council. This move is certainly long overdue, and especially with your initiative to give more research funds to all our scientists in this country so they can drive innovation.

I would like to support you in this area because being Member for Lae where two universities are located, the University of Technology and the Lutheran University, I would like to partner with my Governor of Morobe to be able to assist where we can with regards to ensuring that our universities are equipped with the necessary infrastructure and equipment.

We not only depend on your Higher Education Budget but we also look at our DSIP and PSIP to make sure that these two universities that exist within our province and district are able to generate that innovation in science and technology.

As a recent graduate of the University of Technology and also being a next-door-neighbour to the Lutheran University because of the location that I live in. There is no

problem with land space on these two universities to be able to build the infrastructure where it is needed. But while the political will is there we do need to put our money where our mouth is.

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I would like to make a commitment here in this Parliament that I would be interested in hearing your needs and see how best we can work together with your Ministry in our capacity as Member and Community Development Minister as well to ensure that we do bring our universities in our electorates and districts up to par with international universities.

Mr JIM KAS (Madang) – Mr Speaker, I commend the Minister for bringing this statement to this honourable Parliament and I will be speaking as a former Member of the University Council for which I represented when the former speaker Honourable John Pundari appointed me to represent this Parliament.

Mr Speaker, the thinking in all the University Councils in Papua New Guinea is about Budgets. The agenda of every Council meeting is about issues affecting Universities and one of the main agendas is asking the Government to give them an appropriate amount of money.

I would like to ask the Treasurer to take note of and listen to all the University Councils and their request for funding appropriately given to them. If the Treasurer can accommodate their requests whatever the Minister has presented today will be produced as a result.

I support the Governor for New Ireland in the creation of a New Ireland University, as a former student of the Fisheries College I think the college is well located and has the appropriate infrastructure to build a university there. I take this time to thank the Japanese Government and the Australian Government for that particular infrastructure that is strategically located. I personally think the Government should seriously consider having a higher education institute in that province.

Mr Speaker, academics in all our higher learning institutions want to do research and the amount of money that is allocated for research is inadequate and with the initiative presented by the Minister for Higher Education I call on the Treasurer and the Government to set aside more funding for research and I commend the researchers from the institute of medical research for putting Malawan on the market to lead the way. Malawan is doing a

tremendous job on research for this country but most of the funding comes through from donor agencies and I would like to encourage the Government to look into this matter seriously and provide some more much needed funding.

Mr BOB DADAE (Kabwum) – Mr Speaker, I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election as Member for Finschhafen and later as Speaker of Parliament. I would also like to congratulate the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Ministers, Leader of the Opposition and all the Members of Parliament who have been elected in this 9th Parliament.

Mr Speaker, one of the least developed areas in Papua New Guinea is called Kabwum and I thank the people for showing trust in returning me to Parliament for the third time and set precedence in Kabwum to choose and elect another leader for three consecutive Parliaments in the future.

Mr Speaker, I would like to contribute in this debate but firstly I want to thank the Minister for Higher Education that he has rightfully stated that the driving force in the twenty-first century is higher education or education in general.

I am one of the Members of Parliament who has invested a lot of money in education infrastructure and today the results speaks for itself, you find more Kabwums in tertiary institutions in this country.

Mr Minister, you have covered most of the areas that need to be covered and I just want to emphasis on the aspect of increasing more dormitories. There are a lot of students who leave outside the university campuses to do studies because there is not enough dormitories in the campus, particularly the old universities like the University of Technology in Lae and the University of Papua New Guinea.

Mr Speaker, the increase of dormitories will ease the burden and give fair and equal opportunity for students facing difficulties studying at home and provide a academic competition and improvement across the higher education level.

Mr Speaker, secondly, in most cases the universities in Papua New Guinea turn to the Government for assistance but I think it is about time that the universities in this country must work together and put their knowledge, skills and talents to create a economic environment at the universities in this country.

One of the main areas that our universities can be successful in creating this economic environment is research.

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One of the areas that I wish to suggest is the research. If we can study the universities in Australia and compare them, they compete against each other. If you want to attract State funding, the universities have to be competitive. Universities are also rated according to their research performance, which improve the quality of education and the university as a whole as well as producing of educated elites in their respective countries or universities.

I would like to recommend and suggest that our universities must look at research and the government must provide incentives and give some research into universities with some promise that they must deliver good outcomes to attract State funding.

Cash handout does not do any good. You have to prove that you can earn the money. Furthermore, this country needs many educated professionals but we have spent so much money from early childhood learning to the university level. People who will take the lead in taking Papua New Guinea to the next level and putting our country on the map are the educated elite.

We must learn from other countries like Japan. After the country war, Japan was needed to start over and they found answers nowhere else but through education. They had to send intelligent students from various fields to attend overseas universities and upon their return, Japan was rebuilt.

Within forty years, Japan is now one of the super powers of the world. Singapore is also an example. It was a dumping ground for Malaysia before but Lee Kwan Yu, as most of you know, was a very highly educated person. He turned Singapore around during his lifetime and now Singapore is a leading developed nation.

Malaysia was rated equal with Papua New Guinea some years ago and with one other country in South Africa. These two countries are now more successful than PNG. They were rated equal but today these two countries are Malaysia in particular is almost an advanced nation. If these two countries can do it, Papua New Guinea can do it. We have already proven that through our intelligence. We can export our knowledge overseas because we have lot of experts like professors, lawyers, doctors, engineers, pilots, et cetera who are working throughout the world.

But we need to create a conducive environment within Papua New Guinea universities to make this happen. We have to educate our people and prepare them to gain advance education in other countries.

I thank the Minister for Higher Education for his innovation and I trust that you will ensure that the plans and visions will be implemented during this term of Government. On that token, I also like to thank the Prime Minister for appointing you for the second time as the Minister for Higher Education.

Mr BOKA KONDRA (North Fly – Minister for Tourism, Arts and Culture) – Mr Speaker, I rise also to contribute my views on the matter of Higher Education.

I believe that education is a tool for a nation's future and it is the strength of a nation. In addition, education is a tool for civilization. A society that does not have education and educated people or intellectuals is a dead society where there is no future and strength for development and civilization.

Mr Speaker, Papua New Guinea is regarded as a nation with a wealth of gold and other resources, a nation that has so much resource in its land. I believe one day all the extractive resources will come to an end, yet, the nation will always fall back to its human resource. Human development and the Human Resource industry in Papua New Guinea is here to stay to develop Papua New Guinea. All the resources that we have will one day vanish in some years' time.

We must consider human resource development of this country very seriously. We have to invest more money for the development of this country. Figuratively, we should be locking up all the money inside the brains of our children. Literally, it means the money we invest for our children's education will eventually generate revenue for our rice and tin of fish.

When I campaigned during my election period, I told my voters these ideas and they said, they want roads, health centers and aid-posts. I said, okay, but you are talking about the results of investing money in the brains of your children. For example, a house is designed by a child's brain, and what we taught the child is manifested in the brain. The child, in its development stages, will begin to draw something like a house or a tree. Therefore, we must spend time and money on human resource development.

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Let me give you an example. When I was in grade one in 1981, a huge truck was driven to my village because exploration of the Ok Tedi Mine was to begin. Nobody from the government or the investor came to my area up in the North-Fly to inform us that there is going to be mining there because we were uncivilised. Instead, they brought a big

machine to my school and upon its arrival, we all walked out of the school and started following the machine.

When the machine stopped, we all crowded around and started touching its tyre, body and even the driver. We were amazed that a small man could move a big machine. After the recess, the teachers rang the bell and told all of us to go back into the classrooms. We told them that we were not going back because we wanted to see how the machine operated. So we were there all afternoon. We said education was not the solution because civilisation has already begun and we are going to be there to witness it

The people of Western Province have been brainwashed by money. Instead of bringing education first to my place, they brought machines and money and brainwashed my people. Today, the nation and the world regard Western Province as a place where there is no civilisation. It was not our mistake but the mistake of the Government of that day that didn't give me education first.

So I am appealing to the nation to, stop bringing machines to our remote areas where there is no education but introduce education for 20 to 30 years before you go and start up the mine. Otherwise, you are killing the very existence of the people in this country and also blame them without cause.

I am happy that there is a long list of universities and colleges in other provinces. In my province, our natural resources are depleted so to substantiate for this loss, what will the government and all the stakeholders offer the province in return? But the government must take the leading role. I am appealing to every stakeholder in this country to give my province one thing that we will not forget.

One time, I made a statement that all the money is gone and the mine is winding down, and if there is only last K10 in your pocket, don't give it to me because I am going to spend because you taught me how to spend the mining royalties without any skills. Why not use that last K10 to build a factory or workshop of the brain so I can rear my children in that factory.

Mr Minister, my appeal to you is that give me not money but anything to the people in North-Fly. The mine is winding down so what will I do with all the assets up there. I want this Government to seriously consider and turn the township of Tabubil into a university or college. We have already begun something which is called the Star Mountain Institute of Technology. I want that university to be turned into a university. The people are facing catastrophes and ecological disasters and are dying. So can the Government

build me a factory of the brain so that my sons and daughters can be educated and earn a living long after the mine closes. So Minister, please include it on your list.

We could call this university, Pacific University of Technology. If Lae has one why not give one to my province.

Another issue that I want to talk about is quality of education and not quantity. In Papua New Guinea, there are so many students crowding up the schools but we need to have a better selection criteria and select the students on merits so that we can play a leading role in the Pacific. We are facing overcrowding and the selections are not done properly. We should not use bribery to enrolment. We must do away with this kind of attitudes.

So to conclude, I want to say that let us put the money into the education of our future generation. I have already started and signed an MOU with the Lincoln University and the Christchurch Institute of Technology. We already have more than 30 students studying in these universities and next year, we will have the first granduands. I spend almost about K2 million annually and whether I have followed procedures or not, some people are saying that I have not done so. I would not mind going to jail but first our children must have education.

These are some thoughts that I wanted to share with all of us. We will all die and after all the minerals are depleted the only industry that will remain and take this nation forward is human resource.

15/03

Sir PUKA TEMU (Abau – Minister for Public Services) – Thank you, Mr Speaker, I will be short.

I have never heard a most profound statement from a Higher Education Minister, and this is the first one and I commend the Minister for his profound statement. And I do not think that anybody can better it after him, and so, congratulations Honourable Minister.

I will make five suggestions regarding the issues that he had raised.

Firstly, I think that we are in an era where Papua New Guinea can now showcase leadership in supporting the Minister in investing in this very important sector. The economy is booming and the Prime Minister has provided the leadership, fee-free education has come in and we are moving in the right direction.

Apart from that, after three terms of Parliament have gone by there was no improvement on the primary education and tertiary education was forgotten. Now, it is coming back again through the Minister's leadership.

One area that I believe we need to really look at, and this is where the private sector comes in is, we need to work in partnership, either in higher education or education through expanding Information Technology (IT) infrastructure in the entire country. We must allow for building IT infrastructure to cover the entire country, because the dream of having every district to have university centres cannot be achieved if we do not have IT infrastructure available.

Mr Speaker, I strongly suggest that under the leadership of our Prime Minister and the Minister now taking the lead in Higher Education, we must now move into IT infrastructure and invite the private sector to partner us. We must all make sure that our little schools out there have computers. We must move into electronic-education so that we can link up with satellites with universities in India and America. Therefore, we can tap into those programmes that are now available through this technology.

Mr Speaker, this is an area that I really believe that this Parliament has to urge the government to cover the entire country with IT infrastructure.

My second suggestion, which the Honourable Member for Kabwum had raised, is that universities must now think outside of the box. We cannot keep on relying on the Government for Budget support. Government Budget support will always come but it is always limited because Governments always have competing priorities. Some universities have a lot of land and they need to commercialise those land and make money to earn revenue.

Mr Speaker, today there are a consortium of universities who form business groups and bid for international programmes. An example of such is AusAID, university consortiums in Australia have formed business arms and they bid for AusAID programmes. They make money for those universities. Why then cannot our universities do the same? Why cannot our brains get together and form these consortiums for business and start looking for bids? Bids like, for example, the government is looking at reviewing the *Environmental Act*. Also, the Minister for Environment and Conservation a short while ago talked about a workshop or consultation. This is where the consortium of universities can get together and come up with a smart policy and sell it to the Government of the Day. That is the type of innovativeness that universities and the councils need to move into.

Mr Speaker, we also need to incentivise.

Mr Speaker, the Government will never build all the required higher education institutions in this country. The private sector is waiting so let us incentivise the private sector. Like in the health sector, only 2 per cent input is from the private sector and that is not enough. In many other countries it is around 20 per cent. This is also the case for the universities but the churches are running schools and they are also coming to the government for funding as well. But let us incentivise the private sector to partner us to build the state-of-the-art 21st Century universities and colleges.

Mr Speaker, I also think that we need to look into twining arrangements and the Honourable Member for North Fly in his statement has already been funding those arrangements. And there are universities out there that can twin with us and then we can partner them. Not only in sending students but exchanging staff. There are professorial courses that cannot be funded so the private sector can assist. For example, the mining faculty at the PNG University of Technology has no funding to operate but we have so many mining companies in the country.

Why cannot we negotiate with the mining companies and they can fund a professorial course, computers, renovation and maintenance? The same also goes for agriculture. We have big agricultural firms operating in the country and making a lot of money.

These are some of the things that councils of universities need to be innovative about. We really need innovativeness in this particularly important area.

Mr Speaker, I strongly suggest that we really should seriously look at separating the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology. It has to be separate because this is an area where innovation, smart thinking will come in and the idea of twining with other research institutions around the world will come in. This is because that the world is moving ahead and this is where we can become a smarter society, government and Parliament.

We need budgets and government programmes to be driven by policy where policy must come out of research. If we are not investing properly in research then we will not have the benefit of good advice. If we invest in peanut we will eat only peanut. If we go by downstream processing we will gain greater results.

Mr Speaker, I strongly suggest, as we are moving now into an era of economical boom and this Parliament will not make a mistake when any government of the day is forced to invest heavily into human resource because they serve as security for our country and it is the same in any other countries.

16/03

We know that some countries are not blessed with natural resources; therefore, they invested heavily in human resources.

We have talked about these issues time and time again so why don't we just work together. Let us invest money. We all have shopping lists so let us agree to invest heavily. We have the right leader who is now providing good leadership.

Mr Speaker, every district must close the loop in Education. Every district must not have a broken chain of education at the elementary, community, high schools and technical community based levels.

Every district must have a university centre so that the term 'drop out' is removed from our vocabulary. Papua New Guineans must not speak the word drop out because we are creating alternate learning pathway in this commitment. Therefore, there must be an opportunity for every child to move to another learning path way and eventually one day graduate with a degree. Those opportunities are now available to us.

Mr Speaker, technologies are available as well. I will invite you one day because my electorate needs a university centre. When the budget is handed down in a couple of week's time, I will allocate funds for you to come and establish an university centre.

Every child in Abau district deserves that as well as every other child in your respective electorates. As mentioned by the Minister, we must do less talking and take more actions. We already passed the Sovereign Wealth Bill in the last Parliament meeting that focused on infrastructure. So when we talk about education, we must clarify and simplify it. This is an important question and you have the full support. We look forward to your dream and to reiterate the term you used 'revolutionise' the sector. We can stand with you because our children deserve better.

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, I graduated from the University of Papua New Guinea in 1975. I went to one of the biggest hospitals in the Southern Hemisphere, the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, as a graduate from the University of Papua New Guinea.

I was posted in the intensive care unit and an Australian graduate was giving me a handover takeover report. We came across an old man laying down. He was not diagnosed for five days now, said the Australian graduate. We do not know what's wrong with this old man, he added. I placed my hand on the old man's neck and felt stiffness around his neck area. I was taught back here at UPNG Medical Faculty that if a patient has a stiff neck then that patient is diagnosed with meningitis. So I told my colleague that the old man had meningitis. But he did not believe me. He told me, I did not know what I was talking

about. After the ward round, I went back and did a lumber punch on the old man and sent it to the laboratory. Low and behold, the result came back and they confirm my diagnosis.

So, Prime Minister, we have the brains and the attitudes, so let us help our institutions. The Asian Development Bank also talks about the three I's for the nations to weather problems they are faced with. They are; strong institutions, wide spread infrastructure and innovativeness. Let us commit ourselves to the three I's this floor.

Mr DE KEWANU (Mendi) – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will be speaking for the first time as Member for Mendi. I thank my people of Mendi for mandating me to represent them on the Floor of Parliament. It is a great responsibility but it is a challenge. I believe in each and everyone of us. I would also like to congratulate Mr Speaker, for occupying the Speaker seat.

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I'd like to recognize and congratulate the Prime Minister and his Deputy for their elevation as the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister respectively of this country. And I also am privileged and honoured to serve in the Ninth Parliament with our great leaders in Sir Julius Chan, Sir Michael Somare and Mr Paias Wingti who are household names in my primary school days.

I am also honoured that we have three female Members of Parliament in Julie Soso, Loujaya Toni and Delilah Gore.

As I was listening to the Minister for Higher Education, being a graduate from the University of Technology some 20 years ago, and having seen the institutions of this nation, I see a gap and fallout.

Rightly, the Member for Abau had made that comment about the quality and level of education leadership at that time, when he could diagnose that patient in Australia. And there is a fallout in the level and quality of education in this country.

I am delighted that the Minister for Higher Education has touched some key and fundamental issues on Higher Education.

I have never went back to the University of Technology but when I last went, the environment was not as conducive as it was in the years 1984, 1985 and 1986. This has led to the fall in the quality and standard of education in this country. But I am so thankful to the Minister for seeing and addressing the level and quality of education and placing it where it should be placed.

It is good news for Higher Education in this country, now that the Minister has come up with the policies and plans that he has stated.

And Minister, we as Members of Parliament, I, in particular, was impressed with the Statement you made. I think it is going to go a long way in the history of this country because I will be supporting you with the Higher Education Act that you want to propose at the end of the year.

I think this is going to be a milestone for this country because education and in particular, universities and technical institutions at that level are going to be elevated to the level where this country is moving.

And there is a fallout, and I can substantiated this statement when I say there is a fallout in that when this country was experiencing a boom in mining, oil and gas we did not have the technical expertise, the manpower to tap Papua New Guineans into positions of responsibility.

That fallout and that gap has got to be narrowed today. Not later but it must be made by this Ninth Parliament. We have got to narrow it by supporting the Minister for Higher Education because we can't sit back and relax. If the gap in quality education grows there will never be anything to sustain manpower, research and technology to get this country to the next generation.

And honourable Members of this Parliament, 'we've got to take heed, take account of where we are. And Minister for Higher Education has taken account of where we are. He has taken stock of where our universities and technical institutions are. We have to take his statement seriously.

I am honoured and proud to say that your Department is taking the lead and I am sure the Ministers for National Planning and Finance and the Government will have policies driven toward that end. And our policy will stand on that because the country is at the cross roads now to build and develop manpower, enough scientists, engineers and professionals for the next generation and the furtherance of this country.

I can see the vision the Minister has and he has even mentioned going into the districts. That's something that all of us have to take ownership of and see how the detailed policies are directed at.

As for Mendi, I have a technical institution that's being talked about but I have to get more details of it. You have it mentioned here, yes, it's a Don Bosco Technical Institute, and I believe there was something that has been started in Mendi. I will come back to you on that to see how far they have gone because nothing has gotten of the ground yet.

If every district has an institution of learning or technical institution that will form the basis of taking in our drop outs and utilize them. That can only happen at technical institutions that will be addressed at district levels.

I am impressed and happy with the Minister for Higher Education for putting together a roadmap for higher education in this country. I think it is welcome news for our lecturers, their remuneration packages need to be reviewed and that has been addressed in this restructure.

The institutions have been falling apart and I think that's the right approach, we've got to start now or we will never do it.

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If we don't start now the level of education output will be very poor.

Mr Speaker, in saying this, we as leaders must have confidence in our own institutions. I would like to send my son or daughter to the University of Papua New Guinea or the University of Technology. With due respect to all my colleague Members, I am sure we are sending our children to these institutions.

Mr Speaker, when it comes to health services when we develop our health centres, I want to see leaders be served in the premier hospitals in the country.

So I commend the Minister for Higher Education that the approach is right and as Members of Parliament we need to rally behind him and support him all the way.

Mr JUSTIN TKACHENKO (Minister for Sports Moresby- South) – Mr Speaker, I congratulate you on your election as Member for Finschhafen and your elevation to the Speakers Chair. I also thank the people of Moresby-South for the overwhelming support they have given me to be their leader for the next five years to turn Moresby South around to be one of the best electorates in the nation's Capital.

Mr Speaker, Higher education is a big priority in my electorate and we have a lot of very good institutions and technical schools and a lot of these schools are run by the Churches like the Catholics, the Seventh Day Adventist and also other church bodies throughout our country.

Mr Speaker, with that, there, needs to be more emphasis on supporting the church in running these technical schools and institutions.

The Pacific Adventist University out at 14 mile is doing its utmost best to educate our young people in the South Pacific and this country and the more support they can get

would go a long way. On the same token, our NCD Governor is doing his best to build a new high school out there as well.

Mr Speaker, if the Government cant do it and if the churches can they we need to emphasis on supporting this organizations on what they are trying to do for our people and take their schools and colleges to the next level because a lot of them are run-down and they're been run on a smell of an oil rag. All they need is that injection and support from the Government to show that they are needed in the education of our people.

Mr Speaker, just recently, the Governor for NCD and I have set up new Technical Vocational Education Training Office. That office is for the people of Moresby-South and NCD and with that we are there to give opportunities to our young men and women in NCD.

The Governor for NCD had this set up 4 years ago and I have just basically joined what he has already created and I saw the huge benefit of it.

With that most of the institutions that the students are applying for are church run organizations. They have got limited capacities and that's where I saw the need because they put in a lot of pride and discipline into the students and they ensure that students get educated to the right level.

I commend the Minister for Higher Education and I fully support what he is doing and his work will change the nation for the benefit of our future generations leading the way.

Mr RICHARD MARU (Yangoru-Saussia - Minister for Commerce and Trade) – Mr Speaker, this is my first time to speak in this Honourable Parliament and I would like to thank the people of Yangoru/Saussia for giving me the mandate to serve them in this Parliament.

Mr Speaker, we both go back along way, and on behalf of my family and my people, I want to congratulate you on your election to this high office. This Chair requires a man of steel and I have no hesitation and doubt in saying you are that man.

We are sure that as you preside over this place in the next five years the mess in this place will be cleaned up.

Mr Speaker, I also thank the Prime Minister for giving me the opportunity to be in Cabinet and I congratulate all Members of Parliament for making it to this Parliament.

Mr Speaker, I want to thank my colleague Minister for a very good Statement. I want to contribute in support of his statement and I want the Minister and all to take note.

Mr Speaker, when we talk about human capital we are also talking about the future needs of this nation.

Papua New Guinea now, is in the global market and we have to produce Papua New Guineans who are not only going to work in Papua New Guinea but who are going to work in the United Nations, Asian Development Bank and any major organizations throughout the world.

I support Sir Puka's statement saying, we are a smart bunch of people but we need to be given the right training through to the university level.

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But who are also going to work with the United Nations, Asian Development Bank and with the major organizations throughout the world. I agree with Sir Puka who said that we are a smart bunch of people but we need to be the right training from an early age right through to the University level.

When we look at countries like Singapore, Malaysia, China and Japan, their human resource were not trained in their countries alone, they sought training overseas. I must say that the only thing missing in this morning's statement is a program to send smartest Papua New Guineans overseas, so that we start to breed our young people to be world class professionals in their own right who are going to stand and compete in the global job market.

What successive governments failed to do was to invest in a scholarship scheme to sponsor our students straight from grade 12 into the world class universities abroad and I feel this is the bit that is missing in the statement and needs to be looked at and supported by all.

We have to send students who can be trained in the world to compete at the highest level. The other aspect is that in Australia, New Zealand and England, education is the biggest business for these countries as they are using these institutions to drive the economies.

We should have a vision for the future and should become the top class education nation in the Pacific region so that the rest of the region would be envious towards our standards of education, therefore sending all their students here instead of elsewhere in the region.

We should aim to become the leader in quality education in the Pacific so that it will become another big commercial sector for Papua New Guinea, and as the Minister for

Trade, Industry, I say that it is a big industry and we need to tap into that and this is consistent with what the Minister has already said.

Mr Speaker, one of the things that bothers me about the University council is that, the same people have been in that council and there is no new thinking and innovation so when are we going to look into having a legislation that will do away with having people on this council for more than 10 years as if they own it hereditarily.

We need to look at this and bring in much younger and more committed people into the university councils; this is one of the areas that we need to review and also there are many courses that we do not offer in our country. For example; pilots, why are we making our parents suffer to send their children to Australia by paying K200 000 or K300 000 per year so that they can have a piloting license at the end of the given year for flying.

These students will come back and serve this country so why aren't we offering scholarships to our young students, especially the grade 12 school leavers. Because when we do these, they will come back and localize a lot of the jobs we provide in the country. Let us invest in setting a high standard in terms of human resource in the region. Let's plan and invest in that so that we make education not only a priority but a leading industry in the region.

Mr MORI WERA (Chuave) – Mr Speaker, I did not know that the Minister for Higher Education was going to present a paper and I asked a question during Question Time but I would like to thank the Minister for giving a very detailed statement and he has been very astute to the issue of Higher Education in this country and I must commend him.

Mr Speaker, this basically goes to show that the Government recognizes the problems faced by the tertiary institutions and for the first time practical steps are being taken to address these issues which are being long overdue.

We must as the Minister for National Planning has said yesterday, we must not address the symptoms but we must arrest or attack the causes to those problems and this is what the Government has been trying to do and I am sure they will address a lot of the problems that have not been attended to in a long while.

Mr Speaker, the Minister for Higher Education has been very specific and I would like to point out here that it is very important that we must address and seriously take note of the eight tasks that have been outlined in this paper and these must be attended to and tailored to suite PNG needs and not become mere rhetorics and stored away.

Necessary funding must be made available so that these important tasks outlined must be addressed and implemented. There are many reasons as to why we are having problems with our universities and one of them is the dual salary system and I think as a Government we must take serious steps to do away with the dual salary system so that we can retain our professionals back in those institutions.

I am very thankful that it has been highlighted that there must be a Council established to look into Science and Technology. This is very important apart from the success of the Medical Research Institute in Goroka.

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One thing I want to point out here is that we must seriously address research into the impact of global warming in this country. I have read the paper some weeks ago on what the Office of Climate Change has done but I am very sad to point out here that we have no home-grown database to back-up to address the impact of global warming, and this must be seriously addressed and I am sure that if we can support the policy on education, I am pretty sure that this can be addressed.

I do not need to lecture the honourable Members of Parliament because you all know the impact of global warming and how they impact on food security and important transport infrastructure. In order to address them, we must have basic data and this is lacking. I am from Chimbu and we do not have the natural resources as other provinces have but I want to ask the Minister responsible and the government that in your proposal to establish the school of excellence, why not establish it in Chimbu because we do not have any tertiary institutions. You do not need to go any further. If you go and ask the lecturers of University of Technology and the University of Papua New Guinea on how the Chimbu students have fared compared to students from other provinces, you will find the results for yourself.

The Government must take into consideration and convert either the Kerowagi Secondary School or the Kondiu Secondary School in Chimbu to be one of the School of National Excellence in this country.

Mr Speaker, thank you and I want to assure the Minister that he has my undivided support.

Mr JAMES MARAPE (Tari-Pori – Minister for Finance) – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also join this debate and support all the statements that have been made so far, and also bring into perspective some ideas as far as the Government programs are concerned.

Mr Speaker, many good debates have been made in support of this ministerial statement. The Minister for Higher Education has presented his statement now and tomorrow other Ministers will present theirs. The ministerial statements will be presented and we will realise that in every statement and the intention of the Government, the need to dive into the development kina faces us all the time.

The Minister for Higher Education has stated that K2 billion is needed for this sector to really work. The Health sector as alluded to yesterday has some cost connotations and it also applies to every sector but this Government will continue to make these statements, outlining the priority programs and putting forth the development plans as envisaged by those sectors.

Mr Speaker, I rise to bring comfort to this Parliament that we must not be reserved and negative when the Government starts to move into deficit budget and structuring finance to meet some of these ever pressing needs and demands for development that faces us now. For instance, if you do not invest in the Higher Education today, the child that does not find space in class today will become an adult 10 years down the line.

Let me pose this question, do we wait 10 years to harness the LNG revenue and re-educate an adult 10 years down the line or harness that revenue today and educate that child now? What is the logical question? I am making this statement from the perspective of many criticisms that will come in relation to why get K6 billion loan or K2 billion additional loan outside of the Budget.

Mr Speaker, if you find an optimum space and optimum figure to advance that revenue that we have down the line, get it and start to invest systematically today in the Health, Education and infrastructure sectors. That is the work of a responsible government seeing the need into the future by advancing secured revenue we have today.

Mr Speaker, I am happy to stand here and thank the work of the previous Somare Government which had secured the PNG LNG Project. This project gives us a secure future. We have secure revenue as a result of that LNG Project now and the question I ask is, are we going let this revenue wait or do we get it now? The cost of building this infrastructure today and the cost of deferring that construction at the social and economic cost, at children's education costs 10 years down the line is very huge.

I have heard the level of debate here and I can say that many of us are learned leaders now seated on this Floor, if not all of us. If you a businessman and you put this proposition; you have secured a contract, and you know that five years down the line you know your contract value. Would you stop your contract and sit and dream for the revenue to come? You will kill your business. You get out there and secure that money, invest it into your business and build that business today because you have a guaranteed capital coming in. But the question is you will not be silly to get more than your guaranteed revenue.

As Government today, we are responsible and we will systematically put forward ministerial statements with what we intend to do with the cost factor built into it and we will come to Parliament to seek concurrence.

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Let us not be timid and reserved and sit back and hold back. If we do nothing and expect things to just happen the country will not move forward.

The Highlands Highway is deteriorating, the road from Wewak to Vanimo has not been connected, the road from Rabaul to Kimbe is also not connected, and the road from Port Moresby to Alotau has not been connected and from Gulf to Lae or to the Southern highlands has not been connected. This is because we have politicians who are small time thinkers and are afraid to embark on bigger and better things for the country.

Today, we have just heard that our universities have not expanded since 1975 when Sir Puka Temu went to school and graduated. This is because we have not been innovative. We will structure responsibly as a government. We will structure responsible financing structures so that we address some of these prevalent needs that confront us today, because if we do not do them, and you wait for time and the revenue to come, or simply put budget today does not have the envelope to address all these development needs that we need to address today.

We do not have the luxury of time to delay those developments. If we delay those developments the country will suffer down the line. Therefore, I stand to support the Minister's call. Yesterday, the Minister for Health and HIV/AIDS made a statement and many more Ministers will be also making their statements, and I would like all the Members of Parliament to have a positive attitude.

The Government will not be responsible as we package together all the development needs of this country with the correct costs attached to them. We will be ensuring that we

structure those programmes in a way where it draws down funding and not be a liability in the future. And that it is done in a sustainable manner and at the same time we get the developments right now instead of waiting down the line to get developments in the future. I therefore commend the Minister.

I had to speak on this debate because I saw that my fellow Members of Parliament believe that it is now the job of the Departments of Planning, Finance, Treasury and the government. Therefore, let me give encouragement to all of us. These statements were brought forward to signal to the nation what we are going to do about these important sectors. Are we going to hide behind them? Not as a responsible government we are laying forward our intentions of development putting forward as far as various sectors are concerned, and then we responsibly structure financing to those plans.

As we structure financing to those plans we hope to implement some of them instead of waiting for tomorrow. That is what we intend to do because if we do not do it our mothers and children will continue to die and our health sector plan will not be matched. If we do not do it today our education will not expand. We have already expanded our basic education system and so, we must do it, and let me ask everyone of us sitting in this honourable Parliament to remove our clashes of politics and see in that perspective that the need development is ever prevalent amongst us and right in our faces.

You have already heard the figure of two billion announced by the Minister.

You all will hear such figures when the Ministers for Education, Transport, Civil Aviation, Works and all the other Ministers present their statements. You all will hear huge financial implications and when these financial implications are presented to the Parliament, do we become shy and timid, and hold back because the Leader for Opposition is criticising us or do we say, no, that is the challenge before us.

We must draw from the revenue that we have locked into the future and start to work the plans that we have put forward. As a government, we intend to do this and I ask this honourable Parliament to support us in the coming year in the various sectors like education. We will give focus of the budget to districts and provinces next year.

Mr Speaker, let me take the education sector for instance, if the Members of Parliament take their DSIP appropriation and say, okay, the National Government will worry about the universities and we will fix all the elementary schools in this country.

If you use K1 million from your DSIP for the education sector and all the 89 districts make interventions in the elementary education sector, you will be freeing up K89 million for us to invest in the Universities of Goroka, Technology, Divine Word and et cetera.

The need for large scale capital injections is there and the competition for budget is always there. If we duplicate submissions and responsibilities we will get nowhere. That is why the National Government will structure budgets so that budgets that are entitled for districts and provinces, you will handle them, especially budgets that that fall in your ambit or responsibility. Likewise, secondary schools also come under provincial governments. As for district high schools the district will look after them and for elementary and primary schools, the districts and provinces will look after them in order to free up the National Government to worry about the universities, colleges and technical schools. These are partnerships that we can embrace right across all the sectors of government amongst and within ourselves as well with other stakeholders like donor agencies.

So, let me put the challenge to us again as Members of the Parliament, the challenges that face us today are big but we must not be scared. The National Government will responsibly delegate functions with resources and the challenge is on all of us to work together. And if the National Government has a vision and try to seek structured financing elsewhere for resource then do not be scared and say that this country will go broke. For I ask you all this question, what country in this world has ever gone broke?

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Motion (by **Mr Sam Basil**) agreed to –

That the question be now put.

MOTION BY LEAVE

Mr JAMES MARAPE (Tari-Pori – Minister for Finance) – Mr Speaker, I ask leave of Parliament to move a motion without notice.

Leave granted.

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ADJOURNMENT

Motion (by **Mr James Marabe**) agreed to –

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 1.00 p.m..