

SECOND DAY

Wednesday 21 November 2012

DRAFT HANSARD

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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES CORRECTIONS TO DAILY DRAFT HANSARD

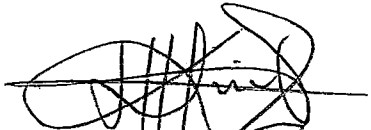
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Corrections maybe marked on a photocopy of the Daily Draft Hansard and lodged at the Office of the Principal Parliamentary Reporter, A123 (next to the Security Control Room).

Corrections should be authorised by signature and contain the name, office and telephone number of the person transmitting/making the corrections.

Amendments cannot be accepted over the phone.

Corrections should relate only to inaccuracies. New matter may not be introduced.



LEE SIROTE

Acting Principal Parliamentary Reporter

SECOND DAY

Wednesday 21 November 2012

Mr Speaker (**Mr Theo Zurenuoc**) took the Chair at 10 a.m., and invited the Member for Sohe, Honourable Dellilah Gore to say Prayers:

‘Almighty God, as leaders of this nation, today we humbly come before your merciful throne. Father God, everyone of us bowing our heads this morning, represent people in our own electorates and districts as leaders for this nation, God lead us as we represent them today. May your heavenly Father release wisdom from heaven above to our Prime Minister, the Speaker, Ministers and Members of this Parliament.

Father this morning, we want to thank you and praise you because you have lived on this earth and taught us how to pray to you and so Father, everyone of us bowing our heads this morning will all join our voices to say the Lords prayer. Amen.’

BROADCASTING OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS – STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable members, I have to inform Parliament that the Permanent Parliamentary Committee on Broadcasting met today and resolved that the *National Television Service Kundu 2* will be allowed to televise questions without notice as part of its community obligation and that *NBC* be allowed to broadcast live Question Time for the duration of this meeting.

QUESTIONS

Mr SAM BASIL – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I would like to direct my questions to the Minister for Finance.

Mr Speaker, traditionally during the handing down of budgets, the Parliament allows for seven days grace period before the Opposition replies but now that I have been given the opportunity, I would like to ask the Finance Minister some questions regarding the 2013 Budget.

Mr SPEAKER – Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the Standing Orders do not allow us to discuss or deliberate on matters that are already on the Notice. The Budget is already put on Notice so I will not allow you to ask questions in relation to it.

Let this be a reminder to all the Members of Parliament that you will not ask questions relating to the Budget at this time. You will be allowed to debate on it when we return next Tuesday.

Mr JOSEPH YOPYOPY – Thank you Mr Speaker. Before I raise my questions, I would like to join other leaders on this Floor to congratulate you on your election to the Chair and also to the rest of the Members of Parliament. To the people of Papua New Guinea, I want to say thank you for appointing these vibrant leaders. We have been looking for change and I believe this time around, change will start during this Ninth Parliament. I also want to thank the people of Wosera-Gawi for their confidence in me to elect me as their leader to lead them for the next five years.

Mr Speaker, I want to direct my questions to the Minister for Education and I want the Prime Minister and the Minister for Finance to take note and the question are in relation to the K600 million that we have allocated for free education. Though I am supportive of it, there are some issues that I believe we should address. My questions are based on the implementation and acquittal systems.

I have a number of questions based on that and firstly, I have not seen any implementation system that has been used for the last two years of this free education system. We have so far given out over a billion kina in 2011 and 2012 but I have not seen one system in place. If the Minister is aware of one, can he please inform this Parliament on how we are implementing this system in all our schools?

Secondly, if you look at what we have given out, there are no checks and balances; there are no controls over how schools are using their funds at the moment. You can see that most of us parents are still buying materials for our children attending schools these days so we really

don't know what is happening to the funds that were given to the schools. As far as I have seen over the last two years, there are no checks and balances and I think the Minister should really check with his Department to know what is happening.

Thirdly, in 2011 and 2012 as I have stated, over K1 billion has been spent for the free education but what have we got to show over the last two years?

02/02 . .

I think we should start looking at how we will be implementing this over the next few years.

Mr Speaker, fourthly, many of us here have schools in very remote areas and we as leaders of our own constituencies deserve to know how the schools are using the funds in their own electorates.

This is very important because so far we know that many schools have allegations of misappropriations. Therefore, we want to know how schools are using their funds in their own electorates.

Mr Speaker, my term as manager in charge of education in NCD we have carried out a quick audit in all the NCD schools, and the findings showed that 95 per cent of the schools do not have records of how they are spending funds in NCD. Therefore, if that is happening in NCD I think that it is the same right across the country.

Mr Speaker, I think before the Minister can give his ministerial speech we would like to know this and also, it would be good if a report can be tabled in Parliament for us to know how funds are really used in schools around the country.

Mr PARU AIHI – Thank you, Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the Honourable Member for Wosera-Gawi for these very important questions.

The Free Tuition Fee Policy was introduced by the O'Neill led Government in 2011 and unlike the past successive Governments, this is a government that has taken a very bold stand in introducing that policy and also, funding it. There are a lot of things that need to be sorted out in the Department and I must concede to that.

I have taken office in the last four months and believe me that we are doing our best to make sure that there is a proper system in place. Nevertheless, let me point out a few things, the

government has not given us K1 billion in free tuition fee funding. It has been only K602 million that has been released in the last 12 months, K300 million was captured in the Supplementary Budget in 2011, and a further K302 million in the Budget for this year. Therefore, that is a total of K602 million.

Mr Speaker, we have sent the money direct to the school accounts. Thus, about 80 per cent of the funding has gone into school accounts and that has been left at the mercy of the school board members, the principals or teachers in their respective schools.

The other 20 per cent of the funding has been converted to cheques and the education officials are out there in the provinces to distribute the cheques to the schools. The reason why we are doing this is because many of the schools around the country do not have bank accounts. These schools are in very remote areas and they have also these problems of some schools have given account numbers of board chairman and even principals with the intentions of the monies being drawn into their own accounts for their own use.

Mr Speaker, there is this programme that was introduced during the former Minister's time which was the basis of development in those respective schools. Therefore, the monies that were intended for the Free Tuition Fee Policy ended up being used by the school boards and we would like to think that they are using the funds in accordance with the slip programmes and in fact, many of us know that they are not doing that.

Therefore, we are changing the system and I am reluctant to go into details given that tomorrow I will be presenting my ministerial statement to the nation about what we need to do. Nevertheless, let me quickly say this, we are starting to claw back some of those funds so that we can convert that into what is called 'commodity'. That means there will be two parts for the Free Tuition Fee Policy. One will be the cash component with a small percentage around 50-60 per cent, and the other bit is going to be used to supply the necessary materials that our children need to be in school.

I want to set up what is called a 'Joint Implementation Committee' in every district and each Member of Parliament will be part of that implementation committee so that you actually have a say in how these monies that go to the schools is going to be implemented. It is about time that we do this because I know that many of you hardly get involved in your districts regarding education matters.

Mr Speaker, there are policies that the O'Neill-Dion Government is putting into place and these corrupt activities that many of you know about will become something of the past. I also intend to review the entire system of governance in the Education Department and I believe that the outcome will be very pleasant for this nation. It is all about providing quality education for all our children and I know that in NCD there has been a pilot project that the Governor so graciously engaged in, and that is the kind of model that we want to see put into place.

03/02

Mr NIXON MANGAPE – Thank you, Mr Speaker, I direct my question to the Minister for Justice and Attorney General. The previous Government has already passed a law on death penalty for rapists and murderers.

Can the Minister tell us when this law will be enforced because law and order issues in the country are increasing?

Mr KERENGA KUA – By some strange coincidence, Mr Speaker, I asked the Secretary yesterday as to what was the delay in enforcing this matter. There is a provision in the law to implement this law in certain circumstances. There are certain types of crimes where death penalty can be imposed by our judges.

I am aware that sentences have been passed and are awaiting implementation or the execution process. For some reason, execution has not taken place.

So yesterday I asked the Secretary the same question. I also asked him to give me a brief on why and how this process of execution is not taking place even though sentences have already been passed. I asked the Secretary to conduct research into the delay of implementation so that I can inform the Cabinet accordingly.

Mr Speaker, I don't have an answer for the Member right now but since I have already questioned the Secretary, I will inform the Member and the Parliament accordingly as soon as the Secretary briefs me.

Mr SOLAN MIRISIM – Thank you, Mr Speaker, for recognizing the people of Telefomin. My questions are directed to the Deputy Prime Minister.

Mr Speaker, Telefomin District has been receiving development funding from Border Development Authority (BDA) since independence, 37 years ago. There has been lack of government services in the District. The District headquarters is approximately 20 kilometres towards the border.

Mr Speaker, the Yapsy LLG in the Telefomin District is also located on the border. Currently, BDA is catering for Wutung Post and Wiam in the Western Province including other districts in the Telefomin areas.

Mr Speaker, the people of Papua New Guinea are currently residing on the border of Indonesia. However, government services cannot reach these people. These people have to walk for two days to reach Yapsy in order to receive government services.

My questions are as follows:

(1) Can the Deputy Prime Minister review the law on Treaty Border because the government services cannot reach our people residing on the border? Instead, these people are receiving services from Indonesia government; therefore, many of our people have decided to become Indonesian citizens.

(2) Can the Deputy Prime Minister give assurance that there are plans in place for the Government to address this issue?

Mr Speaker, illegal smuggling of guns is also becoming evident in these areas.

Mr LEON DION – Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to respond to the Member's questions.

As I mentioned earlier, the Border Development Authority was established by the Government under a special arrangement to cater for the border areas within the six provinces. The Sepik provinces are part of this arrangement. The Yapsy LLG is also included in the Border Development Plan.

I apologise, Mr Speaker, for not providing the updated information. However, my department and the Border Development Authority are required to ensure that such information reaches them because border issues are sensitive issues.

04/02

Border issues are quite sensitive and also involve other relevant Ministries like the Foreign Affairs, the Defense and others as well. My department is a key department that is also responsible for the administration and the rule of law in those areas.

Your question highlighted whether we can review the treaties that have been made. And yes, we do have treaties but there is no need to review them unless there are specific areas to consult, but to answer in brief, I would say that Yapsy and the overall border area including Telefomin is in the Government's plan.

And what we require is the corporation of all the Governors and Open Members of Parliament so that when it comes to the implementation process we all work together, especially in relation to the joint funding of some of the areas that you would have already identified.

My concern is that the Border Development Authority cannot be left to operate on its own but must be assisted and also funded through the normal process of the Government system. Many times when we establish special authorities of this nature we forget about them and think that they will take care of themselves and carry out the normal administration of the service they are intended to carry out. So, this remains an important challenge to this Government and as far as my ministry is concerned, we will continue to ask and present to the Government all our requirements for those areas. But I do want to see that the administrations within those border areas that fall directly under the Border Development Authority must be coordinated properly also by the responsible officers from the Provincial Government system.

So for your question in relation to growth center, I would say that it comes under the BDA's corporate plan. Once we get funding for it, this will be established and the department will ensure that you receive the relevant information to guide you in developing those areas, especially Telefomin, Western Province, Sandaun and the other six provinces as well.

This is really a big challenge for the Government to achieve within the next five years. Funding is a problem that we are all aware of but we will make sure that donors and our friends will continue to assist us provided that we provide counter-part funding.

My only appeal today is to make sure that the provincial governments in those areas concerned must work with my department and the Border Development Authority so that some of these development initiatives that are already in place can be realized.

Mr WERA MORI – Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I would like to ask two questions, and my questions are directed to the Prime Minister. But since he is not in the Chamber, I would like to ask the Leader of Government Business to take note.

Mr Speaker, last week, we had the indefinite suspension or shelving of the Nautilus.

Mr SPEAKER – Honorable Member, you may reserve your right to ask the Prime Minister when he is present.

Dr WILLIAM TONGAMP – Thank you, Mr Speaker, I will direct my short question to the Minister for Higher Education on the current situation at the University of Technology. Before I continue, I want to say thank you to the former Government under the leadership of Grand Chief Sir Michael Somare for granting the new provinces of Hela and Jiwaka.

Until very recently, I was a Lecturer at Unitech and was a former student, so I understand the situation there. Early this year when the council appointed a new vice chancellor, they had a quick meeting and terminated him.

Then after the students and staff had a meeting, he was reinstated but the council waited until the end of the school year when all students were sent home and then terminated the Vice chancellor. To be very honest, this institution is being rundown, the standard is not what it should be.

05/02

The level of knowledge at Unitech is very low because of poor management. I don't know what type of criteria we have to run these types of institutions but there are some people in the Council that do not know what is happening in the school. They are dealing with the senior administration and they have completely run these schools down.

I urge the Ministry and the Government to intervene quickly and remove all the members of the Council, all the senior lecturers and heads of departments.

As the Minister for Higher Education what approach the Government and the Minister will be taking with regard to the situation at Unitech?

Mr DAVID ARORE – Mr Speaker, I would like to thank the Governor of Jiwaka for this very important question.

Since Independence, University councils and the managements of institutions in the country have not been monitored. They run institutions like their own private business and some of these counsels have not changed in the last 20 years. They have built small empires and they think that they are indispensable in this country because they argue that they are governed. They are an autonomous entity and therefore, the Government cannot step in. And in the case of Unitech, which I have been following very closely. The good Governor has mentioned that in April there was a confrontation between the students and the Chancellor. The Chancellor's vehicle was burnt down by the students for reasons known only to them. With the issue of the Vice-Chancellor, we sent a neutral investigation team down to Unitech about two months ago. They carried out an investigation and the report has already been submitted to my department and office and again we found out that the counsels did not screen applicants properly before they appoint the Vice-Chancellor of University of Technology. And so on the issue, as of yesterday, I would like to inform this Parliament that the National Executive Counsel has terminated the whole University Council of the University of Technology. A new Chancellor has been appointed and five new interim councilors have been appointed under the Chancellorship of Sir Naruga Bogan and so we want to ensure that this problem is sorted out before February, when the students start school. In response to your question, we have sent an investigation team in to check and, yes a lot of counsels have run for elections and lost. They contest the elections and when they lose, they come back again. They have run down the whole institution, right now they have a debt of K36 million, accumulated over years. And so we are working on that to
a d d r e s s t h e i s s u e .

I will be bringing forward an Amended Bill for Higher Education on the Floor of Parliament. The current operating Act is from 1983. I expect the support of all the members so that we can pass this Bill and stamp down on our Higher Education Institutions in the country, especially our universities. I agree with you that some of the qualifications in our universities, especially the University of Technology is not recognised in the world. Our Engineering qualification is not recognised under the Washington Accord in the world, therefore the amendment will help improve these Higher Education institutions in the country. We have also for the first time provided guidelines for our private education providers in the country. We did

not have a policy for education for those private education providers. We have 800 000 students who can be in the tertiary institution but our institutions are only catering for 20 000 students. So we have a critical state in this country for Higher Education institutions and I am asking all the members, when they are getting their DSIP funds for next year, I will be putting out a rollout program for University centers throughout all 89 districts.

So I am expecting you all to cooperate and put some money aside from your DSIP funds and at least we will have about 89 university centers.

Mr GORDON WESLEY – Mr Speaker, I direct my series of questions to the Minister for Trade, Commerce and Industry, Honourable Richard Maru, and I want the Prime Minister and other relevant ministers to take note.

In regards to the ongoing major developments in the country the LNG Gas Project, Ramu Nickel Gold mine projects and other developments on our natural resources are in the pipeline for the next 15-30 years. Naturally there is a high expectation of large sums of cash flow into the country, while the benefits of the natural resources may be enjoyed from the mining boom for only a limited time. It is crucial to raise the question of how simple Papua New Guineans can take ownership and directly participate in the business opportunities and not be mere spectators or be means of cheap labor for foreign enterprises. Besides emphasis on agriculture development for rural population, the Minister must inform the Parliament and the Nation, what plans he and the Department have for the urban population.

Mr Speaker, having said these introductory remarks, I now ask the following questions.

One of the pillars of the Vision 2050 is creating wealthy families for the citizens of this country. In Port Moresby alone, I am amazed with the level of development taking place in business enterprises.

06/02

My questions are:

(a) What percentage of growth in private sector in NCD are businesses owned and run by Papua New Guineans or families, who deserve to be given priority?

(b) In realistic terms how much money is allocated in the Budget for this purpose as a commitment to implement part of Vision 2050 on empowerment of families in business?

(c) Can the Minister inform the Parliament his plans on how to effectively involve and force the PNG ordinary families as part of the preparation to catch the massive wealth that will be filtered through the nation in the next 20 – 30 years to ensure that this wealth doesn't end up in foreign hands?

Genuine foreign investments are welcomed into the country and the government of the day should be commended for that. Investors bring money into the country and create job opportunities for many of our school leavers who are seeking employment for the interest of our people listening out there.

d) Can the Minister advise the Parliament and the people whether there is a list of self-employed businesses that are secured for the citizens of this country?

e) Can the Minister tell the Parliament how effective is this policy?

f) Many Asian retail and wholesale outlets such as the Lot 60 stores springing up in the city. How do this group of operators organize themselves to do business in this country?

g) Do these Asians have some form of financial backing from their own country or government to help them to do business in our country?

h) Will the Minister inform the Parliament if he plans to learn from the Asian countries so we too can assist our people to run successful businesses? The Government has to adapt a similar concept.

In Port Moresby city alone, sellers on the streets are creating much littering and unhygienic environment spitting sites in many public places especially, in markets and in front of shopping areas, yet this particular informal business has enabled mothers to feed their children and families and pay for school fees.

(i) Can the Minister inform Parliament if he has alternative plans that will help small family businesses to start in NCD as part of a joint campaign with the NDC Governor and not only to keep the city clean but also assist simple families with jobs and business opportunities?

Thank you, Mr Speaker

Mr RICHARD MARU – Thank you, Mr Speaker, I am very happy with these questions. Mr Speaker, firstly I want to inform this House that as of today 90 percent of businesses in the formal sectors is owned by outsiders, we only own about 10 percent. Thirty Seven years after independence our people have been left to pick up the crumbs in our own country, we sell

betelnut, collect bottles on the streets and secondhand clothes while the outsiders are coming in and taking over all the shop and businesses in the country. That is why the rest of us got fed up and in April, 2011, we hosted the Papua New Guinea Indigenous Business Summit in Rabaul to make the Government aware that enough is enough. We must take back our birth rights and we must take care of our economy ourselves.

I am happy to announce to this House and the Nation that last Tuesday, NEC approved a stimulus package which you have all seen in the papers the other day and tomorrow, you will see the K12 million action plan of this O'Neil-Dion Government to arrest the situation we are facing in our country.

In the Budget K18 million was put into the NDB for 2013 to generate more credit available to ordinary Papua New Guineans. In the Stimulus package all interest rates from 1 January, 2013 from NDB will drop down to 6.5 percent, the lowest since independence. And that will mean all commercial banks will be forced to reduce their rates as well, for more and more Papua New Guineans to come in.

Mr Speaker, no other Government since independence has looked back to the grassroots people. The people should be proud of this Government, we have made a bold stand to take action.

So, the K18 million that has been put into NDB, each Member of Parliament, under the guidelines will receive K10 million, of which, K1 million will go straight to the grassroots in their electorates to venture into business. That responsibility is also passed to every Member of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, in addition to that the Somare Government has given K20million to NDB to start up the new Microbank. The buildings have gone up already and they have applied for a license and we hope by December or January they will start up the new bank for us.

With the support of the O'Neil-Dion Government, we hope that our new bank, which will eventually replace PNGBC will start opening for business by January 2013.

We need to reduce the cost of all charges and bank fees, remove all sorts of ID requirements and make funding easily available to all citizens. So this Government is supporting this initiative and hope that within the next two years, we will have a fully pledged commercial bank that Papua New Guinea owns because right now we don't own one and we should never sell it again.

This is another plan that O'Neil Dion Government is pushing for now. The new PNGBC is coming back we will make credit more accessible and by February or March we will introduce a Bill on the Floor of Parliament.

07/02

By February or March we will be bringing legislative Bill which will allow for reintroducing of the *Papua New Guinea Empowerment Legislation*. This is a very comprehensive legislation and I would like a bipartisan committee consisting of both sides of Parliament. This bipartisan committee will deliberate on what type of businesses will be reserved for nationals only.

Under this legislation and by law kai bars, store and business similar to that will be run by Papua New Guineans only. We therefore bring this back and I look forward for all your support. This submission has already been approved by NEC and by early next year when the legislation comes through we must pass it.

Another thing that this legislation will address will be the ownership of businesses. For example, the Oil Palm Industry, our people give all the land but there are no schools, roads or hospitals where oil palm is grown. Why is that? We give land to these foreign companies and every year they declare K300 million to K400 million profits but our people are left with nothing. Therefore, we are going to pass a law saying that 50 or 51 per cent of all companies must be owned by Papua New Guineans.

I challenge all you Members in Parliament, to have the guts to stand up and pass this law because I am bringing this Bill to Parliament.

Mr Speaker, I would like to let Parliament know that we are now negotiating with all the landowners in Madang and all the cannery factories in Madang for the first time since Independence, 51 per cent or more will be owned by Papua New Guineans. This Government is going to take the biggest reform regarding this sector for the SMEs.

Mr Speaker, countries like New Zealand do not have gas, copper or an LNG project. They only depend on animal farming and tourism and they have a budget of NZ\$200 billion per annum. We, on the other hand are only talking about K13 billion today. Why is that you ask it is because they invest in those agricultural sectors and they are very good at it.

Therefore, by next year we will be reviewing the investment strategies for the country and we focus on key sectors where it will transform our economy into a strong, vibrant and financially an independent economy.

Mr Speaker, I therefore assure the Member that by next year legislation will come before Parliament where businesses in country must be run by Papua New Guineans.

(Applause in the Chamber and gallery)

Mr SPEAKER – Order! The Parliament is a place where our leaders come to deliberate national issues. Clapping in the gallery is not allowed. The public is therefore reminded that mobile phones should be turned off and clapping is also not allowed. If these rules are not observed then attendants and security personnel will have to escort you out.

Mr Charlie Benjamin – Point of Order! I agree with what the Minister has stated but the term ‘kongkong’ should not be used by the Minister as it is discriminative.

Mr SPEAKER – Minister, I would like ask you to withdraw the term that you used to describe people of Asian descent, and is your reply to the Member completed?

Mr RICARD MARU – I withdraw what I said, and lastly, tomorrow both newspapers will print the 12 point SMEs Stimulus Package and it will detail what the Government plans to do, including the legislation that I just made mention.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

MOTION BY LEAVE

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

Leave granted.

**SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS –
REARRANGEMENT OF BUSINESS**

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

That so much of the *Standing Orders* be suspended as would prevent the Minister for Religion, Youth and Community Development presenting her Ministerial Statement.

**DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION, YOUTH AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT – MINISTERIAL STATEMENT –
PAPER NOTED**

Mrs LOUJAYA TONI (Lae – Minister for Religion, Youth and Community Development) – Thank you, Mr Speaker, for according me this opportunity as a first time Parliamentarian to present a statement on the Floor of Parliament from the Department of Religion, Youth and Community Development.

My Statement will be presented in five parts. Part 1 will present the background of the Department of Religion, Youth and Community Development; Part 2 gives an overview of the performance of the Department; Part 3 presents the strategic direction of the Department and the policy direction of the O'Neill-Dion Government; Part 4 outlines how the Department will implement its strategic direction and policy priorities of the government; and Part 5 illustrates what the Department intends to achieve in implementing its strategic direction and policy directives of the government.

Mr Speaker, my Department is a social sector department grouped under the administrative and social sector Department, which also include Departments of Health and Education.

The primary function of the Department is to facilitate and promote integrated community development process in Papua New Guinea. And its key role is to assist communities to enhance community development, coordinate and the implementation of statutory functions under its jurisdiction, promote women empowerment and gender equality, facilitate social

inclusion of all the persons and persons with disability and promote corporate governance in all its operations.

Mr Speaker, the vision of the Department is for Papua New Guinea, is to have a vibrant, resilient, knowledgeable and productive communities as the key to a sustainable future.

08/02

Its mission is to take a lead in mobilizing local communities and marginalized groupings in order to enhance productive living and an ongoing process of human development. Corporate goals of the Department focus on Corporate Governance, Community Livelihood and Human Rights.

The organizational structure of the department comprises of two divisions, nine branches and twelve sections. Corporate governance structure is headed by the Secretary and supported by a number of internal working Committees. Its operation is guided by a Strategic Management Framework and performance is monitored through the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

Mr Speaker, the Department of Religion, Youth and Community Development is responsible for coordinating implementation of six government policies, twelve pieces of family welfare related legislation, three International Human Rights Conventions and number of impact programs. The landmark Integrated Community Development Policy is the umbrella policy. These policies are aligned to the goals and objectives of PNG Vision 2050, Development Strategic Plan and the Medium Term Development Plan. They are delivered at the District Focal Points for Community Learning and Development Centres through partnership with government departments and agencies, Development Partners, NGOs, and Faith Based Organisations including Churches, private sectors and community based organisations.

Mr Speaker, the Performance Reporter. In 2007 when the government of Sir Michael Somare came into office, it set a clear agenda for development. One of its priorities at that time was to give responsibility for development to the people. The mandate for implementing this development agenda was vested with the only female Member of Parliament the former Minister for Community Development, Lady Carol Kidu, DBE. The Minister accepted the challenge and set the goal to transform the nation through the Integrated Community Development Policy and other related policies, legislation, impact programs and projects.

In the past nine years the Department worked with the Minister to implement the objective of the Government. It undertook this task in three stages: the Preparation, Implementation and Consolidation.

The preparation phase started in 2003 with the development of a concept paper on Integrated Community Development Policy and the establishment of a three years Corporate Plan. Number of other important national policies and legislation were also developed and established including the National Youth Policy, the National Disability Policy, the Early Childhood Care and Development Policy, Informal Economy Policy, Censorship Policy, National Women and Gender Equity Policy, and *Lukautim Pikinini Act*.

Several impact programs and projects were also developed and established including, the Integrated Community Development project, Nationwide Birth Registration program, Community Child Protection, Non State Actors Support project, Human Rights Advocacy and Awareness, Community Capacity Enhancement Initiative, Disability and Elderly program, Women in Leadership program and Gender Base Violence Program.

The Department also establishes a new organizational structure, recruited new generation of employees, secured technical assistance from Development Partners, established the Office of Development of Women, and re-established the National Child Welfare Council and the National Volunteer Service Council.

The Implementation Phase started in 2007 with the approval of the Integrated Community Development Policy by the National Executive Council and the establishment of second three years corporate plan of the Department.

Number of key milestones was achieved in this period. Some of these are:

- Established 20 District Focal Points for community learning and development centres in 14 districts;
- Completed phase 1 of the Integrated Community Development project in NCD and rolled out Phase II in East Sepik Province;
- Established Birth Registration program in 10 districts and one Provincial Hospital;
- Launched the *Lukautim Pikinini (Child Welfare) Act*;
- Launched the Non State Actors Support program;
- Drafted legislation on Human Rights Commission;

- Presented initial, 1, 2, and 3 periodic report to UN CEDAW committee;
- Established Community Capacity Enhancement Initiative program;
- Established the National Advisory Committee on Disability;
- Established Phase 1 of the Censorship Database system;
- Hosted two PNG Community Development Ministers Forum;
- Implemented NEC Decision on the National Social Protection Policy.

Mr Speaker, between 2012 and 2015 my Department will implement the consolidation phase of its strategic direction. The consolidated phase is regarded as the most important phase of change for the Department. It consolidates the gains made in the Preparation and Implementation phases of its strategic direction.

The vision and mission of the Department have not changed; however, its corporate goals have changed and now focus on Improving Corporate Governance, Enhancing Community Livelihood and Furthering Human Rights.

Priority under corporate governance is on improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the Department through structural reform and functional alignment.

Focus under Community Enhancement is on the implementation of the Integrated Community Development policy facilitated through the District Focal Point for Community Learning and Development centres.

Under Furthering Human Rights the focus is on leadership in Human Rights issues through policy and legislation reform.

09/02

The National Government's priority where the *Alotau Accord* is concerned is that my department is also put in the forefront to implement goal No.5 - Gender, Youth, Churches and Community Development and Sport - in alignment of the *Alotau Accord* of the Government.

This priority area calls for the establishment of a new Ministry of church and community development whose mandate is to be on gender and youth. It also calls for the current church and government partnership program to be strengthened and expanded with support from development partners. Furthermore, a National Youth Service Program is to be established to engage to nurture young people to be nation builders.

The policy direction also calls for the establishment of old age and disability pension scheme to be based on the experience of the New Ireland Provincial Government. How do we get there?

Mr Speaker, my department will use a number of strategies to implement a strategic direction and a policy direction given by the Government under the priority areas of improving corporate governance and several initiatives will be undertaken. This will involve improving the operating environment, structural reforms, functional alignment, and policy alignment, enabling legislation, transfer of powers and functions, ITC improvement and employee support.

Mr Speaker, with regards to the operating environment, the current reform and the internal operating environment of the Department will continue to operate in line with the *Public Finances Management Act* and the *Public Service Management Act*. This would be pursued through the establishment of the internal audit unit and the audit committee and the establishment of the legal and litigation unit, the internalization of the PSMA and the PFMA through in-house operation policies, improvement and enhancement of payroll management system and implementation of the trial devolution of powers from the Department of Personnel Management.

With regards to structural reforms, the objective of the consolidation phase is not likely to be achieved under the current functional structure of the Department, therefore, the structure will be reviewed with a view to reduce the number of functional units and elevate mandated functions to autonomous status. Several functional units will be merged to eliminate duplication and improve coordination. The objective is to create a lean organisation with smaller but highly innovative skilled managerial and subordinate core team of staff to provide effective technical support to autonomous ministry functions, provincial and LLG authorities, district administrations and district focal points for community learning and development centers.

Mr Speaker, the Office of the Director of Lukautim Pikinini will be elevated to an autonomous status similar to the office of censorship, National Youth Commission and the National Volunteer Service. The *Civil Registration Act* will be reviewed and the status of the civil registration will be upgraded to a stand-alone ministry agency.

Similarly, the Office of the Development of Women will be upgraded to an autonomous entity and the disability and elderly division will be also upgraded to an autonomous status through the establishment of the National Commission of Disability and the Elderly.

Mr Speaker, with regards to the functional alignment, my department also accommodates five stand-alone ministry functions under the National Youth Commission, National Volunteer Service, Office of Urbanization, Office of Censorship and the National Council of Women. Every effort will be made to align policies and programs of these entities with those of the main department. The National Youth Commission is an important function of the Ministry of Community Development and it plays an important role in establishing national policies and programs that engage young people in nation building.

The Department will work with NYC to review its current legislation so that it accommodates the policy direction of the Government on National Youth Service Programs. The current partnership with the Office of Censorship and the Censorship Board will be strengthened and the functions of the office of censorship will be reviewed to increase its capacity to effectively implement the National Censors policy.

Mr Speaker, the National Volunteer Services plays an important role in helping the Government achieve its development objectives, thus the department will work with NVS council to reform the organisation so that it becomes the beacon of hope for the Government in delivering much needed services to the rural and marginalized population.

The National Council of Women (NCW) is an NGO arm of women's movement in Papua New Guinea and it plays an important role in helping the Government develop policies for the advancement of women in the country. The Department will work with the executive of the NCW to review its present function so that it aligns with the provisions of the new NCW Act which was recently passed by Cabinet and we intend to work very closely to ensure that the aspirations of the women of these country is realized through this NGO women movement in the country.

In relation to policy alignment, my department will not develop any new policies except for the National Social Protection Policy. All existing policies will be reviewed and aligned with the goals of the PNG Vision 2050, Development Platform Goals and objectives of Development Strategic Plan and Medium Term Development Plan and policy direction of the Government.

Similarly, current impact programs will be reviewed, upraised and incorporated into the structure of Community Development Assistance Program and Non-State Actors Support Program.

In relation to enabling legislation, unlike Health and Education departments which operate under enabling legislations, the Department of Youth, Religion and Community Development exists through the determination of the National Parliament under the present arrangement. The status of the Department is subject to change with the changes in policy direction of the Government.

For example; in 2007 the Department was downgraded to the Office of Family and Church Affairs under the structural adjustment program of the Government. The change in the status of the Department had adverse impact on the implementation of policies and programs under its jurisdiction.

10/02.

Mr Speaker, in the past nine years, the Department has made great strides in positioning itself as an important government department. First it will work towards establishing an enabling legislation to safeguard its existence and achievements.

With regard to transfer of functions, Mr Speaker, the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, (AROB) and the National Capital District Commission operate under different legal and policy frameworks, thus my department will work in close consultation with the National Coordination Office of Bougainville Affairs to transfer the powers and functions of community development, child welfare and civil registration to the Autonomous Bougainville Government as per the Bougainville Agreement.

Similarly, Sir, the function of the NCD Division of Community Development will be transferred to the political and administrative mandate of the National Capital District Commission as per the *Organic Law on Provincial and Local Level Governments* and the *NCDC Act*.

Mr Speaker, with regard to information, communication and technology, more than 80 per cent of the population of Papua New Guinea lives in the rural isolated communities. Reaching these communities is a major challenge for the department therefore the Department will work towards establishing low cost communication with district focal points and develop cost effective mechanisms for communicating with people at the grassroots level.

The Department will also establish a strategic communication strategy, SCS, to effectively promote and market its policies, programs and associated products being implemented at the district focal points for community learning and development centers.

Employee support, Mr Speaker, an organisation is made up of individuals who share common goals and the Department of Community Development is one such organisation with 200 members who share common visions.

However, over the past nine years, the Department experienced major challenges in achieving high levels of productivity due to absenteeism and high staff turnover. This has been largely attributed to lack of staff housing; many staff live in squalid conditions in settlements and, therefore, cannot put in a fair share of a days work.

Mr Speaker, my Department will give a high priority to improving staff welfare through housing schemes, and discussions are hoped to be held with the Ministry of Public Services, Department of Finance and the Department of Treasury to develop a housing scheme so that staff can participate and own homes for their families.

Community capacity enhancement, Mr Speaker, goal area number two is on enhancing community capacity. This goal will be implemented through a number of programme initiatives such as district focal points for community learning and development centers, integrated community development projects, national integrated community development advisory committee, partnerships with development partners, NGOs, churches and learning institutions.

Where district focal points are concerned, Mr Speaker, currently there are 20 district focal points. Six more will be established in Western Province, New Ireland, Enga, Hela, Southern Highlands and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville. One will be established in my own district and electorate of Lae.

The existing 20 district focal points will be operationalised and other policies and programs will be established at the district focal points.

Integrated Community Development Project, Mr Speaker, the Integrated Community Development Project was established through the technical cooperation agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of Papua New Guinea.

Phase one of the projects was implemented in NCD and phase two is currently being implemented in East Sepik Province. Priority will be given to the completion of phase two of the project. Discussions will be held with the Japanese International Cooperation Agency, JICA, to

extend the current technical assistance to the Department on Integrated Community Development policy so that it includes four other district focal points in the country.

The role of the implementation coordination mechanism for the Integrated Community Development Policy will be strengthened and built into the organised national structure of the Department. It will also become the overall coordination mechanism for all other policies and programmes implemented by the Department.

Mr Speaker, the National Integrated Community Development Advisory Committee, will be fully established and its subsidiary committees, the Provincial Integrated Community Development Advisory and the District Community Development Advisory Committee will also be established at the provincial and district levels.

Mr Speaker, partnerships with development partners, my department receives substantial financial and technical assistance from a number of multi lateral and bilateral development partners. These development partners include the United Nations agencies, AusAID, European Union and JICA. The level and relevance of assistance received from these partners will be reviewed in line with the development priorities of the government.

Mr Speaker, Partnerships with Learning Institutions, partnerships will also be established with local and international learning institutions to support the implementation of ICD Policy through ongoing research.

Mr Speaker, partnerships with non-state actors. My department has long-standing relationships with churches and other non-state actors in implementing national government policies and programs. These relationships will be strengthened in line with Goal Number Five of the *Alotau Accord* of the O'Neill-Dion Government.

Partnerships with the private sector will also be explored to implement joint programmes through the public-private partnership arrangement.

Mr Speaker, under priority number three of Furthering Human Rights, my department will undertake several program initiatives. These will focus on Child Protection Report, on CEDAW, disability and elderly programs, social protection, Human Rights Commission, Women and Leadership, National Civil Registration Services and gender based violence programs.

Under Child Protection, Mr Speaker, the National Child Welfare Council will be strengthened and provincial child welfare committees will be established. The Second Periodic

Report on the Convention on the Rights of Children will be submitted to the United Nations Committee.

Mr Speaker, with regards to CEDAW, in 2009 PNG submitted the initial 1st, 2nd and 3rd Reports on the implementation of CEDAW.

11/02

The fourth periodic report is expected to be submitted. My department will give high priority towards the completion of this report.

Where, disability and elderly are concerned, an estimated 15 per cent of the population of Papua New Guinea is considered to have some form of disability and many of these people live in rural isolated communities with little or no excess to basic services and care. My department will give propriety to address the plight of these people and the current effort is to ratify the Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and to continue to consult and have dialogue with key partners and stakeholders to establish national disability legislation policy.

The policy will be reviewed and the work of the National Advisory Committee on disability will be strengthened. The provincial and district advisory committees will be established to facilitate the implementation of the policy.

Mr Speaker, where Social Protection is concerned, the work of the National Task Force on Social Protection policy will be supported. The final report of the task force has been submitted to the NEC and upon its approval, the task force will implement phase two of the project to establish a national social protection policy.

Where Human Rights is concerned, the Department will work with the Department of Justice and Attorney General, the United Nations Aid Agencies and other partners to facilitate and establish the Papua New Guinea Human Rights Commission. Current awareness on human rights issues will continue and community capacities will be strengthened to localise advocacy and awareness.

Mr Speaker, where women and leadership are concerned the process and benefits of democracy in Papua New Guinea will not be fully realised until the female gender of the population is given equal representation in the decision making processes of this country. Therefore, my department will continue to work with the National Council of Women and others

to support the work of the development partners and to have more women elected to Parliament during the National Elections but certainly not with the 22 reserved seats.

Mr Speaker, on Civil Registration, it must be made clear that registration of vital events such as births, deaths and marriages is Constitutional and is a basic right of every person. Civil registration system and process in PNG began as early as 1860's however, little recognition was accorded to this very important events for more than 100 years until 2000, when UNICEF, in accordance with *Article 7* of the Convention on the Rights of the Children, approached the Government through the Department of Community Development to give this event a national priority.

UNICEF also provided funding to kick start the program and in subsequent years the Government of Papua New Guinea increased funding support to this program and to date an estimated 23 per cent of births, deaths and marriages in the country are considered to be registered. The current decentralisation processes for deaths, births and marriages to provincial district and LLGs will continue and registration offices will be established at district focal points for community learning and development centres to operationalise the program.

The *Civil Registration Act* will be reviewed to modernise the civil registration system and processes including the biometric system which will be piloted in Lae District. Papua New Guinea does not fare well with other countries on gender violence. In fact, Papua New Guinea has the worst record that needs to be addressed. The department will give high priority to the implementation of gender based violence program.

Funding will be allocated in 2013 Budget to implement the program, or should I say it has been allocated and I commend the Government for this initiative. Additional finance and technical support from the development partners to operationalise the program and with regards to the government's priority and the *Alotau Accord*, my department will work towards implementing goal No 5 of the *Alotau Accord* and a new Ministry of Church and Community Development will be established and its key mandate will be on gender and youth issues.

The current Church and Government partnership program will be strengthened and expanded and a new entity for interface dialogue will be established to promote dialogue between different faiths to increase participation between these religious faiths on social and human development in the country. Similarly, the current legislation governing the National Youth Commission will be reviewed to accommodate Government priority on National Youth

Service, old age and disability pension scheme which will also be developed through the National Social Security Policy.

The experience of the New Ireland Provincial Government will be used as a basis to model this scheme. The forward looking strategy of my department and the policy priorities of the Government will be implemented through impact programs and projects at the district and local government levels through community learning and development centres.

The program modelling will be done in my district and the electorate of Lae. It is the melting pot of the country, with 16 LLGs and numerous ward council areas and it is an ideal location for National Government policies to be modelled. A district focal point for learning and development centre will be established in the district next month to facilitate this project.

Mr Speaker, a number of impact projects and programs will be established and implemented consistently with the development priorities of the Government. Some of these include; early childhood development, church partnership, mission kitchens, sheltered workshops, gender based violence, food security, water security, climate change and others.

These programs and projects will be targeted at reducing and alleviating poverty in settlements and communities beginning in my electorate. We can weigh the pros and cons of that and decide on how best we can continue in other areas of the country.

12/02

Mr Speaker, implementation of the *Alotau Accord* of the O'Neill-Dion Government and the forward looking strategy of my department is envisaged to achieve a number of outcomes: A new ministry of the Church and Community Development is established; the church partnership and interface programme is strengthened; gender and youths programmes mainstreamed into government policies and programmes; the National Youth Service Programme is established and implemented in districts and LLG areas; the National Policy on Social Protection is established and old age and disability pensions are paid to these category of population.

Again, under the forward looking strategy of my department, we envisage, that there is improvement in corporate government systems and processes of the Department, that district focal points for community learning and development centers are established in the 89 districts and learning development centers are operating in many communities, and that there is strong leadership on human rights through policy and legislative reform.

Mr Speaker, these plans will be implemented as the long term vision of the Department for Community Development coordinated by an organisational reformed taskforce comprising of four teams representing three goal areas of the Department and Goal No. 5 of the *Alotau Accord*.

Mr Speaker, in conclusion and Members of this honourable Parliament, the Department of Religion, Youth and Community Development has come a long way in the past nine years. It has emerged from the back burner of Public Service in Papua New Guinea to become an innovative development agency of the government, and an organisation that has become the envy of many government departments, development partners and stakeholders as a can-do department.

Unlike many other departments and agencies it has enjoyed political and administrative stability. This achievement is attributed to strong and stable political and administrative leadership. The Minister and Secretary share common vision and this partnership creates the environment conducive for the development of implementation of national government policies, programmes and international human rights conventions that fall under the jurisdiction of the Department.

Mr Speaker, therefore, I do not intend to re-invent the wheel but to build on the achievements of my predecessor ministers and work faith based organisations, including churches, NGOs, CSOs, development partners, Government departments and agencies and private sector organisations to pursue and achieve the objectives of the O'Neill-Dion Government.

Mr Speaker, I stand to be corrected, I stand to work with and partner with line departments and development partners.

Mr Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity to present this paper.

Mr DON POLYE (Kandep – Minister for Treasury) – I move –

That Parliament take note of the paper.

Mr Speaker, firstly, I would like to commend the Minister for Religion, Youth and Community Development, Honourable Loujaya Toni, for this comprehensive and articulate policy paper of the Government on social development.

At one stage we never had many ministers who were fascinated about this very important issue, in developing our people starting from childhood to youth and then to adulthood. The former Member, the then Minister for social development, Dame Carol Kidu, was a champion that dogged these agendas and raised the profile of social development on human rights, rights of disabled people, children and mothers. The profile of social development in this country has lifted in its standard by the former Minister and I would like to commend her for this.

Mr Speaker, you would wonder if you would find ministers with the same kind of enthusiasm and fashion to take these issues further to the next level of implementation and sustaining these programmes. I, therefore, believe that we are blessed that the current Minister, Honourable Loujaya Toni, has got the fashion, enthusiasm, drive and leadership and I commend her for driving this very strongly.

Under her leadership I think the O'Neill-Dion Government will draft some of these important policy matters that regard social developments and other issues that she has outlined in her policy statement.

I also would like to commend her and her other two colleagues who travelled to the Simbu Province recently with the PNG Council of Women, which was also supported by the Vice Minister for Finance and Treasury, Honourable Delilah Gore, and the Governess of Eastern Highlands, Honourable Julie Soso, in taking the leadership role in addressing gender issues recently in Simbu. I am sure that they are also planning other program throughout the nation. I am also heartened to hear her say that rather than the Parliament enacting laws to have 22 reserved seats for women representatives; women should come to Parliament through the election processes.

I see this kind of leadership as good and the country needs it and I would like to commend the Minister for this paper that she presented for it is a very strong paper and it needs a lot of support, and I am also encouraged by the comments she made that, we have to review whatever is necessary in these policy areas to strengthen and further improve them.

13/02

I would like to raise one or two points with regards to three areas. Firstly, I would like to talk about Early Childhood Care and Development Policy that the minister has outlined. Secondly, I want to talk on Disability and Elderly Program and finally on religion in PNG.

On the Early Childhood Care and Development Policy, let us look at our situation in PNG. How responsible are parents towards a child? I would like to focus on the responsibility of parents in bringing up their children at home. I see a dangerous trend developing in PNG where children are becoming very rebellious towards their parents. Children as young as 11 years old up to 21 years old are now becoming very rebellious to parents and to the society compared to previous years. Why is that happening? There are many factors contributing to this lack of respect and a growing rebellion of children against parents and authority.

Our young people are now consuming homebrew because it is accessible and cheap. It is fermented using fruits such as ripe bananas, pineapple, pawpaws and mixed with sugar and yeast. It is then boiled and the steam is collected and goes through condensation and produces a liquid which has a very high content of alcohol. This is very frightening.

Sometimes working parents leave their young children under the care of a babysitter and since children are vulnerable, they learn from their care takers. The good principles and values are not entrenched in them at that stage up until they are ready for school. According to psychologists and educationists, the first seven years of a child is very important because that is the time when development instils character in that child. In many societies of the world, United States, Japan, China and Singapore, there is very strong link between the parent and the child. The children are brought up well at their homes and after seven years of age they are looked after by institutions or schools away from their parents. The Early Childhood Care and Development Policy review should carefully look at the parent's responsibility in raising their children in this modern era. I think we are failing in this area. I will give an example of myself; I contested the 1992 and 1997 elections and lost. In 2002 I won the election and all this time, I have been so busy with my public life and I forgot about my children in the village. I forgot about my responsibilities as a father and after three or four years I returned to the village to find that my children have all grown up and I have adapted ways and mannerisms that are unacceptable and their language is also very distasteful. I wanted them to be disciplined to grow up with strong characters and to be able to say no to wrong doings and to be able to defend the right, but I don't see this in my children. What have I done? This falls back on me. One of my own sons was involved in a drunken brawl and I had him locked up in the Police cells and bailed him out after two weeks. I sent him off to China to study because I didn't want him involved in unlawful conducts. It's my failure as a father because I have not spent enough time with my child. Many

Papua New Guinean parents have been carried away by the modern treasures of life and we are forgetting about these precious jewels that are the future of Papua New Guinea. In these policies we must look at the disciplinary methods; how the parents are bringing up their children and how the church plays an important role. Discipline must start from the family and translated into the school curriculum, university level and onto the employment field.

14/02

We can see this area deteriorating right before our eyes. Our children will have less character, become rebellious, steal without shame, become corrupt without responsibility and will say things completely different to what we say. This is because in the early stages of childhood, there is no building of this culture of honesty, values and principles. In developed nations childhood development is very important.

It is the people that will develop a country. When a child becomes an adult, he or she will become a professional person, a business person or a career person. That person will then help develop their country. Countries are developed by people who have strong characters and principles. You look at the statements that have been made by various presidents and leaders of the world like the USA, which I have referred to. They speak of a lot of integrity and come with strong characters to drive the country forward. When their leaders say things the people believe in them. They also have very strong disciplining school systems. On the other hand, I think that we are in the danger of losing this culture.

In fact, traditionally, we used to have them. In the Highlands region where I come from we have the 'Hausman', in Enga, which we call 'akanyelda'. 'Akanyelda' means a place that young men go where the elderly teach and engrave into the young people how to respect another person. Like how to respect the various circumstances of life and how to respect a woman and girl. Nevertheless, we have allowed our cultures to die away and I think that this is the same in other parts of Papua New Guinea. We think that going to school and parents leaving the children to babysitters and adapting all these modern ways is going to change everything. However, studies have shown that this is not true.

There have been studies done by respected institutions of the world that show that over 80 percent of people locked up behind bars and in imprisonment have had problems during their childhood. These people experienced family problems like parents divorcing, having abusive

parents and growing up in poverty. Therefore, 80 percent of people in prison are those who had problems in their childhood and this is what we must entrench in our Papua New Guinean society because this is where it all starts.

I commend the Minister on the review that she will be leading in the Childhood Care And Development Policy because this is an area that we must address. Papua New Guinean papas and mamas must be responsible and school teachers must also be responsible. This is because I find some teachers with a lack of discipline. They come to school half-dressed or half-drunk or chewing betel nut and smoking and there is no commitment.

A child's discipline and development is very important because it starts from the parents and then transferred across to the teacher in the classroom to other levels of education and then to society. We complain about criminals, corrupt people and those who are breaking the laws, but it all starts with us because we are all responsible.

Mr Speaker, I am talking from experience because I have seen my children behaving in such manners because I have given them less time for attention. I think that we have to guide our parents to make sure that we are all responsible parents because a responsible and sound economy depends on how we bring up our children.

The next point that I would like to raise is in regards to the Disability and Elderly Program. We must not copy what other countries do; for instance in Australia, there are homes especially for the elderly and disabled people. We should not adopt this culture. Our culture is one that cares for our people. We have got a communal mindset for we are not capitalists. We are not people who are individualists. The people of this country are communal people who share in order to support and complement one another's existence. For example, if your mother is sick, you find that all of your family will take care of her. I think that in this review the Minister should look into government support for families that live with elderly or disabled persons. The families should be supported in order to look after them.

We must strengthen this communal responsibility or the '*Wantok*' system, not in the bad and negative sense but in the positive sense by supporting the network that is already there.

Mr Speaker, let us not break this culture please, it must not die. Let us get our policies and laws integrated into our cultural systems that are good. Otherwise, when we establish policies for the disabled and elderly, you will have to look for new money's and resources to

establish them, which sometimes is very difficult to manage. We should harness the strengths that we have in our culture.

Another point that I would like to make is in regards to religion. Papua New Guineans are very religious people and we have embraced Christianity, which I think is a very good thing. We respect our God, we pray and respect one another because we are a Christian nation, but there is one thing I see popping up everywhere. I see small groups sprouting everywhere in the name of churches. We have more than 7 million people and yet there are so many groups coming up and I do not know whether this is good or bad.

Mr Speaker, are we becoming over-religious? Over-Christian or what? Do we need to become over-religious? I think that we have got churches that have done good work. Why then are we creating so many?

Mr Speaker, I think that we have to control the growing number of religion sects and groups. I think this trend can have some negative impacts because again, studies have shown that some groups like that have become so charismatic that they have led people and followers into committing mass suicide. Some set themselves on fires but I am not saying that we are at the stage of doing that. What I am saying is that when you are growing as a young nation we should control things from the very beginning.

There was one church in Enga that I offered to help through some donations. I will not name the church. I am not supporting them but I am just trying to make a point here. The pastor said to me 'Minister, we are not going to get your money because we believe in hard work. We will work ourselves and so please keep your money and do not give it us.' I, therefore, think that this is a good example but there are other churches that will come and say that we are praying for you. Just give us a little money and we will pray for you more and I say, please, I have prayed for myself already.

(Laughter in Chamber)

Mr DON POLYE – What I am saying is, let our worship be genuine, be sincere about it and let us not allow little sects to sprout everywhere. That is only my opinion and I am only tossing it on the Floor of Parliament.

Mr Speaker, I do not want pastors and missionaries to become angry with me. At the same token let us also filter what religion should come into the country. There are some religions that are very violent and that should cause some concern in PNG.

15/02

Mr SPEAKER – Can the Sergeant-At-Arms find the owner of the mobile phone and remove the person from the Chamber?

Thank you!

Mr DON POLYE – Thank you, Mr Speaker, our *Constitution* says there is Freedom of Speech and Freedom of Worship and therefore, many different religions have come in. However, violence related to religious acts in the world today teaches us so many lessons so we should be very careful. We have to take a firm stand on this matter now because Papua New Guinea is a religious country. We do not want to see young and vulnerable Papua New Guineans joining different religions coming into our country in the name of preaching the gospel. In the long run, as a developing nation we might develop a very bad culture where violence is promoted in Papua New Guinea. Religious violence is a bad practice and if it is promoted in Papua New Guinea, it will also affect the global world.

Mr Speaker, in support of the Minister for Community Development, Religion, Youth and Women, I have raised these issues, however, as far as the policy reforms are concerned, the parents should be responsible for how they conduct themselves professionally, in various cultures and religion. Our busy lives can deprive us from our children and our children can be derailed or become rebellious because we have failed to bring them up in the way we are supposed to. Secondly, for people living with disability and the elderly people let us create a system to support the families that live with these people rather than create a system that does not involve their families. We have a cultural system already, we only need to strengthen and improve the cultural norms of our society.

Mr Speaker, let us not create so many religious sects, and denominations in the country or allow religions that promote violence to come to Papua New Guinea. I suggest that from this time on wards, we should start to make decision and establish position on the Floor of

Parliament as a Government and as a nation so that we are clear on where we are moving forward.

Mr NICK KUMAN (Gumine – Minister for Education) – Mr Speaker, thank you for giving this time to contribute to the statement made by the Minister for Religion, Youth and Community Development.

I wish to commend the Minister for bringing a very good statement to Parliament, amongst many responsibilities under her ministry, I want to focus on one important aspect of her responsibility.

Mr Speaker, my focus will be on civil registration. I believe civil registration is about knowing our people; how many people we have in this country and the particulars of the particular person and this is the basic information for any country to have in the system.

I think civil registration has not been seriously considered by other past governments. Of course, when we are voted by our people to this Parliament, we are here to represent our people on the Floor of Parliament. We are not here to represent the animals, environment, the trees, et cetera.

Mr Speaker, unfortunately, it hurts that even after 37 or 38 years after the Independence, we still do not know how many people we have in this country. It hurts that we do not really know our people. Knowing our people means, you know how many people are below the age of 10 years, how people are below the age of 20 and how many people we have above 70 years.

This is very important and it will help us in planning and budgeting but, unfortunately, we do not have those figures, hence all our planning and budgeting have been based on assumptions, and that is one of the very important functions under the Ministry of Religion, Youth and Community Development.

Mr Speaker, under the current law, we only have an office of registering death and marriages. How about those people who have been born and have not been registered? How about people who are yet to die and have not being registered? How about people who have not been married and have not registered? We have to take a different approach to registering our people.

Mr Speaker, we do not have to look for new ways because we already have the system in place. All we need is the Government's political will to register our people. When we register

our people, we would be surprised to know that our population figure is easily estimated to be 7 to 8 million.

I believe that is not the actual figure. For instance, in my electorate of Gumine, there is estimated figure of 60 to 70 thousand people, but that is based on figures inflated by people with political interest. In fact, I really do not know how many people I have in my electorate and how many are disabled or how many of them are women and girls. How many of them are students or school age children? This is my problem. It has to be planned; for example, if there is a famine in my electorate, if I have to plan to feed them, how many bags of rice should I buy. I do not know but these are important information that we should all have in our electorates.

Mr Speaker, I don't think we need a rocket scientist to tell us how to register our people. We already have government institutions in place.

16/02

Mr Speaker, I think what it needs is a holistic government approach to have our people register. Instead of a voluntarily approach we should make it compulsory so that children enrolling at schools must be registered there as well.

If you wish to travel on an aircraft you must provide your civil registration number because by doing that, the authorities will know whether a particular person travelling out from Simbu is sick with a contagious disease so that the spreading of contagious diseases can be monitored and controlled.

There is an advantage of registering all our people and monitoring their movements and I am interested in the Minister's statement of having the civil registration reviewed. The Minister should introduce legislation in Parliament to make it compulsory for all citizens of this country to be registered. I will give him my support.

Mr Speaker, how many of us on this Floor of Parliament have registered ourselves? We are Melanesian and have Melanesian brothers and sisters living on the other side of the border in Indonesia. We have Melanesians living in Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji, so how can we be sure that we are Papua New Guineans on this Floor of Parliament? How can we be sure that we are not people from other countries but actual citizens of Papua New Guinea? We simply don't know.

We have problems with the landowners from the resource areas for too long. We really don't know who the actual landowners are because many people are claiming to be principle landowners. How can we differentiate between a principle landowner and a non-landowner when dealing with the resourceful area? Mr Speaker, the Government has failed that is why these problems will continue.

Now, we are talking about shortage of land but as I mentioned earlier, the Government has failed to monitor. How many of us here have so much land, not leaving enough for other citizens. Only through such registration, we would know and control the scarce resources like land. In doing so, the State land can also be shared equally and not only having certain people in this country to own so much State land.

Mr Speaker, I am impressed with the Minister's statement because the Government is going to look at the bio-metric system. That is very good because we will be using that to register and monitor our people but there is a downfall. Therefore, I would like to make a recommendation to the Minister. When you look at registering your people, you have to introduce legislation that will make it compulsory for all the existing State-institutions to ensure that everyone is registered.

Mr Speaker, if a particular person is to open a bank account, this account must be linked to his or her civil registration number, driver's license and employment number. All these identification numbers must be linked to the civil registration number, so that the authorities will know that they are dealing with only one person. Otherwise, it will be very hard to monitor people.

Mr Speaker, I recommend that the government make it compulsory so that every state, department, agencies and the employers register the people. It must be their responsibility to ensure that the employees and the members of their family are registered. I believe that is the cost effective way of registering all our people. So that by the year 2015 or 2017 we would know exactly how many people are there? The Electoral Commission will also not bother the Government about allocating more money to run the elections.

Mr Speaker, according to the Minister's statement, we must also have the bio-metric system on line, so that when a particular child is born in Gumine District and registered, it should automatically show online. But in order to do that we must invest in information and communication technologies, so that information can be made available online.

Mr Speaker, on that note, I would also like to urge the Government to invest in information and communication technologies so that when people are registered using the biometric system, it should automatically be online and there are no duplications as well.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, I would like to talk about a non-Christian denomination being introduced in Papua New Guinea, because we can say Papua New Guinea is a Christian country but we are allowing that non-Christian church to establish itself in the country. This has created a lot of negative response from the public.

17/02

Mr Speaker, I had a very unfortunate experience during the elections.

Shortly, after the church established itself in Port Moresby a branch was set up in my electorate in my LLG. During the elections we came face to face with the reality that, it may not be the church itself being at fault but the believers are resorting to extremism and terrorism. We hear and see all these things in the papers and TV but it is happening in our country.

Right after polling ended in my area, I was travelling in a convoy of 8 vehicles and we came under live fire from the members of that church. Three of our vehicles were burnt. This is the first time in Simbu Province or maybe it is the first time in the region or even the country where three land cruisers were burnt and came under live fire from the followers of that church.

When we talk about terrorism or extremism, it is already happening in the country. If such activities were carried out by other people then that would be understandable but if such activities are done by followers of a church, then that brings into question, what are we doing to curb terrorism and extremism in this country.

In the case that I mentioned, the culprit was caught and locked up in the police cells but somehow he has escaped and there is a threat of tribal flare ups anytime. These are the kinds of things that I would like to bring to the attention of the Minister, and that is, churches may be a good thing but we may need to monitor activities of their followers. That also brings us back to the issue of registering our people, knowing our people and monitoring their movement. This will go a long way in solving a lot of the problems that we currently face, and maybe going a long way to preventing similar problems from coming up in the future.

Mr TITUS PHILEMON (Milne Bay) – Mr Speaker, I would like to commend the Minister for her statement on behalf of the women and children and disabled people of Milne Bay Province, and also the country. I know that the Minister is very passionate about what she has brought to the attention of the Parliament.

Mr Speaker, looking at this ministry, it is a lifeline and it is the people's ministry. I really support the Minister's statement and the initiatives that she has taken and the changes that she wants to see take place in the Ministry and the Government.

Mr Speaker, I just want to say something on the establishment of the new Ministry of church and community development. Like the other speakers before me have mentioned, I support this initiative and I think that it is long overdue and at the same time we have to be very careful in terms of what churches will be supported within the Ministry.

I think that we should look at the churches that have contributed to the development of the country and that the government has partnered with in the past. Such churches who have supported the government in the establishment of schools and health centers for these are the type of churches that we should look at to support and not all the churches who just come for the sake of establishing churches. I think that we have seen enough to know which churches have contributed a lot to the development of this country that the Government should partner with.

The new Ministry for church and community development is very timely at this time and I also support that, we should also think about allocating about 10 per cent of our total Budget to the church and community for the development of this country.

Mr Speaker, I also would like to support the Minister's initiative on the old age and disable scheme that she mentioned.

Mr Speaker, this scheme was modeled in the New Ireland Province and I think that it is working successfully and some of us in the other provinces would like to adopt this policy. This is because it is benefitting our old aged and disabled people.

Mr Speaker, today, in Papua New Guinea we seem to be rushing. We are rushing for development and we have a lot of projects and resources that we are looking at developing and if we are not careful enough, in the rush for development we may leave our people behind and forget them.

There are already signs in our cities and towns. The influx of people from the villages going into towns and cities are ever increasing. I commend the O'Neill-Dion Government for

recognising the districts and LLGs by allocating funds so that we can then bring development to our districts so that we hold our people back in the rural areas.

18/02

I agree with what the Minister for Commerce and Industry mentioned today. If we are not careful enough we are only going to be spectators in our own country. Our women children and youth will become useless; they will be just betel nut sellers in their own land.

So that is why this Ministry must be given big support by the Government. Our women and children must be taken care of and more so our youths.

Today our youths are only participating in sports and not so much in economic development in our country.

So, Mr Speaker, these are some of my comments and I'd like to support the Minister in whatever she wants to do in her Ministry.

Mr WERA MORI (Chuave) – Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for the little time given to me to contribute to the ministerial statement of the Minister for Community Development.

Firstly, I wish to commend the Minister for presenting a very excellent and informative paper in a very articulate and astute manner.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I will not speak for long but in that little time, I wish to inform all of us here that despite all the different budget and development policies we advocated, we must remind ourselves that the youth are a ticking time bomb.

I don't know about other parts of Papua New Guinea but in my electorate the youth is a very big problem and if we want to advance and move this country forward, we must take the youth issue very seriously and address it because it is one of the root causes of many of our problems today.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I wish to also remind us that only some weeks ago an article appeared in our daily newspapers that some youths from a particular school in Port Moresby partook in some very undesirable acts while drinking after their examinations.

As a nation, how long are we going to put up with these things and when are we going to seriously address these problems?

Mr Deputy Speaker, a lot of the ideas advocated by the Minister have substance but these substantive theories must not become mere rhetoric. We must act on them and provide funding.

The idea of Civil Registration which she suggested is of paramount importance because we have a need to know how many people we have in Papua New Guinea at any one time; how many children we have, how many children are in school and so on. We do not have such databases or anything even remotely reliable.

A National Census exercise was conducted only a few years ago, but it was a total failure. In my electorate of Chuave, the district managers did not even go to the villages to conduct it. They engaged youth to fill the census forms and return them. This sort of data gathering is inaccurate so we must be very serious in what we want to do.

I support the views expressed by the Member for Gumine in relation to non-Christian churches in PNG. Now, we must not live under false pretense. Our *Constitution* states very clearly that PNG is a Christian country and so it must be. Let us be serious and ban all other form of religions in this country.

If you go to some other countries, especially Islam dominated countries like Pakistan and others; Islam is their State religion so if you bring in another religion you will not have the freedom to practice it openly. Why can't we do the same in PNG?

Some religions come in under the pretext of humanitarian service and introduce all sorts of practices and today they almost took the life of the dully elected Member for Gumine.

So we must be of one accord and impose legislation to ban all those foreign religions because our *Constitution* is specific on the point that PNG is a Christian country, therefore we should ban all other religions.

Mr Deputy Speaker, we worship the God of Israel and let us strengthen that. I would like to see in the not too distant future a bilateral agreement with the government of Israel and get some of our young people to Israel to serve in their army. Let them impart to us some of their skills, technology and discipline. Let us make a start somewhere, otherwise we will continue to rumble on and on and by the time we wish to cement something, we will still be faced with the same problems.

Let us try something different because from the Budget handed down by the Treasurer yesterday there is a will to address these issues. I think it is good if we have the right framework

in place so that the kind of budget handed down yesterday if implemented will have some impact on this country.

It is imprudent to expend billion of kina year after year without any material impact on the lives of people in the rural areas where it is supposed to matter the most, then it is a total unaffordable wastage of scarce resources of the country.

So, Mr Deputy Speaker, we must be very serious, let us put the right framework in place so that at least we can implement them.

To me, the Ministry of the honourable Minister is one of the most significant and key ministries in any government.

19/02

It is one of the key ministries in the new government. We cannot downplay this ministry because it is responsible for the welfare of the seven million people of Papua New Guinea, whom we also represent. Civil registration is a step in the right direction. It must be done using biometrics. We must utilise the information technology and it must be done using biometrics so there is control so that all your personal details can be linked back to that one data base for instance, registration of your vehicle or even voting in different areas. We must utilise the resources where it matters most. This system will also assist in providing accurate data for schools in remote areas so there won't be false claims. It will be good to have a very good data base. I support the work of that Ministry because I know it is a significant Ministry especially all those social oriented ministries. We must not look down on them.

Mr DE KEWANU (Mendi) – Thankyou, Mr Deputy Speaker, for recognising the people of Mendi and for the opportunity to debate this paper.

I am impressed with the presentation by the Minister for Religion, Youth and Community Development and Member for Lae and I would like to continue on the debate.

The Minister has covered almost all the areas however I would like to talk about data base. In any country, for anyone to progress the data base is the basic information for planning. After 37 years of independence we are still lacking and I think in this Ninth Parliament many good reforms will take place, one of which is the biometric system or a database that this country

can depend on to plan every aspect of development. We need to have readily available information to know the status of our population.

I want to make some suggestions on how best we can achieve this goal. If we need to legislate it to make it compulsory for the LLG's responsible in registering births and marriage, it has to start somewhere. We have to make it compulsory that the councillors be held responsible. It must start at the ward level. Every time there is a ward council meeting they must be asked to bring in data of people in their wards in terms of deaths, births and marriages. If we need to develop an online database then we will need to budget enough money for that purpose. I want to see this system established in this Ninth Parliament and it is our vision. The council presidents must give the information to the council executive officers and it must go online and if the councillors do not comply, they must be penalised. We must set up this biometric system to identify the school children, the unemployed, the employed and their professions and so forth. If we plan this database properly this country will reach another level and this database will be accessible to our development partners such as the United Nations and it will be used for planning purposes. This is all linked and tied to having a proper database system.

20/02

I just want to remind us that we have to come up with a reliable database so that as a country we have to put our money and resources and start somewhere. Another issue is on religion. As a born-again Christian, it is through God, the prayers of the Christian community that I am here on the Floor of Parliament.

It is not by mistake that we are here. We are here for a purpose and it is our responsibility to participate meaningfully to create policies of this nation. The *Constitution* states that we have to exercise freedom of religion. I want us to amend this to say Freedom of Christian Religion. This must reflect the title of Christian Country.

Christians are those that believe in God, the God that we all pray to. Freedom of Religion will only mean any other God, so we have to add Christian. If we all have one frame of mind where this country has to become a Christian country then we have to start here. I believe a new ministry of Church is the right way to go because this country depends on God and when we have to give God a special place, this country will be blessed.

When God is set high on the throne, blessings will be abundant for this country and I believe we will all be blessed by God, through his own special way. I support the initiative of the Minister and I look forward to the support of this Parliament to establish and give prominence to some of the programs and projects mentioned.

Mr JOE SUNGI (Nuku) – I commend the Minister for Religion, Youth and Community Development for a comprehensive and well-presented statement and it is an eye-opener for us and to remind us that the family unit is the basic foundation for a person and any development in the society and the country.

I would like to also pay tribute to the former Minister for a lot of the initiatives and policies under the last Government, where she has set up a good foundation.

We are happy that the new Minister has taken on the responsibilities. She is doing a good job and I want to commend her and we will support her in her endeavours.

Mr Speaker, I would like to share some of the experiences, especially in terms of how we touch base with the community. And being a former provincial administrator, I think there are lots of initiatives coming from the departments, especially with community learning and development centres under the Ministry.

It is a program that is going through and also education has come up with the community college program and in health there is the community health post. So all these are focused on the community and I would like to comment on members of Parliament can take control and see that we are organised and provide the direction at the community level. What is happening is that the Community Development is one of the lowly prioritised departments in terms of manpower and structuring, so what we need now is to really structure the department right down to the community level because that is where it matters most.

Mr Speaker, on average we only have about two or three community development officers in a district.

21/02

Mr Speaker, in reality, if we have all these programs and initiatives, how are we going to implement these programs? It is our call and we have the Ministers available to ensure that we structure the Department properly so that it can take on board all these new initiatives. If we can,

we should sort out the community in terms of data base. Everything starts with the structure. If we organise ourselves we can also provide the direction to the donors. There is a program called Strongim Pipol Strongim Neisen (SPSN) and also the Community Development Scheme (CDS). These programs did not turn out well in my province because they supported self-promoted groups who were not in line with the structure of the Government.

Mr Speaker, I would like to see that all community based programs must be focused at the wards because it is the lowest structure of the Government. If we establish the Community Development Learning Centre (CLDC) under the Ministry of Community Development, Youth, Women and Religion and if we want to establish a community health aid post for the health ministry, even if we come up with community college for the education ministry, they should be focused at the ward. The ward is the lowest government structure where everything should be coordinated and headed by the ward member.

Mr Speaker, I would also like to use this opportunity as the vice Minister to remind us that the members are no longer regarded as mere councillors; they are rightfully called ward members. The title ward councillor is now a thing of the past. This title was used during the days of the *kiaps*. In 1995 the titles *Kiaps* and councillors was abolished and, therefore, we are now correcting ourselves. We need to recognise the ward members as the most important elected members of the local level government. They are basically the same as us so by giving them prominence we can also guide the intervention programs. The community based intervention programs must be to get the endorsement, recognition and the support of the ward member who is the chairman of the ward development committee.

Mr Speaker, we must fix our structures to ensure there is no duplications of functions in which will only cause disunity and confusion amongst our people.

Mr Speaker, we need to realign and use the existing structure of government which is basically the community ward development committee which is already in place. If we start creating other new structures we will confuse our own people and confuse ourselves and when it comes to resources which are limited we are going to face difficulties in distribution.

Mr Speaker, I know we will be receiving monies for the LLG and if we do, we need to have the right system. We will use the money where it matters most and we will see the lives of our people impacted by these resources trickling down to them.

Mr Speaker, this is my opinion. It is a very important Ministry and it is a very important Department for us because right now some of the ministries do not have a structure that reaches down to the ward level. We don't have the manpower, therefore, this is where we need to align ourselves, come to an agreement and get all the resources together and utilise them where it matters most.

Mr Speaker, the community ward development committee is the lowest structure of government where all government programs meet and we start from there.

Mr TOBIAS KULANG (Kundiawa-Gembogl) – Thank you, Mr Speaker. I take note of the Minister's statement. I would like to make some contributions in the area of religion. I take note of the comments made by my colleagues in relation to religion, especially those who made reference to our founding fathers aspirations as they have decided to choose among many other religions, Christianity is a founding principle and guide. I acknowledge that this is an important debate.

I have been observing very quietly the performance of leadership and the issue of the challenges that we are faced with and as far as our definition of what is right and what is wrong. In the recent past, I for one object that we have struggled to understand and define clearly what is right and what is wrong and to some extent we have accepted what is wrong as right. We have even suggested that we can legislate what is wrong to be right and that is in the minds and the circles of leadership. I would like to quote a statement from a great writer John Maxwell, he said "Everything rises and falls on leadership". The ability of every nation and society to be robust and to rise and face challenges depends on its leadership.

22/02

I believe that leadership plays a very key and important role.

Mr Speaker, I have to say this with great humility not with one who is without fault but I think that it is an important issue that needs to be debated, and that is why I am saying this.

I think that in our challenging times and environment the fundamental issue that will enable leadership to come out and shine and provide good leadership that is required is the issue of integrity and moral uprightness.

I have observed that this nation has come to a stage where we are struggling with the basic definition of what is right and wrong. I have done my own research and pondered long and hard regarding this issue and I have taken note of the debate done by the Treasurer, and I too agree that there is been a disconnection with our ancient past and the way our society and structure was through social institutions like the '*haus man*'. Our people in the past had a system that catered for all our people and though it was informal it was a system that was a custodian for the moral conscience of that society. Our past traditional societies had systems that guided society's understanding of moral right and wrong. When Christianity came to our country it came into conflict with much of our traditions and we have now moved into this new world.

My father is a Catechist and I was unfortunate not to experience staying in the '*haus man*' with my grandfather. Though I did have some interaction with him I did not have that opportunity because I was brought up by my father. Every evening we said our prayers and he taught me according to the principles of Christianity of what was right and wrong and that was what brought me to where I am and that is what I hope to pass on to my children as well.

Nevertheless, in terms of society's structural context, there was a major disconnection and I take my hat off to our grandfathers for choosing Christianity as a foundation. We have no relatives in that country called Israel. Therefore, I believe that it must have been divine intervention that allowed Christianity to come into this country and I am happy that Christianity is one of the foundations of this country.

Mr Speaker, one of the issues that I have noticed is the disconnection with our traditional past and now there are many denominations and yet we don't have a structure in place to guide the transition into this Christian religion. These churches are the custodians of the moral conscious. Where do we go on Sundays? We go to church. These churches have replaced our tradition '*hausman*'. However; we don't have an institutionalized structure to look after them so that churches can be able to effectively perform their roles as the custodians of moral conscious so that generations after generations we will continue to be taught and be able to know what is right and what is wrong. If there is no proper structure in place it will be like a ship without an anchor.

The second disconnection from our past that I noticed is and I quote from the preamble of the National Constitution 'We pledge ourselves to guide and pass on to those who come after us our noble tradition and Christian principles. We the people do now establish this sovereign

Nation and declare ourselves under the guiding hand of God'. These are very important words but I think we need to institutionalize these words. We talked about it in 1975 and it still hangs in the air while we progressed in other areas over the last 37 years. I have travelled to the cities of the world, Wall Street, Times Square and I have seen a Rabbi with the similar dressing as the one I saw in Nazareth walking to a synagogue. Jews are very powerful people because you cannot separate the institution that looks after their moral conscious from their lifestyle. Even for the Muslim religions, the state and the religion are inseparable. To separate them would be like removing the brains from the body leaving the body idle. In Singapore, I saw the South East Nations debating, they were trying to fund the element that would give them the competitive edge in the twenty first century and they came down to one virtue and that was integrity, not money, gold, copper or gas. We founded this country on Christian principles in 1975, but we have left it there without institutionalizing it.

23/02

When we talk about a noble tradition, we have to clearly define what it means. Are we talking about the traditions of the Chimbus or the Tolais? For example, my son was born in Port Moresby and, therefore, what can I tell him regarding this noble tradition. Nevertheless, these were the foundations that our forefathers said that they would establish this nation. We have got to properly define them and have them properly institutionalised so that they can become part of us.

Mr Speaker, my debate is not going to be a long one regarding the matter raised by my brother, the Member for Mendi. We have to be realistic and know that we cannot have it two ways. It is either we fulfill the visions of our forefathers and make Christianity as the State religion of this country or whether we just hang in limbo regarding this matter of moral consciousness. The signs and indications show that we are floating now without an anchor. The anchor for the nation is a strong moral consciousness that provides a strong moral compass, otherwise without proper definition and this has not become a reality yet, our oil and gas would not be developed.

Mr RICHARD MARU (Yangoru-Saussia – Minister for Trade, Commerce and Industry) – Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I too would like to add some of my thoughts towards this debate. Firstly, I would like to thank the Minister for his passion and the speed in which she is moving. We are all happy with the job that you are doing.

I would like to support the two members who have just spoken because we say that we are a Christian country only by word of mouth for a long time now. I am in agreement that Parliament should pass law and that by law make this country a Christian nation. Therefore, these two members have my support.

It is about time that we acknowledge God properly and make him the Lord and King over this nation. Therefore, I believe that many of us members are looking forward for the Minister to bring to Parliament a Bill to address this issue. I believe that we are ready for such a Bill.

I know that the former Minister had tried to propose a law to recognise same sex marriages and gay rights but such things are deemed offensive to God, and therefore, we must not allow such things to happen. Therefore, Minister, such matters regarding this issue which has also been proposed by the United Nations and human rights organisations will not be accepted by people like me on this Floor of Parliament.

That is my first point that I wanted to raise and, therefore, the Minister must look at coming up with a law to bring to Parliament. I know that times are changing but we must give recognition and glory to God as the only God of this country.

My second point that I would like to raise is in regards to the partnership between the State and the churches. I believe that the State has not done enough for this partnership.

Mr Speaker, one area that I would like to mention to you and the members of Parliament is that, when I travelled to England and Australia, for one pastor or priest, only 30 people made up his congregation. This made it easy for him to visit the family homes of his congregation and attend to the spiritual needs of the members of his church.

As a church elder, I know that in this country one church pastor oversees more than 1,500 people spread over five to six churches. We make it difficult for people who want to be pastors and missionaries in this country. It costs these people about K5, 000 to go to school and be trained in institutes like the Pacific Adventist University (PAU).

I challenge the Minister to break from tradition and make a policy and bring it to Parliament so that we have to start paying for school fees for those who want to be missionaries. You will definitely have my support in the National Executive Council (NEC). These people are

playing the most single and important role in this country. They work both day and night and if you one that associated with churches then you will be well aware of the burden of pastors and missionaries.

Every day when a person dies they have to go and pray in the hospitals. Whether it is a sunny day or rainy day they are still always working. They serve our people more than any other profession and yet we do not recognise that and do not subsidise their school fees when they go to school. Therefore, Minister, can you bring a proposal to address this matter because I believe Parliament as a whole will be in agreement.

We need to have more missionaries so that they can spend time teaching our children and the youths about God. Like the biblical story of Moses, he had spent 12 years with his mother but he never lost his focus with God and he became one of Israel's greatest leader as well as this world has known. Therefore, when he was with his mother he was taught the teachings about God.

We have to get our missionaries to start teaching to our children while they are still young and that is one of the ways that we can make this nation strong. Therefore, I would like to see a proposal for the churches where we must fund people to go to school to carry out the work of God. The State must seriously consider this issue.

This is what I think should be done because I for one will be in support of such a proposal. We cannot have one pastor to 1,300 church members. How then will he be able to take care of the spiritual needs of all these people? We must, therefore invest in the training of pastors, priests and et cetera, so that they can look after the spiritual needs of our people.

Mr Speaker, finally, in countries like Australia now, if you want to operate as a church then you must be formerly incorporated and registered. The Government must know that the church must have audit for their accounts before government grants can be given.

Many members of Parliament now want all the services to be provided by the churches, especially, in the areas of health and education. For example, in my district I want all the health services to be carried out by the churches. My only issue is that when I provide them with funding I would like to know that they have a governing process and system in place where the funding will be utilised accordingly. Therefore, in other countries churches cannot register unless there are proper processes to make sure that funding is spent accordingly, that the church is legitimate so that people do not make offerings that are collected and used discretionally.

Therefore, we must have a process where churches are properly incorporated and that we have a system on how you can become a church recognised by law. This will also help in identifying who should be entitled to get government grants as a church. If not then everybody will start a church just to come and partner the Government to get funding.

Therefore, Minister, I encourage you to look at other examples in other countries.

24/02

Mr Speaker, I would suggest and encourage the Minister to critically look at how smaller sects of churches are popping up everywhere in the country in the name of preaching the good news or gospel. We cannot have churches popping up everywhere, so we must now have the guidelines to see how they come in to register as a church in Papua New Guinea. How do they come and register as a church? What are the accountabilities, as the Government is moving towards partnering the church more in the future in delivering the services to the people.

Mr Speaker, we have to have a process of registration and a process of accountability within the churches. I am more concerned about everyone starting a ministry and popping up everywhere like mushrooms. Some of these churches are building international schools where many children have been enrolled and this is very frightening. So, as Government, we should have some accountability and we should make sure they must not come in the name of the church just to come in and grab money from the innocent church members who love God and offer tithes to the church. We must have some means to control and minimise this as well as to monitor this in your department.

Mr Speaker, I support the Minister for her statement and the policy reforms that she brought for this country.

Motion (by **Mr Patrick Pruaitch**) agreed to –

That the question be now put.

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

ADJOURNMENT

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

That the Parliament do now adjourn.

The Parliament adjourned at 1:15 p.m..