



PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

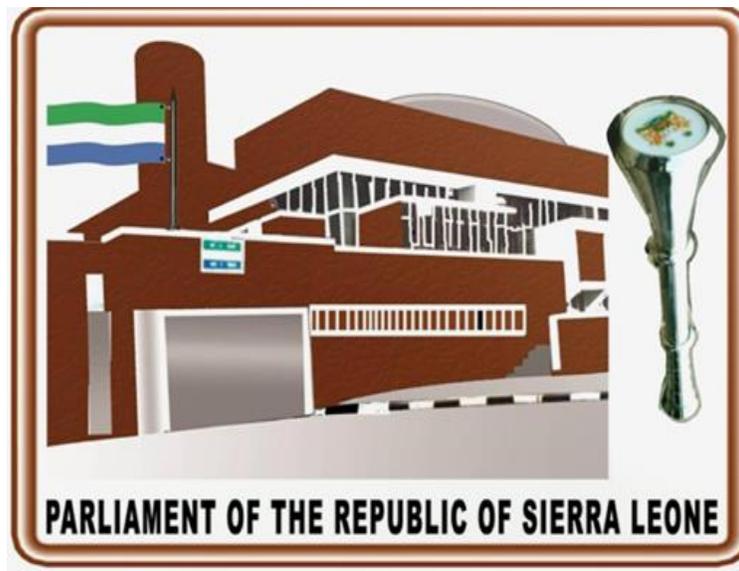
ON:

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS, DELIVERED BY THE PRESIDENT, DR ERNEST BAI KOROMA, ON THE OCCASION OF STATE OPENING OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE, IN THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT, ON FRIDAY, 14TH DECEMBER, 2012.

FIFTH ALLOTTED DAY

**OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT
FIRST SESSION-FIRST MEETING
FRIDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY, 2013**

SESSION – 2012/2013



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VOLUME: I

15TH SITTING OF PARLIAMENT

First Meeting of the First Session of the Fourth Parliament
Of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone.

Proceedings of the Sitting of the House
Held on Friday, 8th February, 2013.

C O N T E N T S

I. PRAYERS

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THURSDAY, 7TH FEBRUARY, 2013.

III. MOTION OF THANKS TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT, DR ERNEST BAI KOROMA

PROPOSER: HONOURABLE IBRAHIM BUNDU

SECONDER: HONOURABLE ISATTA KABIA

BE IT RESOLVED:

"That we the Members of Parliament here assembled wish to thank His Excellency the President for the address he so graciously delivered on the occasion of the State Opening of the First Session of the Fourth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone in the Chamber of Parliament on Friday, 14th December, 2012."



THE CHAMBER OF PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE

OFFICIAL HANSARD REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE HOUSE

**FIRST SESSION-FIRST MEETING
OF THE FOURTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE SECOND REPUBLIC**

Friday, 8th February, 2013.

The House met at 10:00 a.m. in Parliament Building, Tower Hill, Freetown.

I. PRAYERS

[The Clerk of Parliament, Hon. Ibrahim Sulaiman Sesay, Read the Prayers].

[The Speaker, Hon. Justice Abel Nathaniel Bankole Stronge, in the Chair].

The House was called to Order.

II. CORRECTION OF VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS FOR THURSDAY, 7TH FEBRUARY, 2013

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, we go through the record of Votes and Proceedings for Thursday, 7th February, 2013. Page1? Page2? Page3? Page4? Page5? Page6? Can somebody move that the record of Votes and Proceedings for Thursday, 7th February, 2013 be adopted as presented?

HO P. C. BAI KURR KANAGBARO SANKA II: Mr Speaker I so move.

THE SPEAKER: Any seconder?

HON. SULAIMAN M. SISAY: I so second Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Any counter motion?

(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)

(Record of Votes and Proceedings for Thursday, 7th February, 2013 was Unanimously Accepted as Presented)

III. MOTION OF THANKS TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT, DR ERNEST BAI KOROMA.

PROPOSER: HONOURABLE IBRAHIM BUNDU

SECONDER: HONOURABLE ISATA KABIA.

HON. P. C. BAI KURR KANAGBARO SANKA III: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am sure during the past four days, Members of this Honourable House contributed immensely on the Address presented by His Excellency

the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. There are many good issues that we must do together. Like I said yesterday Sir, after reading this Address for more than four consecutive times, I came to the realisation that history is in the making. I know that we have to work as a country and as a Nation to achieve the aims that have already been put into this Address. Everything in this Address is very important Mr Speaker. And I am sure that the present Honourable Members of Parliament, Cabinet Ministers and all Heads of Agencies and Departments will do what should be done to make Sierra Leone a better place for all of us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the development aspect that the President outlines in this Address is not for him alone. It is a development that is neither for the APC nor for the SLPP; but for all Sierra Leoneans. It is meant for everybody that steps foot in Sierra Leone and all lovers of peace.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, during the rebel war in Sierra Leone, various peace keeping missions came to Sierra Leone, including the United Nations, ECOWAS and ECOMOG. People from the four corners of Planet Earth came to Sierra Leone. A lot of people died in this country. Some of them died because they wanted to bring peace to the people of Sierra Leone. Mr Speaker may their souls rest in perfect peace.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the issue of women in this country. For me, the most important aspect of women's empowerment in this country is the education of the girl child. This is because education is the most vital role of any Government, including the Government of Sierra Leone. Parents and the community must provide the level playing field for the girl child to be educated. Mr Speaker, why are we always showering praises to the Minority Leader of this Honourable House? Mr Speaker, we are doing this not because of her beauty, but because she is well educated. There are many beautiful women out there selling. They couldn't come to this Honourable House because they are illiterate. Some of them are saying that 30 % is not the issue. The 30% Quota is indeed not the issue. The issue is that we must muster all our efforts to ensure quality education of the girl-child. When we give the girl

child the education she needs, there is no need for 30% Quota. It does not mean that they have to go into politics, but when they are educated, they can become doctors, lawyers, physicians, professors, teachers and nurses. For me, 30% is something we have to look at very carefully. If the girl child is well educated, nobody will challenge her in terms of employment.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, recently, the three Secretaries of State in America were all women. This is because they are educated. They served in the Clinton, Bush and the Obama Administration. It was only recently that Barak Obama appointed a male to serve as Secretary of States in America.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, many people have spoken about Food Security. The issue of food security in this country is a serious problem. Mr Speaker, 70% of our staple food comes from the labour of the women of this country. The men are only providing a bag of rice. The other items are left in the hands of the women such as maggi, pepper, cassava, wood etc. I am bringing this because I am one of the grass-root people. In fact, I grew up in the village. When I was a child, I knew what my father was giving my mother for cooking. If he provided the rice, he didn't care about providing the fish. My mum had to take the fishing net to the river to do some fishing. I know that most Honourable Members seated here today their mothers have gone through the same experience as my mother (*chuckling*). I am talking about all of us Members of Parliament. We all know what it takes. We all have brothers, cousins, sisters and grandparents. That is the good thing about polygamy (*Applause*).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the Health Sector. Health and sanitation is in the hands of the women of this country. We only have to educate the women of this country. They will know what type of water and type of clothes they should give to their children. For me Mr Speaker, I am appealing to this Government to continue the good work they have started in terms of providing health facilities for our suckling mothers, pregnant women, and for the children under-fives. I want the Government to continue to educate the girls. I am also appealing to the Honourable

Minister, who is working diligently to promote education in this country. I want him to bring special programmes and incentives for the girl-child. This is because the girls have the disadvantage of carrying their babies. And Mr Speaker, immediately the girl child becomes pregnant at an early age, it becomes difficult for that girl because very few parents could afford to send that child again to school after six or seven months.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, pregnancy is no longer between a man and a woman, but between boys and girls. Nowadays children are bearing children. It is very interesting Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, a fifteen year old boy can pregnate a fourteen year old girl. It is a fact Honourable Members. As a Paramount Chief, these are facts I am giving you today. I deal with such cases often times in Masingbi. Therefore, what is being said by His Excellency the President is a concerted approach to the development of this nation. Let us (as Members of Parliament, good citizens of Sierra Leone and people who are determined to change the image of Sierra Leone from negative to positive) work on these programmes outlined by the President. We have to work with this Presidential Address. We should not politicise this Address in terms of enforcing it at all. All what is outlined in this Address is for the benefit of this country. I want to see somebody who will say no to the progress of this nation. I want to see a person who will say we should not do this for the development of Sierra Leone at all and give us an alternative. I want to see the person who will say we should not bring electricity, we should not promote agriculture, we should not bring infrastructure.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as Members of Parliament, we should find ways and means to ensure that these programmes work. It is not for us to mount negative criticism at all Mr Speaker. We have to be bringing in positive suggestions, observations and recommendations to our different communities. It is only when we do this together we can succeed as a nation. That was why I said yesterday that this Presidential Address is a working document for Parliament. It is a working document for all Members of Parliament for the next ten or eleven months that we will be in this Honourable House.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I think the education of the girl-child is a paramount issue as a Government. The education of women is very important in any country. Sierra Leone cannot become a developed nation if the girl-child or women are not empowered in terms of educating them. It will be impossible Mr Speaker. Therefore, my contribution is centred on education of the girl-child. All of us should work together in order to get rid of the ghost teachers, ghost pupils and ghost schools in our own communities. Mr Speaker, over 90% of us know that these ghost people exist. But the problem with some of us is the fact that most of the head teachers and principals that are heading these institutions are our close relatives. Most of them are our brothers, cousins, nephews, nieces, friends etc., and as a result, we cannot make any report to the Ministry of Education even when we are seeing things going wrong. We should report this to the Ministry concerned. We have to gossip if that is the only means to get the truth. If we fail to say the truth, we are not serving this nation diligently. All of us should be busy-bodies for the betterment of this nation. Let us expose those who are bent on destroying this nation. There are many fake schools and teachers in this country. Mr Speaker Sir, how can we get rid of those living teachers that are not doing the work for which they are paid for? Apart from the ghost teachers, ghost pupils and ghost schools all over this country, we know many teachers that are not working but they are receiving salaries. It is not easy to get rid of these bad teachers at all. It is not only for Dr Minkailu Bah to do it. We have to do it collectively. We should not say because these people are our friends, brothers and sisters we cannot say the truth. We have to save this nation by saying the truth. We have to protect this nation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are many fake contractors in this country. Contractors who cannot perform are fake contractors. If we want education to flourish in this country, we have to draw programmes that will benefit our various communities. We should try by all means in ensuring that sanity prevails in the areas we represent. We have to ensure that our communities are free from ghost teachers, ghost pupils and ghost schools. All ghost Government workers should be fought against. I am appealing to all Sierra Leoneans to think seriously about the issue of corruption. We see

corruption everywhere and every day. The issue of my brother, sister, cousin, or political supporter should be wiped off. This should not be the issue at all Mr Speaker. It is not good for this nation?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am appealing to the President and his noble Government to put emphasis on the issue of education and to bring in the skills required of our youth. Mr Speaker, I took an informal census in my Chiefdom. What I got was 14,500 children in the primary schools, from pre-primary to primary schools. I have seven secondary schools in my chiefdom with a population of 3,500. But most of these young girls by the time they get to SSS4, some of them would have been pregnant; hence, they became drop-outs without jobs. I am sure that what is happening in Masingbi is also happening in other areas. Therefore, we should do something to train these young boys to be carpenters, welders and masons. We have to give them the skills they need. There are many companies that need these young people. Mr Speaker, the sad part of youth unemployment in this country is that we do bring in foreigners from other countries to do the jobs our youth could do. We only need to give our youth the required skills. We have this problem with the African Minerals and other mining companies. When we visited the African Minerals, they told us that their machines cannot be operated by Sierra Leoneans because they are not trained to operate those machines. They asked us to give them somebody with the technical know-how to operate those machines. Mr Speaker, we could not provide them with anybody. They had to bring in four Guineans to operate those machines.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we should not only cater for the universities, but we should provide our children the skills needed. We have to provide them the required skills so that they can be independent people. In Freetown, we now have many independent welders who are making wooden as well as steel doors and windows. They are not employed by the Government but because they have the skills they are providing employment for themselves and other people. They provide the necessary logistical support in terms of constructing dwelling houses. Therefore, they are self employed. These are the issues that we should raise and try to formulate (together with

this Government and with other subsequent leaders that will come in) to make Sierra Leone a better place for us to live.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we the Paramount Chiefs have defended this country during pre-colonial days. The great Bai Bureh, Mammy Yoko and others with all their illiteracy stood up to say that "*taxation without representation is illegal.*" Mr Speaker, although Bai Bureh was later captured during the course of defending the territory of this great nation, his contribution towards the political history of this country is still in our minds. British knew very well that what Bai Bureh did was correct. The Boston Tea Party in America is another notable example. Later, Bai Bureh was brought back in 1906 and died in 1908. But he fought the colonialists. Therefore, we the Paramount Chiefs of this nation have fought and we have given notice to this Parliament that one day some of us will come here to tell you honestly and sincerely with all documentation how Sierra Leone achieved it's Independence.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, how did former President Tejan Kabba succeed in bringing peace into Sierra Leone? I have all the documents with me. Luckily, the Vice-President by then or the Attorney-General who is still alive and some Cabinet Ministers like Dr Prince Harding, Ibrahim Siddique Brima etc., knew the role the chiefs played, particularly the role I played in ending the war. The Nigerian President by then, former President Obasanjo knew all these things. Jeremy Stuck, the representative of Britain to the United Nations came to me twice in this country. So therefore when some of us stand to talk we look at you. The flag-bearer of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP), Maada Bio knows. He met me on the 7th of February, 1996 for me to talk to Foday Sankoh for them to discuss. But by then I had not met him, neither seen him. The only time I came to see him was when Obasanjo in 1996 came to address this Parliament. He was seated next to him Mr Speaker. President Tejan Kabbah knows what I did. We talked about Foday Sankoh. Those of you who are mathematicians know what a composite function is. We know those who contributed to the war. We know those who started and we also know the real Foday Sankohs. I can name them because I know them. He was a composite function of those who opposed and overthrew the APC.

When the peace process started, I played an important role at Bintumani. I can never go and overthrow my Government.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when the rebel war hit Kailahun, most of the people ran away to Kono. They were allowed to stay at the airport at Yengema. They ran away on the 23rd October, 1992 and came to Masingbi. They were well treated. Before Kono was combed, the Second Brigade Office was moved to my house in Masingbi by Honourable Kess Boya. I gave him my father's room to stay. The only thing I told him was that he should not drink or smoke in my father's room (*Laughter*). Honourable Kess Boya stayed in my father's room with Colonel Mansaray until Kono was properly combed. After that, the Deputy Chairman of the NPRC at that time, Brigadier Julius Maada Bio went to me with some of his friends to thank me for the way we kept the people of Kailahun and Kono Districts. They gave me Le20 million. That was in 1993. I will swear to my prayers that I told them that I would not accept the money. I said what I did was my personal contribution to this country. Maada Bio can testify to that. Julius Maada Bio, the leader of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) knows me very well. We have people in this House who know what I have just said. That is why I am saying it today in public. Some of you are saying that I am an APC Member of Parliament. I am a Sierra Leonean. If APC is doing well, I have to say it in public. When the SLPP was doing well, I said it also. Maada Bio and I are very close friends and he did everything to bring Peace into Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the UN representative to Sierra Leone at that time, Mr Adenaji called me and said: "*Chief, I am now getting information from New York and please let it be a Sierra Leonean issue.*" And he was giving information to President Ahmed Tejan Kabba at that time. He also sent to the Attorney General at that time, Mr Solomon E. Berewa to tell me not to give information anymore to UNAMSIL, but rather to pass it to him so that he would pass it to UNAMSIL. I did that for this Nation. I am coming from a humble home. I have records of my great grandfathers meeting with the first Europeans in 1625. I never wanted to be a chief. I came to visit my father on the 15th March, 1987 and he passed away on the 5th April, 1987. People said your father

was a good chief. I did not give anybody money. They said your father was a good chief and so they gave me the Chieftaincy.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we the Paramount Chiefs have played and are still playing pivotal roles in the development of this country. The then NPRC Deputy Chairman, Julius Maada Bio went to my chieftom with Dr Alusine Fofanah and Komba Kambo. On that day, we gave them a rousing welcome. After that, he offered us Le20 million for our hospitality. When the Kono and Kailahun people came, they supplied them Bulgur. They took the bulgur to me with the late retired Colonel A. O. Kamara. He was then the Secretary of Internal Affairs. I told them that that was my contribution to this nation. I did not want someone to say I was cooperating with him to consume the monies of this nation. I did not take a cent from them. At that time, the current Attorney General, Mr Frank Kargbo went with them. These are witnesses to what I am saying here today to the people of this nation. Mr Frank Kargbo was also there when I declined taking the money. And if I enter Kono today, there is no village in that part of the country that will not dance for me. I am challenging Honourable Koedoyoma on that. They will dance for what I did for them. They are my people. I grew up in Jaiama Sɛwafɛ. I am not a tribalistic Chief at all. I am not a regionalist. I have over fifty to sixty acres of land in Kono District. I am currently mining in Kono District. Go to my house I will show you all the licenses (*Undertones*).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, people should learn to respect the Chieftaincy in this country. All the Members of Parliament in this House that come from the provinces one way or the other claim to be sons and daughters of Paramount Chiefs. I want to see the Honourable Member that comes from the provinces and does not have any connection to the Chieftaincy house of this country. Let him/her put up his/her hand. If there is no hand up, why do you disrespect Paramount Chiefs? I want to see anybody here who will say I don't belong to a Chieftaincy house in my district or chieftom. All of you claim to be sons and daughters of Paramount Chiefs. Why don't you respect the Paramount Chiefs? I have been a Paramount Chief since 1988, so was my father, grandfather and

great grandfathers. I am the fourteenth in line that have succeeded being a Paramount Chief in my family.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Paramount Chiefs of Sierra Leone, whether they like Ernest Bai Koroma or not they know he has given them the highest respect ever in the history of this country. Whenever the President wishes to travel to any part of this country, he will call the Paramount Chiefs from all the Chiefdoms. If the President was going to Tonkolili District, every Paramount chief in Tonkolili and his Chiefdom should give one cow plus three hundred to five hundred thousand Leones. That was the normal practice. Mr Speaker, whenever the President's plan to travel to any part of the country, the District Officers and Permanent Secretaries would write to inform us of his visit. They would ask each chiefdom to give a cow plus three hundred to five hundred thousand Leones. I have the letters to support what I am saying.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was surprised to learn that President Ernest Bai Koroma is not asking for anything whenever he travels to the provinces. He will be the one to feed us instead of the other way round. We don't contribute anything for him Mr Speaker. I will challenge any Paramount Chief of Sierra Leone that will claim otherwise. We use to cook for President's entourage, including the people that we take with us to welcome the President. Today it is the reverse Mr Speaker. That tradition has been abolished by President Ernest Bai Koroma.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President do give tokens to all the Paramount Chiefs that will go to see him. He does the same to those that lied against him during the elections. I will challenge any chief here who will say no, he has never done that. He does it every time he meets with the Chiefs. He is currently in Bo. By the time he leaves Bo, the Chiefs will be laughing (*laughter*).

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, when President Tejan Kabbah was going to Masingbi, I had to take the burden of providing for him. This President is doing everything to uphold the tenets of Chieftaincy in this country. We salute him for that... - (*Interruption*).

HON. KOMBA E. KOEDOYOMA: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise on S. O. 32 (5) and to remind the Paramount Chief from Tonkolili that his contribution should be within the framework of what we are discussing here. I am saying this Mr Speaker because we think that the Honourable Paramount Chief is going out of context and he should please... - *(Interruption)*.

THE SPEAKER: Excuse me Honourable Member from Kono. Don't you seriously think you are usurping functions which do not belong to you? Honourable Paramount Chief, please continue *(Applause)*.

HON. P. C. BAI KURR KANAGBARO SANKA III: Thank you Mr Speaker. I am sure this debate is on the radio and television. I am calling names in order to prove that I am saying the truth. And there are prominent people in this country that can challenge what I am saying, if they think am lying. The role the Chiefs have played, including myself is great for this nation.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, I was among the delegates that went to Abuja to finally sign the Cease-fire Agreement. At first, they wanted to go without me. But Jonathan Kposowa, who was among the delegates said he would not go until they take me along. I brought peace in this country with them. They had to send a plane to pick me up with Kelly Conteh and the retired Brigadier Dumbuya. When we went to Abuja, I changed the Agenda of the Programme. The United Nations representatives were all there. The American Ambassador in Nigeria, the British, the French and the German representatives were all there, including the leader of the delegation, Mr Solomon E. Berewa. Joe Blair was there as the High Commissioner at that time. I changed the dynamics in that hall and we sat there until 3:00 a.m. before we came to conclusion. I told everybody that we would not leave the Hall until we sign the Cease-fire Agreement. That I did for this nation and my colleagues Paramount Chiefs from Sierra Leone encouraged me to go and speak on their behalf. Our former Vice-President and flag bearer for the SLPP was there. He was the leader of the delegation but I took the negotiations in Abuja.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, we are grateful to His Excellency for giving respect to Chiefs of this nation. When he came to power in 2007, he invited all the Paramount Chiefs to State House. Everybody was afraid. Those who were afraid were the ones who did not open their doors for him during the campaign. Some of them did not allow their Court-Barrays to be used for meetings. The youths had to go and brush other areas for the President and his supporters to hold their meetings. Schools were closed. When he called them to State House, they became jittery. When we went there, he spoke well to us. He told us that we are the custodians of people's custom, culture and tradition. He told us that the Paramount Chiefs have over ninety percent of the land mass in Sierra Leone. He said: *"I cannot do anything without your support."* Everyone was amazed. By the time we left, he had prepared a fabulous lunch for us with three hundred thousand Leones each. Every Paramount Chief, including the Regent Chiefs or the representatives that came was catered for. Everybody was surprised. It was a historic moment in Sierra Leone. That is how he has respected the Chiefs. Some Chiefs know this but they could not come out in the open to say it because of the political patronage. They could not say it because their opponents or those who are in political parties will disrespect or boo them. But this is what's going on today. I want to see a Chief in Sierra Leone not only in this noble House that will say when I went to see His Excellency the President; he never received transport from him.

Mr Speaker, Honorable Members, I told him before that we did not support him. All of us (Paramount Chiefs) were supporters of the SLPP party. When you were in power, we supported you. Now that we are supporting this Government why are you so angry with us? And that is the bad thing about politics. I am telling the truth here Mr Speaker. We the Chiefs of Sierra Leone, whether we voted for him or not, know that he is a good leader. Therefore, as long as he is doing well, God will bless him abundantly. In fact, he will be angry with me for sayings these words in public. He does not want people to know about his goodness. And whenever he wants to give us money, he will ensure that all the security men are out of sight. He throws all the Ministers out. He would say, S. O. 2 Mr Speaker; *"Chief, wuna ya transport,"* and everybody will laugh (*Laughter*).

Therefore Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Ernest Bai Koroma has given us the courage to stand up and say the truth. If Chieftaincy comes from the Holy Quran and the Holy Bible, and this young man is respecting Chieftaincy in Sierra Leone, no matter what your political thinking is, no matter what you think of him, he does respect Chieftaincy. God Almighty will respect and honour him abundantly. God will lead him to succeed.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will find an adequate time to tell them how we the Chiefs, including the late Madam Gulama appealed to Foday Sankoh. We told Foday Sankoh, the then RUF Leader to communicate to the Chairman of the NPRC, Maada Bio over the wireless phone set by the Nigerians. He agreed and on that day, negotiations were done and we agreed for immediate cease-fire, starting from 5:00 p.m. He also agreed to meet with him in Ivory Coast. We called the then Chairman and he spoke with Foday Sankoh. His face was smeared with smiles. Julius Maada Bio went to Masingbi with Tom Nyuma to visit me.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to say to the men and women in this Parliament that when Mr Maada Bio went to my Chieftaincy to campaign, I gave him my room to be used for his campaign. He sat where the Chiefs used to sit because he is the son of a Chief. We the Chiefs are your parents. If you have done something wrong, we will tell you that you are wrong. We commend people who are doing the right thing. Dr Ernest Bai Koroma is doing the right thing. Therefore, we will defend him against all evils. No weapon will be used against him in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Chiefs should be respected in this country. I will one day bring documents here that will prove that I played a pivotal role in bringing peace in Sierra Leone. The BBC Reporter told me to write a book but I declined. I said that is my contribution to this country. I am particularly saying these things to those that think the Paramount Chiefs are swinging. We are not swinging at all. Everybody wants a better place and a better Sierra Leone. If we have got a leader who is thinking for the development of this country, why should we shy to support him? If we do that,

we will be called hypocrites and we are not hypocrites. I am not a charlatan. We will give all support to the achiever. And Ernest Bai Koroma has achieved. Therefore, we have to salute him and say bravo. May God bless him. May he govern and leave a legacy that everybody will follow. He brought awareness to all political parties, political thinkers and to all future philosophers that Sierra Leone must be a developed nation and that leadership must come from the Head of State and must bring development into this country. That is the awareness he has brought in this country. That is the challenge he has brought to us. He does not live on intentions. He lives on actions. There are bills that are now being passed and most of the Projects are being implemented. They have been approved since 2003 and nothing was done. Therefore, he is the world best. I thank you very much Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, I hope that we will all consider the contributions of the last Speaker as unique. I had a short meeting with the Leadership of Parliament in my room this morning. I hope the Majority and Minority Leaders will indicate to their respective party contributors to adhere to what we agreed upon this morning.

HON. HELEN KUYEMBEH: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to thank His Excellency the President for a Speech so graciously delivered to this Parliament on the 14th December, 2012. I must quickly mention that I was impressed that His Excellency reaffirmed his commitment to serving this nation and quickly catalogued what he has done or what he did in the past five years during his tenure of office. He has laid out many promises and plans he intends to implement in the next five years.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, permit me to recall that His Excellency did present to this House a Presidential Address in 2007. I am not sure most Members have it here today and I do apologise for that. But permit me to make reference to this Speech. In this Presidential Address, the President did make a lot of promises to this nation which I believe he recognises as much as we all do that they are policy statements that are very important to this nation. There were lots of sectors mentioned in this Address but I

will just quickly look at three areas like Health and Sanitation, Education and Agriculture. In that Speech and in his subsequent speeches, the President did promise that he was going to revamp the Guma Dam. He said he was going to have it restructured so that clean drinking water would be provided to this city. He also said that he was going to instruct SALWACO to rehabilitate all water processing plants in the country. Some of us will recalled that some of these shiny structures which were built in those days that are considered water-processing plants are still existing as white elephants in this country. The President did mention that he was going to rehabilitate them from Donor Funds. He also promised that he will improve the water system in the rural areas.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President said that he was going to ensure that water wells that had already been dug under projects (like the wells that have been dug under the SLPP) were going to be enhanced and improved upon. Now, when we go to what His Excellency told us in this current Speech for which I am thanking him, we will clearly see that he did not follow through on those particular promises. Guma Valley Water Company is still weak. And you will agree with me because we all live in Freetown. At least at one given point in time we might go to the provinces but we all live here. Drinking water is a problem in this city. It is very sad to say Mr Speaker. I would really implore His Excellency the President to take a walk or take a ride around the city to see for himself how our people are suffering. The kids and young adults ply the streets of Freetown in search of water. That tells you that the promise the President made is not fulfilled.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President promised to rehabilitate the Water Processing Plant in the rural areas. We are yet to see that happen. For instance, in my constituency, Constituency 075 in Bo District, we have a huge Water Tank there. It has been there for years. That tank was badly damaged and there has been no effort to rehabilitate it. As a result of this, there is no pipe borne water in that community for many years.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in 2007, he said that he was going to present to this nation a free and compulsory education. That is not happening at all. On the other hand, when he took over, there was a free-girl-child education policy. That policy has been killed by this Government. Mr Speaker, the reference to the Free and Compulsory Education is in this document and I would implore you to take a look at it.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, can you please let us know what document you are referring to?

HON. HELEN KUYEMBEH: Mr Speaker I am referring to the Presidential Address of the State Opening of the Third Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone, presented to this House on Friday, 5th October, 2007.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. That is all I wanted to know.

HON. HELEN KUYEMBEH: If I am allowed to continue Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President also promised this nation that he was going to provide Agricultural input, tools and materials to local farmers to enhance productivity. He also said that he was going to provide extension facilities in the District Headquarter Towns to provide Agricultural support to our local farmers. Mr Speaker, may I quickly tell this House that credit will be given where credit is due. And indeed I am going to give credit to His Excellency with whatever I believe and I have seen with my eyes that he did. In it is indeed true that Agricultural inputs were provided but not across the country. In my Constituency for instance, we have never benefitted from any of that. We have... -
(Interruption).

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Members, apart from anything, courtesy demands that we accord some degree of decorum to colleague Members of Parliament when they are making their contributions. You may not agree with what is being said, but you may have the chance to refute statements you disagree with. May I appeal that we listen carefully to what is being said.

HON. HELEN KUYEMBEH: Thank you Mr Speaker. Having said that, I want to categorically state here that some of the promises His Excellency made are not followed at all. I will go back to the Speech presented to this House on the 14th December, 2012.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Speech made by His Excellency the President is a reiteration of the promises made in 2007. Let me tell this House that drinking water in this country is becoming a calamity, particularly in this city. It is sad as I tell you earlier, that weensy kids that are supposed to be in schools, that are supposed to be studying or having their rest at home are plying the streets of Freetown just to get water. And yet we wonder why the educational levels are dropping. This is because these kids, rather than spending 90% of their time studying are around the streets of Freetown in search of water. Mr Speaker, initially, the President organised and set up a task force to immediately address the issue of street trading. I applauded the President for that bold move. But I am of the opinion that drinking water is very vital to the very existence and health of every nation. Therefore, the water issue should be given the same importance and the President should set up a Task Force in his Office to ensure that the issue of safe drinking water is taken care of in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, under Education, I would also like to let the President know that education is going down the drain slowly. It suffices it to say that we really have a lot of work to do. It is a sad to note that Fourah Bay College, which used to be the *"Athens of Education in Africa,"* is now called the *"Ashes of Education in West African."* It is a disgrace, particularly to some of us who claim to have gone through that Institution. It is a shame. Added to that, I will say that the entire educational system in this country, starting from the primary schools to the universities is almost decaying. The educational system has to be revamped so that we can boast of quality education in this country. Schools have been built all over the country but there are places, particularly in the rural areas where there are dilapidated schools that need to be renovated and staffed. Most of these schools are deathtraps. We have kids sitting in these schools. If the wind blows, the roofs will be blown off. Those schools should be rehabilitated and probably build more schools. Also, access to quality educational

materials, particularly curriculum and other resources that will enhance the quality of teaching are required. Added to that, we should look at our teachers.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, you will agree with me that most of us sitting in here have colleagues that sat in classrooms. The teachers' standard of living is far below what you can describe as befitting. And how do we expect our teachers to perform and give their best when we do not pay attention to them. We are not attracting quality teachers in this country. We are not motivating them. And therefore, we cannot talk about retention. We need to focus on the teachers if we want quality service from the teachers. If it pleases His Excellency and Members of this House, there are ways we could help to improve the conditions of our teachers. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Finance should come together and create soft loan scheme for these teachers. Their salaries are very minimal as compared to their colleagues whom they went to school with who are in the Ministry of Finance or in the public or private sectors. They are earning more money and are driving luxurious cars. These teachers are languishing in the classrooms and yet we are depending on them. We are depending on the teachers to educate our children. How could you be so unfair to allow those people to live miserably? We should not be oblivious of the fact that these teachers went through the same rigors that those living comfortably went through. And yet we complain that our education system is poor. The other side of that is that, we should pay attention in sensitising parents. In some developing countries, Parents' involvement is key and vital in children's education. We all know the adage that says: "*parents are the first teachers of their children.*" And indeed, they are the first teachers of their children. Therefore, this Government and this Honourable House should ensure that parents are sensitised to some point and if given the opportunity to be involved in their children's education. The parents should not only be going to Meetings. There are other activities they should be included in. They should be involved in the Curriculum of the schools. There are educated parents in this country. We have educated adults out there who have the knowledge and the expertise and who could

contribute towards the improvement of the curriculum. I know they will give support that would help our children in their education.

Mr Speaker, Honourable members, I want to talk about agriculture. I would ask the President to please decentralise Agriculture to the chiefdom level. I know we do have decentralised agriculture at the district level and in District Headquarter towns. But it would help us and will help our people out there a lot if Agriculture is decentralised to the chiefdom levels. Thereby, people in the rural areas would be able to access these materials that were provided but never got to their right destinations. But if we have extension offices at chiefdom levels, the work of the Ministry of Agriculture will be lessened. We have qualified people that will be assigned to those offices and the purpose of them is to support the agricultural sector. I believe if this has been done, the materials would have got to the targeted group. I also request that we consider going back to history by opening agricultural nurseries at chiefdom level. This is because what that does is that, it gives opportunity to our farmers. Farmers will not have to travel long distances to go to the district headquarter towns to pick up materials or seedlings they may need. The nurseries will be there to do that work for our farmers. I grew up in Pujehun and this is what I saw happening there. I visited the nurseries. There were nurseries that had everything. And in those days, I believe some people in this House, particularly those coming from Pujehun District would agree with me that agriculture was doing very well at that time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, having said that, let me quickly refer to a conference that His Excellency the President launched in this country. This is the document under reference. His Excellency the President called on this nation, people from different spheres of life to participate in putting this document together in January, 2012. The purpose of this Conference according to this document was to have brains in this country

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, what is the title of this document?

HON. HELEN KUYEMBEH: It is a *"Report on the Sierra Leone Conference on Development and Transformation: Chatting the way forward."* This was meant to chat the way forward to the development and transformation of this country. People came together to put this document together. I am sure a lot of money was spent in organising this Conference and documenting this Report together. However, it amazes me that His Excellency did not mention or reference this Conference or what was the outcome of this Conference in his Address to this House. And the reason why it amazes me is because the purpose of this Conference was to chat the way forward by way of transforming this country to a middle income country in the next twenty-thirty five years. And if that was so important that that Conference had to be held and key recommendations which are in line with the promises the President made to us since 2007 were unearthed, I would imagine that it would have been proper to give credit to where credit is due so that this country would benefit by the recommendations that were made by this Conference.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this brings me to the much talked about Agenda for Prosperity. Mr Speaker, we went through the Agenda for Change from 2007 to 2012. As much as I do know in the circles of development, change is not just a static event. It transcends and keeps moving. If this House would tell me or His Excellency wants to let us believe that this country went through changes from 2007 to 2012 and has accomplished everything and we should move on to Prosperity, I am very surprised. Let us define Prosperity in its simplest term. Prosperity is a state of affairs. It is not an effect. It is a situation or state of affairs when the country is thriving and flourishing with abundant and successful social status. I want us to look at ourselves in this House and examine whether this description befits this country. It is not Mr Speaker *(Laughter)*.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like I said earlier, I will give credit to where credit is due. And I stand here to say that His Excellency and his Government from 2007 to 2012 did work very hard. They did made changes like my learned friend said yesterday. He said change is how you define it. It can be positive or negative. But whatever change it

is, changes did happen from 2007 to 2012. What I am contesting is the fact that I would not look at Honourable Members' faces and the people of this nation and say we have changed so quickly in five years. This Government is portraying this country as having quickly emerged from the dark within five years and transformed to a point where we will be saying that we are on the road to prosperity. This makes me wonder whether we are really applying the definition of Prosperity to our current position in this country. The President did mention something about Poverty Reduction. But let me tell you that poverty has not reduced in any shape or form. As a matter of fact, it has been intensified greatly. We talked about the health sector and that, we are making gains. Yes we are making gains because we have built the structures. We have built medical centres all over the country. But the question is, of what use are these medical facilities to us if we cannot take care of the very fabric that causes us to go to the hospitals? We cannot provide safe drinking water in this country. We cannot provide a safe environment for our existence. The city is filthy with thrash all over the place and that brings illness. Therefore, if you cannot take care of that, why are you wasting your time to build health facilities when at the end of the day those health facilities cannot even cater for the number of patients going to those health centres? Mr Speaker, you will agree with me that people go to the hospital today and the next day they become sick again. We are not taking care of the health sector. Let us go back to the beginning and take care of health and sanitation. If we want to be healthy and stop the outbreak of cholera and water borne diseases, we have to keep our city clean. We will be saving a lot of money than building more medical centres.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I wish to draw the attention of this House that previous Governments have worked very hard for this country. And like I said, the APC Government has played their part. Development is a continuous process. We build on existing structures and possibilities. When you get to governance, you play your own part and do the best you can. I give them credit like all other Governments have done. What I want to say is that, my constituents will not listen to me if I say we are on the road to prosperity. We are still in the period of transformation. We are still changing

and we are transforming. We have many things to take care of in order to get to prosperity.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, once more I thank His Excellency the President for his Speech. I thank Members of Parliament for all the deliberations for the past couple of days. I thank everybody for bringing out the issues that need to be brought out for the attention of the President. I think we have informed the President that it is not all rosy. There are problems and those problems need to be taken care of. I thank you *(Applause)*.

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH (*Deputy Speaker of the House*): I thank you very much Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am sure it would have been very sad if my voice is not heard in this Well before the closure of this debate, especially so when those on the other side know very well that they have already lost the debate. The public has judged and I am sure they have been listening. It is the public that we are talking to.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, like others, particularly so like the last Speaker, I would start by congratulating His Excellency the President for the Address he so graciously delivered in this Well. I will be very brief in my intervention. I know that it is very difficult to distract me when I am speaking. And I will follow the queue of those who listen before they talk. I am sure all of us will agree that we are here debating the Presidential Address and not the APC Address. The President spoke to the nation and he was not talking to Members of the APC.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to start with the Justice System. The Honourable Member from Bo attempted to talk briefly on the bad sides of the justice system in this country. He did not talk about the good side of the justice system. It is a fact that during the past five years, a lot of strides have been made and a lot of improvements have been made in our Justice System. I want to inform the Honourable Member from Bo that he is undergoing trials because we have a Justice System. In the past, you would have been convicted for what you have just said. You would have

found yourself somewhere else...- (*Interruption*). Mr Speaker, with your permission I want to take Honourable Members to Page 1, Paragraph 1. His Excellency the President said: *"I thank every citizen of this nation for the confidence reposed in me and my party, the All Peoples Congress to take this country to another level."*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is true that the President is taking this country to another level. The last five years of APC governance was successful. The President has all justifications to say that he wants to take this country to another level. My colleague who last spoke talked about water. I will not dwell in detail on that but we now know that we now have a Ministry that is responsible for water in this country. This is an indication of how sincere this President is. It shows how honest the President is to the people of this country. Also, the President did not say that he was going to expand the Guma Dam in 2007. He said he was going to build on the Guma Dam. And it is a fact that indeed the Guma Dam has been improved. That is why more people are benefitting from that Dam as compared to 2007.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Honourable Koedoyoma comes from the Eastern part of this country. He knows that something is happening right now in the Eastern Province when it comes to water. My colleague from the Marampa Mines did attempt to respond to the statement of my Honourable from Moyamba that for you to get a job you need to have some surnames. She made mention of the Kamaras, Sesays or Banguras etc. The Honourable Member is not saying the truth at all. We all know that during the last Parliament, we did pass the National Mineral Agency Act into law. We know the premium we put on the National Mineral Agency. The Director-General of that Mineral Agency was approved by this very House for the job because he is a Sierra Leonean and not because of his surname. The name of the man is Sahr Wonday. Is he a Bangura or Kamara? He applied with other Sierra Leoneans and he secured the job on merit. That is what this Government is doing. We give people jobs because they deserve the jobs. It is not like in those days when it used to be something totally different.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the opposition party always talks about change. The Leader of this Honourable House always says: "to thyself be true." My mum, the Minority Leader of this House knows that she benefitted from the Agenda for Change. She knows that. She was able to change her vehicle to a better one. We have to be true to ourselves.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a lot has been said about human rights. During the last Presidential Address, I talked about Press Freedom and it was discussed here. It became an issue but it was a fact. The Press is free today to write or say what they want to write or say. Politicians are free today. Do we have political prisoners? The answer is no. Honourable Foday Rado Yokie knows that he is on trial, but not on trial for political crime. You are on trial for things you know better than I do.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my colleague from Constituency 001 is not here today. I am sure she is not here because she is still in the wilderness. Honourable Alice Foyah has always been in wonderland. I am sure that you will take this message to her. Unlike what she said about the people of Kailahun, the women of Kailahun are happy with His Excellency the President. I want you to take this message to her. Check the increase in votes for the APC from Kailahun District. I want you to compare what we got in 2007 to what the President got in 2012. If they were not happy with the APC and the President, it would have been the reverse. Instead of the deficit my colleague spoke about yesterday, it has been plus for the APC. These are not S. O. 2 'banya fakis,' they are banya reyalitis.' From 5% to 22% is a huge increase Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank the Honourable the Deputy Minority Leader from Pujehun District. He spoke like a Leader. He said the President delivered his Address from the bottom of his heart. That is true. That is what distinguishes intentions from actions. That is a clear distinction Mr Speaker. We have to be saying things we mean. We should stop saying things we don't mean. The President spoke in 2007 when he addressed this House. And most of what he said has been delivered because he meant what he said.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my fellow Edwardian was talking about Proportional Representation. I wondered why most of them are not here today. The Leader of this House will respond to them copiously. We might want to consider the PR System in the future. But I was asking myself a question yesterday. Does it mean that my colleague was advocating for the PR System because that is the only system they think they will use to come back? We want to face our electorate. We want to let them know who is representing them. No more ballot stuffing in this country. The President is sincere to the people of Sierra Leone. And that is why he came out to face his electorate. We are facing our constituents. We want them to know who is representing them. I am here representing Constituency 110. My constituents will have direct access to me. Under the PR System, some people were enjoying freedom from not meeting with their representatives. I am representing Freetown and not representing myself. Therefore, we have to discuss the details of this in a more descent version. But we are definitely not going back to the PR System.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am happy that the Minority Leader is an expert in the field of Agriculture. We have had a lot about innovations, ideas and strategies to ensure that our Agricultural base grows from where it is today. We will encourage her to assist the wider group with her expertise. We invited you for the Conference my colleague referred to just now, but you refused to attend. We want all hands on deck. Everybody was invited. The President mentioned collaboration in his Speech. Mr Speaker with your leave I will read from Page 1: *"I once again with faith in God, loyalty to the Constitution, and firm commitment to the achievement of our National aspirations..."* The paragraph shows that he wants to work with each and every citizen of this nation. That is where I appreciated Honourable Kuyembeh's intervention. She proffered solutions to almost all the issues she raised. She spoke like a true Sierra Leonean. I hope she will continue in that spirit (*Applause*).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I do not want to dwell on those who were criticising or crying down the essence of the New Airport. That was selfish for them to criticise such development. Somebody was comparing the construction of the road leading to

Liberia as against the value and advantages of having a new Airport. That is a fact. It is always good to say thank you for good work. Why are we refusing to thank him for the good things he has done for this nation? Are we challenging the good advice of the former President, Dr Tejan Kabbah? He has asked us to keep away from 'bad hearts.' Why are we continuing to practice that?

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is only people who are thankful that will receive thanks from others. If you fail to say thanks to others, it will be very difficult for you to grow. The Honourable Member from Bombali District talked about democracy yesterday. He tried to educate us about good governance. For some of us who listened yesterday learnt a lot. I know that some of you listened but did not understand what he was talking about. But some of us listened attentively but refused to accept the reality. It is true that you might have eyes but you cannot see. This is because you refused to see spiritually.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was the last Chairman of the Mines and Minerals Committee. The Minority Leader was a member of that Committee. Mr Speaker, with your leave I will read Page 10, Paragraph 46 of the Presidential Address: *"There has never been so much interest in our natural resources as at this time. There has never been so many investments as at this time. There has never been as much possibility of positive transformation as at this time, Positive transformation. My Second Term will be dedicated towards enhancing the capacity of Sierra Leoneans to become the biggest drivers and beneficiaries of this transformation."* Those of us who were here during the last Parliament will attest to that fact. The President did say he was going to review Mining Agreement. What he said came to reality. We did review Agreements and today, this country is being applauded internationally. We reviewed the Koidu Holdings Agreement and the people of Kono have started getting the benefit. London Mining Agreement was also reviewed. The people of Marampa are happy today. President always lives up to his promises. He did not say things he does not want to do. All what he said are things from his heart. And he has been ensuring that all what he is coming up with are things that will benefit Sierra Leone and Sierra Leoneans.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President talked about discipline during his last Address in 2012. He mentioned Operation WID. My colleagues on the other side used to talk about Abacha Street. The Abacha Street traders are our supporters and they still support us. Somebody said we never wanted to take them out of the Streets because they are our voters. Now, they are out of Abacha Street but they are still supporting us. I want to assure you that they are still with us and they will continue to support us. Now that they are out of Abacha Street, the SLPP are playing cat and mouse. You want to create an impression as if you are in sympathy with them. They will never listen to you. They are still supporting us. They will never listen to you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will not talk about the roads because the Leader of this House will dilate on that. But we all know that the Mining Industry is now transparent than six to seven years ago. You have seen the level to which we took the AITI. The Honourable Koedoyoma from Kono District is a member of the Mines and Minerals Committee. I am sure you will be in a better position to tell those who do not want to accept the reality that the Mining Industry under President Ernest Bai Koroma is more transparent than what used to happen before 2007.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minority Whip is not here today. I want to thank him for being true to himself. He was part of the infrastructural transformation and it would have been not good of him to say things which are not true. He spoke well. All what he said is nothing but the truth. The issues he talked about are issues we can see and feel. He was talking about the road leading to Bo and the Peninsular or Wilkinson Road. These are facts Mr Speaker. Honourable Rogers from Pujehun knows that what his senior colleague from Pujehun District was saying is a fact. He has always been his campaign manager. It would have been something else if he had failed to praise the President for things which are real and of which he was part of.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Honourable from Taiama spoke about women of this country yesterday. She said the women of Sierra Leone are not happy. That was what she said. She is not here again today. But we know that the voting population was

51% and it is from the women and if the women were not happy unlike today, they would not have voted President Koroma. The women voted for him massively Mr Speaker. It is a sign to confirm that they are happy with what he has done and what he is doing.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is a shame that we are criticising the Free Health Care Programme. It is a shame. We are not saying that the Free Health Care Programme is perfect. We are not from Koribondo. But the President's initiative has been applauded all over the world. Everybody applauded the Free Health Care Programme. The infant mortality rate in the country is far below what it used to be before 2007. I know my colleague from Bo will agree with me that 80% is an excellent percentage. You are not expecting 100%. The President has scored more than 80%. This means that he has done an excellent work.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the last speaker did make reference to the 2007 Address of His Excellency the President. She spoke very well. I will not go into the details of that but I will just want to guide this House and bring in some of the issues contained in that Speech. With the leave of Mr Speaker, I want to look at Page 12, Paragraph 61. The President said: *"Among other things, I will be working assiduously to increase access to primary and secondary education."* Those were his words and indeed he achieved what he has said. He spoke about education. He also made mention of the subventions that were increased. He compared it from 2007 to 2012 when he was leaving. The gap was huge. I want to inform this House that I am not a realist, but an extra realist. With your leave, I want to read Page 13. He said: *"when we took over governance in 2007, Government Subvention to the University of Sierra Leone was Le9bn today it is Le38bn. We had increased subvention to Njala University from Le8bn in 2007 to Le26bn today."* These are facts. It is our responsibility to ensure that value for money is achieved. The President has been moving towards that direction. That is why he has vowed to support Oversight functions of this House.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will end with the much talked about boycott. I heard undertones from Honourable Members from the other side of the House saying that most of the Honourable Members of the APC were also boycotted. I am sure they were joking. Honourable Yapoh Conteh and others never contested the elections. We never gave them symbols in the first place. They did not contest at all Mr Speaker. Honourable Tamba Sam was boycotted by his own people. He secured the SLPP Symbol but failed to win the elections. Honourable Tamba Sam is a friend of mine. He was boycotted by his people. Honourable Yapoh Conteh never contested the elections. But Honourable Emmanuel Tommy and Honourable Philip Tondoneh were all boycotted. Therefore, I am encouraging you, especially the new Honourable Members not to allow themselves to be taken to the wrong lane. Follow the right path. Honourable Helen Kuyembah has started very well. I encourage her to continue with this pace. I thank you very much (*Applause*).

HON. ANDREW V. LUNGAY: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it gratifies me to be here once more to this wonderful House. I was here in 2002 to 2007. I am Honourable Andrew Victor Lungay, former Presidential Candidate of the SDP Party. Actually, it is not the winning in the Olympic Game that matters. It is a matter of taking part. I did write in the visitor's book in the Library that I will be coming back. And certainly, here I am. This was actually a notice to the person that actually got the symbol from me in Constituency 012, Kenema District.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I stand here to thank my constituents for sending me back to this Honourable House. They have realised that the five years I was away on political sabbatical, they lost the quality representation that I gave them. But notwithstanding that, my constituents voted me with all the threats and challenges that they faced by some big men who were Ministers in the APC Government, including Mohamed Moiwo Makaya. I had 80% votes during the election.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was surprised when the Deputy Speaker said that we have already lost the Debate. I was very surprised. I have not yet spoken. My leader

has not spoken yet, the Deputy Speaker jumped into premature conclusion. The majority Leader of this House was my junior at the St. Edwards Secondary School. He dreaded me through the corridors of the school. They all feared me. But I was just a sleeping giant. I treated all the junior boys with courtesy and respect. As I said earlier, I will not take too much time here because a lot has already been said. I must confess that we have had a quality debates from Honourable Members, including the Paramount Chief that contributed to the attainment of peace in this country. The quality of these debates is absolutely high. This is a manifestation of our democracy which we got from the nationalists like Dr Sir Milton Margai, Dr Siaka P. Stevens, Dr Tejan Kabba and Julius Maada Bio. I have taken my time to mention these names because in the history of this nation, all of them have contributed to what we have today.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I now come to the present President of the Republic of Sierra Leone. I will not call him a Messiah. That will be blasphemous. It will interest you to note that he is a personal friend of mine. I probably would say that I had the singular honour of inviting him to my village, Vaahun, which I call the Peoples Republic of Vaahun in Kenema District. He honoured my invitation. He came and spent few hours with me in my village. That does not necessarily mean I have got to betray and prostitute my political beliefs. It does not mean that because the President happens to be my friend I should join the APC Party. I will not do that at all. I respect his political ideologies. Therefore, I will expect him to respect mine as well. The friendship will not spoil at all. This time and in this generation, we are privileged to be here to represent our people. There are lots to be done after the war. It was a senseless war (*Applause*). Sierra Leone did not deserve it. I was in London at that time and we played our own part. We were marching at Dawning Street to ensure Britain's involvement in order to get the rebels out of the city.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it hurts me to hear Honourable Members glorifying whatever may have happened at that time. It was unfortunate for the citizens both at home and abroad. I think the rebel war in Sierra Leone history had been the most gruesome war this country has ever experienced. What actually peeved most of us in

Britain was when we saw a child on the television with two hands amputated. My daughters came to me and said dad, you people from Sierra Leone are too wicked. A small baby has been amputated. What did the baby do? I was ashamed. When I was addressing the nation at Bintumani Two, I lined up all the amputees. They faced the diplomats who were there and the Paramount Chiefs. I asked them a rhetorical question thus: *"Would you really want any of your children to look like these children?"* Every young girl would want to powder her face and not even mentioning the question of taking care of herself before she goes out.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I asked them directly that question. I asked the then British High Commissioner to Sierra Leone. Anyway, the answer was obvious. Why I asked those questions was that as a political leader, I was the only one that deviated from the majority views of election before peace. I wanted peace before elections. Any other person who would have attempted to mention that would have been booed at. But I stood there and addressed this nation. I said I wanted peace before elections. But notwithstanding Mr Speaker, we did have elections before peace because I came from London to take part in that election. One funny thing happened to me. Foday Sankoh had vowed and promised that he would kidnap one of the Presidential candidates and hold him ransom. Unfortunately for me, I was in Kenema District, campaigning along side with Honourable Edward Turay, the former APC Leader of this House. By the time I finished talking with the students in Kenema, the helicopter had gone. I was stuck in Kenema and I was very scared. All the other political leaders were in Freetown.

Suspension of s. o. 5(2), being 12:00 p.m. for lunch.

HON. ANDREW V. LUNGAY: Mr Speaker, I was not at the airfield in Kenema on time. I missed the helicopter flight. I went back to my house very worried. The next day, we went to vote. The Foday Sankoh's threat was lingering in my mind. I was the only leader left in the provinces. I hid under my brother's bed. Around 5:00 a.m. in the morning, I started hearing gunshots everywhere. The soldiers did not want us to have that election at all. Therefore, they started firing all over the place. An old man called

Pa Alpha went to ease himself; and one of the Military boys saw him and said, S. O. 2 Mr Speaker, "*Luk di Pa yanda,*" (Look at the old man over there). When I heard that, I thought they were looking for me. I jumped under the bed where they have not swept for almost fifteen years or more. I lied under the bed belly-wise, squeezing. The military boys killed nine people in Kenema. I saw the corpses in the Kenema Government Hospital. To summarise, I came down to Freetown after the election. Tejan Kabbah won the elections and was sworn in as President of the Republic of Sierra Leone. I cautioned him when I went to take leave of him for me to go back to London for medical treatment. I told the President not to trust these military boys. I told him to watch his back. When the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) attempted to overthrow him, I reminded him of what I told him before I left for London. They attempted to take and they took over. But Sierra Leoneans fought very hard. They fought the AFRC/RUF and people sacrificed their lives to get President Tejan Kabbah back to power.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me come to the Presidential Address. All I have said was just a preamble. The Address is very comprehensive. The Speech touches on every facet of life. I have no problem with that. I am very happy about the Mamamah Airport. I have had some privileges because my name is Lungay and we have the Lungi Airport in this country. In London, we have seen the Gold Airport, Kennedy Airport etc. And so, people used to ask me in London whether the Lungi Airport is named after me. I never answered them. In fact, I have had on two or three occasions my ticket upgraded from Economy Class to Business Class simply because of my surname. We are going to have a new International Airport at Mamamah. That Airport might be called President Koroma's International Airport (*Laughter and Undertone*).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am happy and also concerned about this. Those of us in the 40's, 50's and 60's enjoyed the luxury of trains in this country. I enjoyed the luxury of the train that ran from Pendembu to Water Street. From Koidu Town, we would come to Segbwema to get a train to go to Bo and Freetown.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was very much perturbed when the railways were wiped off under President Siaka Stevens' regime during the 70s. I read in this Speech that the contractors for the Mamamah Airport are from China. I will like to appeal to his Excellency to see if they can start feasibility studies in bringing back the railways into this country. There are trains in almost every civilised nation. If you regard yourself as civilised, you have to get a railway network. The next Government will be the SLPP. And we will easily do that. I want His Excellency the President to consider this very much. The accidents on the roads are terrible. A whole family coming from America was wiped off in this country, trying to attend a wedding. These sorts of accidents are happening virtually every now and then. But I think the railway is very safe. The produce of all the companies were transported to Freetown by these trains during the 70s. I am appealing to both sides of this House to lobby for trains to come back to this country. It might not be for us again, but for our children and grandchildren yet unborn.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the criticisms are many about the health sector. A week ago, a 3 year old niece of mine was attacked by cholera. She was taken to the hospital but there were no medicines. We had to pay for the medicines that were given to her. I had to send Le 50, 000 to the hospital for the child to be treated. The child is less than 3 years. Where is the free medical facility? Where is the free health care? I agree that the Free Health Care Programme is working in some places. But it is not working in some places at all. We have to monitor what is going on in the hospitals. I am not saying that the Free Health Care Programme is not good. But those who are managing the system are not honest. This is not right.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want people to know that for prosperity to come, we have to reestablish all those companies that were in this country. Firms like UAC, PZ, GBO, FCOA, CFAO, etc. should come back to this country. Why are they not here? Their being in this country is going to be a sign of prosperity. We should advocate for these companies to come back. Mr Speaker, the present generation is losing a lot. If we establish our own companies, we would make sure they trickle down (*Undertone*). All I am saying is that, Constituency 012 needs good health care, employment and other

facilities. When I was in London, I helped the Conservative Government with the Unemployment Scheme. We had employment training scheme going on. This could be done here. Employment training schemes can be brought in by bringing in job clubs. People who are unemployed will go there to register their names and give their particulars. That will be easier for them to get employed than fighting for themselves.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is a lot to be said. But my Leader will say them so that we will win this debate. I thank you very much.

HON. MATHEW TEAMBO: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am pleased to have the opportunity to make my contribution to this wonderful Speech, delivered to this Honourable House on Friday, 14th December, 2012, by His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank the President for the wonderful delivery of his Speech. It was remarkably delivered. The people of Tonkolili District, especially those in Constituency 062, Mile 91, Yoni Chiefdom appreciate this Speech very much. If I fail to say this, I would be ungrateful. Development doesn't come like the speed of a light. I think we all have to take into consideration the ramifications or the factors that are necessary for development to take place. It is not what we think or what we wish. I think there is a common saying that if all wishes were horses, beggars would ride. It is not the same way with development. I wish we have an utopian society. An utopian society is one which you have everything you wish and everything you want. Paved roads would be everywhere in this country. Light would be in every corner of the country, water will flow everywhere. That is an utopian society. Do we have anything in a real life today? I want to speak on realism or a realistic society.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma has the qualities of a leader. I believe the Speaker would bear me witness. I think when you are doing a contrast, you are presenting the credibility of the evidence. The credibility of the witness plays a very important role. I come to the credibility of our President Dr Ernest Bai Koroma. Mr Speaker, is President Ernest Bai Koroma Credible? If he is credible, why is it difficult for

us to believe what he tells us? Why is it so difficult? Why is it difficult for us to be patient so that certain things will take place? Dr Ernest Bai Koroma has an incredible character. He is disciplined with a strong work ethics. He is approachable, considerate, patient and a production oriented leader. Mr Speaker, I want to say that our President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma is a 99 Leader. It would take us four hours Mr Speaker if I want to go into the details. I want to make this Honourable House a lecture room.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let us consider the inadequacy of the needed natural resources of this country. Do we have enough resources to do all the things that we wish to do in every corner of this country? For the past 4 days, people have been wishing for everything to be readily available. Is the money available to have water supply and paved roads in every corner of Sierra Leone? Do we consider the needed resources to have all those things to happen? The answer is no. Have we ever balanced our budget? Up to this point have we had any balanced budget? If we don't, then, where are we going to get all the needed resources? Let us don't wish but ask where we are going to get the needed resources. We have to make real scale of preference in terms of managing the limited resources in order to accomplish some of the goals that we have set. That is what President Koroma is doing and that's what he has been doing. I believe President Ernest Bai Koroma had wanted to make Sierra Leone a leading nation in the world if he has all the needed resources. I believe the former President of this country; Dr Ahmad Tejan Kabba would have loved Sierra Leone to be like some places in America if he had all the resources needed. But we all know that it will never happen in real terms because we don't have the resources needed to accomplish such wishes.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I also want this Honourable House to also understand the international ramifications. We need to understand the policies of our development partners. Are they just giving us money and say go and do whatever you want to do? Do they just allow us to take any type of loan anywhere around the world? In fact, if we do that, we would damage our economy. It is easy for us to over spend if they left us alone and later destroy our economy and be highly indebted. If we are

highly indebted, our economy will disintegrate. Therefore, our development partners have policies that we have to adhere to. They have guidelines we have to follow. There was an incidence in this House. A particular amount of money was badly needed by Honourable Members. The Minister of Finance and the Bank Governor of Sierra Leone told us to be careful about the IMF and the World Bank. There are certain policies that we cannot circumvent at all. Therefore, what you are asking us to do; perhaps, it would be overthrown by World Bank and IMF. This is because of the policies they have in place to guide smaller countries around the world. It is not only Sierra Leone. Those are the international agencies that have to say Sierra Leone is credible, Sierra Leone is credit worthy because Sierra Leone has taken up to pay its debt, and it has a wonderful international record. That's the only way we can survive. Let us remember those policies.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, as Members of this noble House, we have a responsibility to execute. I want to ask a question Mr Speaker? Have we changed as Honourable Members of this House? Change is a relative term. Every time I hear people talk about change. Mr Speaker, has anyone ever asked what sort of change we are talking about? We have economic and social change. I believe the change would have to take place within this noble House. When that happens, outsiders would definitely change for the better. That was why we were elected. That is one of our responsibilities. And this is the responsibility we have to pass on to the people who elected us to be in this House.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a lot has been said about Free Health Care Programme. There are many malpractices in the health sector. We should not sit down and wait for the Government to go and arrest those people who are undermining the Free Health Care Programme. Let us take things seriously. If I am in a position to discover certain misbehaviours, State House should hear me by calling the police to arrest the person on the spot. That is what I am talking about. That is the responsibility which we have to take as Honourable Members of this House. Don't wait for somebody to come and do it for you. If some malpractices are taking place in your constituency,

you should know that you are in charge. You are the representative of that constituency. You have to work with and within the ambit of the law. If we don't do that, whatever we decide on, or whatever the executive is doing, this country will not move forward. And that blame will end up to us as Members of this House. I want to thank you for your attention.

HON. DR BU-BUAKEI JABBIE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am Dr Bu-Buakie Jabbi, Member of Parliament representing Constituency 008, a Constituency that has been combined. It comprises of four chiefdoms. Mr Speaker, coming towards the end of the debate of the Presidential Address obviously means that much of what one would have wanted to say would have been said by other Honourable Members. Although, probably even better than you might have said it and I am very grateful to some of those Members who have spoken.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would like to begin by saying that we are dealing with proposals. The Presidential Address contains plans and programmes. The Presidential Address does not in any way mean that what the President has said is achieved. Most of the issues in the Address are mere intentions for the next five years. He may not even have intended so. On that note, I think we have to say thanks to His Excellency the President for merely proposing a series of programmes, plans and intended actions on behalf of the people and of the State. For the fact that the President has intended to do something for this country deserves an appreciation and thanks.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I wish to make observations in respect of the situation in Constituency 008, which I think is a representative of many other areas in this country. My constituency is on the far North-Eastern border of this country, it shares boundary with Guinea. This suggests that it is indeed extremely away from the capital city of Freetown. It is of course a rural area and some of the problems in it which I would like to briefly mention could well be true of several other areas of this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one such problem is the road system. We have heard a lot about roads having been constructed as if they cover the whole country. Let me give you a story. When I was going to campaign during the last elections in various areas, one story that was in the air was that the road to Kailahun had been tarred during the first term of His Excellency the President. Indeed, when I travelled to Kailahun District during the campaign, I found the road tarred with S.O. 2 “ᵂᵂᵂ ᵂᵂᵂ.” The ᵂᵂᵂ ᵂᵂᵂ tar that was used forced people to disembark from the vehicle on various occasions because it has to be pushed. And Mr Speaker when one walked through that ‘ᵂᵂᵂ ᵂᵂᵂ’ tar for some distance, I had to be admitted for four days in the hospital.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Constituency 008 comprises of four chiefdoms. One of the chiefdoms is Peje-West Chiefdom. It is the home of one of the best known tertiary institutions in this country; the Bunumbu Teachers College. This institution was relocated as a result of the war. It has developed into the Eastern Polytechnic in Kenema District. But there has always been the expectation that after the war, the institution would have been returned to its former base. That institution has also been a major source of education and development in the Eastern Region, especially in Kailahun District. I am sure the war ended in 2002. Since then, Bunumbu continues to be deprived of its former major tertiary institution. A few months before the elections, His Excellency the President visited Bunumbu and was hosted at the premises of that former tertiary institution. He promised to ensure and speed up the return of Bunumbu Teachers College. I express thanks on behalf of the people of Constituency 008 to His Excellency the President for that visit. I thank him for the promise he made to the people. But those promises have not reflected in terms of reconstruction and development, especially in the area of education. He has made the same promises in this present Address. We hope he will remember those promises and be fulfilled within the tenure of his office. The same applies to the road network in that area. Up to the early 1970s, the area, through which the main road passes from Segbwema to the main mining area, has not been looked at. That road was one of the First Class roads in the country. But from the time the railway was removed around 1972 to now, that road has

been completely neglected and it is even now worst than the worst of the feeder roads in the area.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have seen commitment in this present Address. With your leave Mr Speaker, let us look at Page 5, Paragraph 21. It says: "*we will do more in the next five years and continue, we will continue to expand the pave road network to connect chiefdoms to districts and districts to provincial headquarter towns. We will establish small village and community banks country wide and rehabilitate, construct more feeder roads to link industrial areas to markets.*" Mr Speaker, Constituency 008 is one of the major agricultural areas in this country. But roads in that Constituency have been neglected for so long. It would be a good thing if they could look at these promises that are included in this present Address.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there is an idea related to one programme in this Address. And I would like to draw your attention to it. Let us look at Paragraph 23. It talks about the construction of a new mainland Airport. It is absolutely necessary that a new inland Airport be constructed in Sierra Leone. It is absolutely necessary. The problems of the present International Airport at Lungi, especially in terms of coming to Freetown, the capital city necessitate this consideration. But considering the cost of a new International Airport and considering the ability to pay for the constructions is going to be enormous. There is great inconveniency and discomfort in the capital city over the past few years. I would have thought that the construction of a new mainland Airport should have been centrally located than the proposed site. It may not necessarily be one of the provincial headquarter towns, but at least, an area more centrally located in this country; relatively equidistance from different areas in the country and easy to access from almost all areas. It should also be a place within about 25 mile radius of the capital city. It should at least involve portions of the 3 provincial regions of the country. It should be a capital city located somewhere within a 25 mile radius. Portions of those three provinces can be included. The cost of that should have been taken into account before thinking of the construction of a mainland Airport so that the future problems, some of which have already occurred in Freetown them are

unlikely to be resolved. Those future problems can begin to be planned and taken care of if the mainland Airport is located in a centrally political city. The present capital city can still continue to be an effective commercial city. Indeed, we are seeing this done in other parts of Africa. The nearest example to us is Nigeria, where they had to move from Lagos into inland. It is not for the next year or two, but the very distant future which we need to prepare for. Those who founded Freetown did so for more than 2 centuries ago.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would also want to draw your attention to the issue of boycott as against dialogue which His Excellency the President mentioned in various paragraphs in his Address. In Paragraph 4, there is gracious rendering of that. Gracious in the sense of humour he created in this Well. That gracious rendering or sense of humour deserves thanks. It deserves thanks because it draws attention to an issue which I think needs to be reconsidered by us all. With your leave Mr Speaker, Paragraph 4 says: *"Mr Speaker, in my last Address here, I told Parliamentarians in the habit of walking out and boycotting Parliament that they might be boycotted by the people. Well, I have looked around for some of my friends but I have not been able to set eyes on them. Is it true that the people boycotted them? How many were boycotted? This just shows that dialogue is better than boycott. I hope my good friends would take note of this and acknowledge that the day of walkouts and boycotts are over as they do not serve any useful purpose."*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, my appreciation to the issue of boycott is that it draws attention for further consideration. I am not necessarily going with the impression he has infused into that reference. One has to consider some of the things that have happened in this Parliament in order to determine whether boycott is of any use in politics or indeed in the debates in this House. I would like to refer to two issues that have come up in this Parliament in the past. On both of those issues because one side had a majority party representation and of course we have the provision about when parties decide that their Members of Parliament should take certain line of action, they are required to go along with that. It is possible that on those occasions, the

majority party may have decided and those issues went through Parliament with vast majority votes in each case.

The first issue was the provision in the Electoral Laws Bill brought before the House, concerning the right of the National Electoral Commission to void total votes of polling stations without even looking at the individual votes to determine whether they were valid or not. We recalled that after the General Election in 2007, the matter was taken to the Supreme Court, challenging the right of the Electoral Commissioner or the Electoral Commission itself to invalidate the totality of votes in a polling station. Mr Speaker, 477 polling stations were affected by that exercise. Was it a lawful exercise? For the moment, it is a rhetorical question. Was it lawful? The matter went to the Supreme Court, beginning with the High Court, through the Court of Appeal. That matter was not concluded when the new Electoral Laws Bill came to Parliament. If it was lawful, then, before that Bill came to Parliament, why was a provision included in that Bill, enacting a legal basis for doing so? Was it that the lawful Bill being reenacted? As a lawyer, I wrote a detailed opinion when the Bill was before Parliament. By then, it had not been passed yet into law. It was made available to all Members of Parliament on both sides of this House. I was not a Member of Parliament by then. But I explained to them that it was unlawful for that to have been done. This is because it was not enacted in any law and therefore it was unconstitutional and a contravention of specified provisions of the Constitution. And since it was so, Parliament should not make fun of itself by enacting such a provision which expressly illustrated to be contrary to a provision of the National Constitution. The National Constitution is supreme.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Section 171, Sub-section 15 makes that very clear. Nonetheless, notwithstanding that, one set of Members of Parliament were opposed to that fall short and they chose to walkout. It was nonetheless enacted and it is today a provision of the Ordinary Statutory Law. On an occasion like that, if all endeavour of interaction and dialogue has failed on a matter of major principle, would boycott not be permissible? To boycott is not by its nature a bad concept. In fact, it can be a very

useful tool to put the Government on its toes. Sometimes certain things are brought to the attention of the general public only by walkout.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will give you a second example. This also happened in the last Parliament and it was also followed by a walkout. This one had to do with nomination fee for Members of Parliament, the Presidency, Local Councilors, Mayors and Chairmen. Again, there was a proposed legislation on this. In the case of the Presidential Candidate for example, it was increased by more than 1000%. In the case of Members of Parliament, it was increased by 2,500%. Again, there was very strong feeling against it by certain Members of Parliament. But the majority party in Parliament approached it in a manner suggesting that it was a deliberate strategy to prevent as many people as possible from contesting the election so that the majority will be increased for one party which at that time had enough resources. When the Bill came out and the debate in Parliament became very intense, there was a walkout? There is a law that when Parliament passes a Bill, the President has to sign it into law. On that note, I said to myself the President will be very unlikely to sign this Bill into law if certain clarifications are made to him directly. I wrote a detailed legal opinion that this is not only unlawful but unconstitutional for such increase to be done a few months to the election.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it was even in contravention of certain stipulations in one of the conventions that we had signed as a country with ECOWAS. I took that letter to His Excellency the President. I am very sure he received it. This was before the 7th May, 2013. I was very surprised to learn later that notwithstanding the representation that have been made to him the increase in the fees was still signed into law on the 7th May, 2013 by His Excellency the President. Effort was made to make sure that ECOWAS learnt about it. Had it not been for the intervention of ECOWAS, that law would have been implemented. But ECOWAS straight away saw that it was inconsistent with one of its own conventions. They sent representation here and fortunately, the ... -
(Interruption).

HON. IBRAHIM R. BUNDU: Mr Speaker, I rise on S.O. 34. The Instrument we had concerning an increase or decrease in Nomination Fee was laid on this Table. It was never a Bill to be signed by His Excellency the President.

HON. DR BU-BUAKEI JABBIE: Thank you very much.

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: To add to that, I am standing on S. O. 32(11). It states that *"the conduct of the President and Judges or the performance of judicial functions by other persons, and the personal conduct of Members of Parliament shall not be referred to except upon a substantive motion moved for that purpose."* The Honourable Member talked about signing the Act. It was not Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Yes Honourable Member.

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: Mr Speaker, you want me to read again or should I proceed?

THE SPEAKER: Dilate on what you have just said.

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: Mr Speaker, the Honourable Member from Kailahun made reference to His Excellency the President. That goes to the conduct of the President.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member from Kailahun, what is your reaction?

HON. DR BU-BUAKEI JABBIE: Mr Speaker, that is not the conduct of the President that is been referred to. I said that a case was made that the Bill... - *(Interruption)*.

THE SPEAKER: No, the Honourable Member was referring to the second issue you raised.

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: Mr Speaker, I was referring to the statement he made.

THE SPEAKER: No, he referred to two instances.

HON. CHERNOR R. M. BAH: The second one Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: The second issue?

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Yes Mr Speaker.

HON. DR BU-BUAKEI JABBIE: Mr Speaker, I did not refer to the President per se.

THE SPEAKER: Just a minute Honourable Member. If I understand you well, you wrote an opinion to His Excellency the President on the 7th of May?

HON. DR BU-BUAKEI JABBIE: Yes Mr Speaker. That was the first one Sir.

THE SPEAKER: That was the first one?

HON. DR BU-BUAKEI JABBIE: Yes Mr Speaker. The second one is the Nomination Fee. This does not refer to the conduct of the President.

THE SPEAKER: Alright. Are you referring to the first or the second?

HON. CHERNOR R.M. BAH: Mr Speaker, I still maintain my stand Sir. I am referring to the second one. The statement he made was that, in spite of the advice he submitted to His Excellency the President, by virtue of a letter, the President did not pay heed and went ahead to sign.

THE SPEAKER: That's what I have understood him to have said.

HON. DR BU-BUAKEI JABBIE: Mr Speaker that is the first one. The second one is the Nomination Fee.

THE SPEAKER: No, there are two distinct instances here.

HON. DR BU-BUAKEI JABBIE: Indeed Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Now, the second one was the fees to be paid for election purposes.

HON. DR BU-BUAKEI JABBIE: Yes Sir.

THE SPEAKER: Did you say that that matter was taken to His Excellency the President.

HON. DR BU-BUAKEI JABBIE: No Sir.

THE SPEAKER: You did Honourable Member. Just a minute Honourable Member. Are sure you did not say that?

DR. BU-BUAKIE JABBIE: I did not say that Sir.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you. He did not say that.

HON. DR BU-BUAKEI JABBIE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for clarification purpose, the first one was included in a Bill which would go to the President. The second one I was talking about was a Statutory Instrument to be prepared by the Electoral Commission and laid before Parliament.

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Member, with the greatest respect to you, you did not mention the President.

HON. DR BU-BUAKEI JABBIE: No Mr Speaker.

THE SPEAKER: Then Proceed.

HON. DR BU-BUAKEI JABBIE: Thank you Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Statutory Instrument would have come into law and would have been implemented during the election.

THE SPEAKER: But for the interference of ECOWAS.

HON. DR BU-BUAKEI JABBIE: Had it not been for the interference of ECOWAS.

THE SPEAKER: Thank you.

HON. DR BU-BUAKEI JABBIE: Again, the question is...- (*Interruption*).

HON. IBRAHIM BUNDU: Mr Speaker, I also stand on S.O. 34. I want to make clarification. The reason why the Instrument did not become law was because of the interference of ECOWAS. By virtue of my presence in this House, when that Instrument

was laid, it has become a law after 21 days. What happened was the revision of fees. This happened because of the President's benevolence to subsidise the fee.

HON. DR BU-BUAKEI JABBIE: Mr Speaker, I would not want him to mention His Excellency in this matter. What I would want to say is that it was not implemented because of the intervention of ECOWAS.

THE SPEAKER: Alright. Honourable Members, I said at the commencement of this sitting that I had a meeting this morning with party leaders and certain modus operandi were agreed upon. This obviously we cannot implement now as it is. I would not want to curtail your right to speak being very much aware that the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader will have to speak. I will adjourn now for us to come at 2:00 p.m.

The House stood down for lunch and resumed at 2:00 p.m.

HON. DR BU-BUAKEI JABBIE: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, to conclude if a set of people considered what I have explained very necessary for them to insist on the principles they have laid down, but the other person or group of people did not consider it important enough to be taken into account, it is left to their discretion whether to merely be silent or to demonstrate their stand through boycott. To me, a boycott is not a wrong way of protesting. It should also be a point to be considered by both sides that they take account of the point being expressed with any strength of conviction by either side.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I would also want to refer to certain provisions or sections of this Address concerning various suggestions of legislations in the Presidential Address. With your leave Mr Speaker Page 4, Paragraph 12 for example, says: *"In our Second Term of office, we will act to revamp the constitutional review process, open up the constitutional debate to many more people and a wider range of great importance will be putting in place constitutional guarantees for overcoming the challenges of ethnic divide in the political life of the country, we will put a resulting*

draft constitution to a national referendum.” Also Mr Speaker, Page 18, Paragraph 81 says: “We will ensure a review of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone to ensure that it truly supports a true democracy thriving on a multi-party but inclusive system of governance.”

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Page 20, Paragraph 91 states other modes of legislation by His Excellency the President. It says: *“we will continue to maintain the relevance of the institution of paramount chieftaincy, ensure timely filling of chieftaincy and sub-chief vacancies in accordance with the provisions in the Chieftaincy Act, amend the chieftaincy Act of 2009 to ensure its consistency with the chieftaindom governance and tribal administration policy and the revised Local Government Act 2004 and other relevant legislation and introduce the chieftaindom finance bill for enactment to address the fiscal challenges confronting chieftaindom and tribal administration.”*

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the provisions I have just read are very important in the present process of our political action. I would personally want to give my heartiest and sincerest thanks to his Excellency the President for including in this Address these proposals. Although they are not specific proposals for the moment, but the determination to consider those issues is very necessary at the moment. On the score of the constitutional review, I would want to draw the attention of Members of Parliament in view of certain opinions being expressed in certain quarters. The first one concerns the life of Parliament which for the moment is provided to be five years. The second has to do with the tenure of the Presidency. The tenure of the Presidency is five years and the constitution allows a second term as the final term for any one holding that position. I want those provisions to be reconsidered. I would want to plead with the whole nation that those issues are very crucial. They have been considered very carefully in past constitutional review meetings. And we should think very carefully before we propose any possible amendment to those two provisions.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the tenure of Parliament is five years in this country. In some countries, the tenure of office is 7 years and in other jurisdictions, it is 4 years.

The five year term is a well considered tenure for Parliament. But that should be carefully considered before any amendment is proposed. The tenure of the Presidency, which should not exceed two terms of five years for each term is very important as well. And those issues have been considered very deeply over the years and I would want to give advance caution to everybody concerning those provisions. I thank you very much for listening to me.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI (*Minority Leader of the House*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank God Almighty for being around, particularly to take part in the deliberations of this Address. As I look around, there are many of us who came in 2002 and 2007 that are no longer with us here today. Some have gone to eternity but the majority of them did not come either by volition or by elimination. Therefore, if we are here today, we must say thanks to God. I can only see three Members on the APC side that were here 2002: Honourable S. B. B. Dumbuya, Leader of this House, Honourable Ibrahim Bundu, Deputy Majority Leader of the House and Honourable Torto. On our side here, there are only few of us: Honourable Veronica Sesay, myself, Honourable Koedoyoma, Honourable Kess Boya and Honourable Ansu J. Kaikai. We have been here from 2002 to present. This means there had been very big erosion over the years.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to thank my colleagues on both sides of this House for painstakingly taking part in this deliberation for the past five days and also for the great attention and for taking their time in studying the Presidential Speech before the start of the debates. I also want to thank them for bringing out issues that are pertinent to the development of this nation. I want to particularly thank the Members on my side, especially those who spoke during the course of the debates. They did what they were supposed to do under the Law and Parliamentary Practices. They could not have done anything less than what they have done. I want to say thanks also to the other side for all that they have spoken. As Members of the ruling party, you said what is expected of you and you cannot say otherwise because you would have been constrained by Section 77 (1K and L) of the 1991 Constitution of

Sierra Leone. Those of us on this side do not have any such constraints. I want you to look upon us as your mirror. There are things that you would see but because of your position, you will not see it the way we see it. Therefore, kindly allow us to say the things that you would have loved to say. We are all part of the Government and we are in this Parliament to represent our different constituencies. As we sit here, all of our constituents, especially those who have voted us want the best to be delivered. I am sure we seated here also want the best for them because that is why we are here.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to refer to S.O. 38 (3). I hope that serious attention will be paid to what it says. With your leave Mr Speaker I read: *"This order shall not apply to speeches made during the debate on the Presidential address to Parliament and the debate on the Second Reading of the Annual Appropriation Bill."*

It further says: *"on the Fifth Day of the five days allotted to the debate on the Motion of His Excellency the President for his Address to Parliament on the occasion of the State Opening of Parliament, shall, pursuant to Section 2 of Section 107 of the Constitution been devoted to Ministerial responses to the issues raised by Members on Government policies contained in the Speech."* Mr Speaker that is why on the second day of the debates I made an observation that the MDA's were supposed to be here. Few days ago, these Ministers were very humble to be with us. That was because they wanted to be approved as Ministers by this House. During their interview, we asked them to be here by 10:00 a.m. Some of them were here at 8:00 a.m. We even cautioned them that immediately after their appointment, they will prove to be bigger than this Parliament. Mr Speaker, they should have been here because a lot of pertinent issues have been raised which can help to improve on their work. Today being the fifth day of the debates would have given them the opportunity to react or respond to all the many issues that we have raised. This will improve on the quality of our people. But they are not here to listen to us at all.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these MDAs should be brought before Parliament. It is contempt of Parliament. We don't want to be speaking to ourselves. That is why they

continue to do the same mistakes contained in the Auditor-General's Report. This is because when they are given instructions about things they should do, they don't do them and at the end of the day some of them are getting away with it. I will want at the end of today to move a motion to bring them here. We need to ask them why they were not here to listen to all the issues we have raised. Some Honourable Members have taken hours to honestly and genuinely look into some of the shortcomings of these ministries. But they are not here and so I will want to raise that motion at the end of the day Mr Leader.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the constituents of another Honourable Member are my constituents. They all have the same needs and we must improve on their living standards. The Sierra Leone People's Party supporters needs water, light, education etc., and so also supporters of the APC and all other political party members. Therefore, I don't want anybody here to go with the impression that we on this side are unnecessarily being critical. Some of these issues we are raising are for the good of the President and the ministries. They should take them onboard. They are genuine because we live and work in this country. We are part of this country. We are not an island. Some of these issues touch our daily lives. I struggle to get water and other things in the morning, even though I am a Member of Parliament. I want us (just as the President has said) to work together as a team. We are going to be here for five years. We should be the best of friends so that when we leave this House, our relationships will continue to be cordial. Let this be a share vision for this Parliament. The ministers are together and they sometimes work against us. Let us be united in this House. When it comes to politics, we talk about politics. But when it comes to national issues, let's work together.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we have the motion of thanks to the President with us. The mover of the motion said: *"all that we should do is to say thanks and sit down."* That is fine. I agree with him. But what I want to say is that I am not afraid to say thanks to His Excellency the President because he is my friend. On Friday last week, we were together at the Bank Complex, on the occasion of the Governors Dinner. When he

was doing his usual rounds, he came to me. He calls me 'Labby,' which means troublesome. He calls me this name anywhere he sees me. We have a cordial relationship and I respect him. We spent five years in this House. He seated where I am sitting now. Today, he is the President of this Country. I have the greatest respect for him because I am also a Leader and I want the people that I lead to respect me. Therefore, it is an issue of give and take. What is good for the goose should also be good for the gander. Whether the people on this side say thanks to his Excellency the President or not does not mean that they are being disrespectful to him. And they do that with reasons.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me take for example what Honourable S. B. B. Dumbuya used to say when discussing His Excellency Dr Ahmad Tejan Kabba's State Opening Speeches. This is the Speech of the Second Allotted Day for the 2004 State Opening of Parliament. It is on page 14. Honourable S. B. B. Dumbuya: *"Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise to make my contribution to the motion of thanks to the President for the speech delivered to this house."* I have looked through all of President Kabba's Speeches and there was not a single time did he say thank you President Ahmad Tejan Kabba for the speech so graciously delivered. That was his usual perception and nobody begrudged him. No one was angry with him for failing to say thanks to former President Tejan Kabba. That was wholly and purely his discretion. This year, he has chosen to thank the President and that is his right. We should not begrudge him. I want us to be flexible and accommodating.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am a leader and as a result of that, I will say thanks to His Excellency for the Speech. I will say thanks to him and to all our brothers and sisters out there who supplied the information and statistics for this Speech to be written. When we were in governance, we knew that our brothers and sisters contributed. Therefore, we have to extend thanks to them. But extending thanks does not mean that we wholly agree with the contents of the Speech. And that should not compel people not to say thanks. You say thanks because of work done and appreciation. But you should go further to see where loop holes and shortcomings are

eminent. This is what we have done and have been doing on this side of the House. If the President (when he was the Minority Leader of this House) did not do it, we should have taken it as a sin. But it is not a sin at all. It is people's disposition. And in life, we must respect people's disposition.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the other thing I want to say here is that, as my sister from Lunsar and my sister from the Western Area said, we have to be patient with the President. There are so many areas of concern and he prioritises according to the resources we have. Rome was indeed not built in a day. I agree with my sisters wholly that Rome was not built in a day. And we should give the President chance to do what he wants to do. But if that is the case, why didn't we also say Rome was not built for the few years that SLPP ruled this country, a country that just came from war and decadence? In 2002, the war ended and the refugees were all over this country in Refugee Camps. There were boys going up and down with arms all over the country. The economic base of the country was nothing to write home about. Our mining areas were not operating. Income generating agencies for this country were not working. The financial base was zero for this country; yet, people said we should have provided everything for the people of this country. People failed to realise that Sierra Leone was just coming from war. There should be prioritisation at that material moment of what the refugees in those camps wanted. They wanted to be repatriated because a lot of people were not used to begging. Our people in the provinces were so proud and dignified before the war. They didn't know what was begging. Therefore, a Government coming from war did what the people wanted at that particular moment. The people needed shelter, schools, health facilities and authority.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, all the Paramount Chiefs were here and we needed to restore authority. All the police stations were here. There was lawlessness everywhere. Therefore, the people needed security. Farmers wanted seeds because some of them have not farmed for the past 11 years. When they went back, their priority was Agriculture. They wanted all these things for a solid foundation. Providing seed and brushing tools were the priorities of a country coming from war. The war

came as a result of bad governance, corruption, isolation, social exclusion, youth marginalisation, gender insensitivity, tribalism, bad elections etc. And when it ended, the priority of the people was to restore, create and strengthen those democratic institutions. In fact, the vandalism of these democratic institutions brought about the war. The question is what does a country coming from a war needs? It needed institutions like the National Electoral Commission (NEC), Political Party Registration Commission (PPRC), National Revenue Authority (NRA), National Social Security and Insurance Trust (NASSIT), Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), the Independence Media Commission (IMC) and good laws that will bring investors back into this country. It needed to bring peace in order to give confidence to investors to come and reinvest.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this is the conducive atmosphere we have provided in this country. Depending on the history that a country is having, the priorities are never the same. Now that the foundation is laid for peaceful investment, we can talk about energy and massive infrastructural development in the country. At the time of the SLPP, we could not have spoken about developments after the war. This is because people focused on going back to their villages they have left for ten to fifteen years. People wanted to find out about the homes they left for the past couple of years. There were no schools and no health centres. Electricity was nothing to them at that time. They did not care about big roads. Therefore, at any point in the history of the country a Government wants to do something, it should go back to its history. And based on your history, you prioritise what is good and relevant for the country at that particular time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, that was what we did and now we expect that you do the things that you have prioritised, especially now that there is peace in this country. Now that the infrastructural foundation is laid, we will now talk about energy, massive roads etc. Mr Speaker, this country belongs to all of us. We always say 'to thyself be true.' That is what we should pursue at this point in time.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the economy. I was at the Bank Complex when the Bank Governor gave the status report of the economy of Sierra Leone. I had no reason to doubt the statistics at all. But let me also say that, that was not the first time a Bank Governor gives a status report of the Economy of this country. Bank Governors had many times given reports of how the economy was growing. And people on your side will say that indeed, the economy is growing. But the man and woman out there wouldn't understand this growth we are talking about. They wouldn't understand Gross National Product, Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) etc. All they want is the basic necessities of life that will keep them alive. That is what Maslow said. Maslow said: *"you seek the basic necessities of life first..."* Once you have achieved that, then, you can go to the other levels until you get to the pinnacle where you do the self actualisation. Now, you do things that will give you gratification, not material gratification, but inner gratification.

After that, we can say that our economy is growing. Those arguments were put when we were in governance. And what did His Excellency say when he was the Minority Leader of this House? Earlier on, I said that the statement made by the President is grandiose. The economic indicators provided us are very good. The last speaker did mention that the Government has done well. Indeed, the indicators are good. We have 6% GDP growth on paper.

That was what His Excellency said when he was delivering his Address. He said the Economy was growing. We are being told now that inflation is under control and that the exchange rate is stable. But the reality on the ground is different from what is on the paper.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this was what he said here. And you are accusing us of not being supportive of this Government. We are just saying the realities of things that are happening. We as politicians are concerned with the realities on the ground. The survival of the ordinary man is our concern. The reality on the ground is that prices of commodities are very high in our local markets. The cost of building materials

needed by the people of this country to reconstruct burnt houses is very expensive. This is... - (*Interruptions*).

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Minority Leader, it seems to me that the interruptions are more intensified from your side.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Is this what you call good governance? You are talking of inflation being under control. I want you to go and say it to the market women at Kroo Town Road or to the chiefs in the provinces who are trying to rehabilitate their houses. Go to the banks and ask for 100,000 dollars and see if you can get it. We are still saying that our economy is doing well. If at all we are doing well, we on this side will thank the International Community for that. The President thanked the International Community when he was the Minority Leader of this House and not the President. And if the International Community didn't have confidence in our Government, they would not have given any money to us. The President did not thank our Government then. And when Members on my side say we would not say thanks, you got jittery. Why should you be annoyed? Today, Sierra Leone is a test case. They will not allow their test case to fall and that is why they will continue to support us.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Government is saying that the economy is growing. But I will say what the President said when he was the Minority Leader of this House that it is only growing on paper. When some of you were speaking during these five allotted days, I asked myself thus: "are these Members of Parliament residing in Sierra Leone?" I said no. I said they must be staying in another country and come here to attend parliamentary proceedings using Airplanes. I am saying this because if they stay in this country and listen to the radio or read the newspapers or even walk along the streets of Freetown, they would have heard or seen poverty on the faces of our people. Mr Speaker, I want to tell you that things are very difficult. The economy is growing but it is not reflecting qualitatively on the lives of the people.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, these are the things we are saying and we are saying them so that all of us will come together to find a way to reduce the prices of

commodities. In the last Government, people on the other side used to say we were not controlling prices and that, prices have skyrocketed. We are now telling you to control prices, but you keep on saying that this is liberalised economy. When our people were saying demand and supply, you said we are heartless and insensitive. We want to put ourselves in the position of the people. We are now saying that even if it is a law of demand and supply, there should be dialogue between the exporters, marketers and the consumers so that there can be negotiation on some of these things.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me move to infrastructure. I agree that infrastructural development is very vital to a country's development. When there are infrastructural developments, the APC Party members will not be the only ones that will benefit from them. I will benefit from them, our constituents will benefit and everybody will benefit from them. So when we criticize them, it is not that we don't want it, but you should know that development is a process. When we said in 2002 that development was a process, the APC Leaders did not agree with us. They said it should begin and end from 2002 to 2007. They are now telling us that development is a process. We should accept it as gospel truth. What is good for the goose should be good for the gander.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it was reported yesterday that the Minister of Works was in a meeting with the Sierra Leone Institute of Engineers in his office to discuss the state of infrastructure in this country. And one issue that was discussed was the poor infrastructural condition of the infrastructures that are being built all over the country. And the chartered engineers were saying that we now have a lot of contractors that are coming into the infrastructural industry. There are people who don't even know what infrastructure is about, but because they have the connections, they get the contracts and they in turn would sub-contract them in most cases to unqualified people. They would not even bother themselves to go there, to supervise the work that is going on. Even if they go there, they would not be able to see the architectural merits. So this is the problem that is in the infrastructural development. And when we say it here, you say we are being unreasonable.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me now move to the issue of agriculture. I was the chairman for the Committee on agriculture in 2003. And I held that position for four years. Whenever statistics are given for Agriculture, Honourable Members should make sure that they crosschecked them. We have all of the budget statements in the Library. These documents should be crosschecked because they are public documents meant not only for Sierra Leone but for international community also. When this is not done, I attribute it to laziness. People may be lazy to go and get the correct documents, but every now and then they are saying that in 2007, the investment in the Agriculture sector from our domestic funds is 1.6% of the total Government allocation. This is not true. We have the Appropriation Bill. It is on Page 62; dated Friday, 27th October, 2006.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, under the Economic Services, Agriculture is the first budget line. It is about 3.88%. It is totally different from 1.6%. If you apply statistical analysis, the difference will be statistically significant. We should endeavour to check our figures. The MAPUTO Declaration is talking about 10%. The President is saying that they have achieved the 10%. In 2008, he said they achieved 10%. But when you go to the 2009 Budget, it is the same 10%. The same percentage is in 2010 Budget. But it is not true. The budget line for 2008 is 3.85%; and in 2009, it is 3.88%. Why then are the Ministers saying that the budget line for 2008 and 2009 for Agriculture is 10%. The MAPUTO Declaration says 10%. What it says is that, you cannot add or calculate those budget provisions that were incidental to agriculture.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the question is, if we have achieved self sufficiency in food, what are the indicators? One Honourable Member was talking of food security yesterday. The indicators of self sufficiency in food are many. Where there is self sufficiency in food, the price of our local food, especially rice must have come down. If you go to the markets now and ask for the price of our locally produced rice, you will find out that it is as high as the imported rice. Where is this self-sufficiency in food? Even as early as February and as we are talking now, our people have already started eating imported rice. Where is the self-sufficiency in our domestic rice production? In 2004, the ADUs were all over this country. The ADU's were meant to improve on the

local production. But APC came and introduced the ABCs. You have established the ABCs but where is the hub? Where is the marketing and production hub? They are not there at all.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Member, let me also talk about Corruption. Mr Speaker, how many pages or lines in the President's Speech are attributed to corruption? Corruption is everywhere in this country. If you look at the dailies, you will find out that corruption is everywhere in this country. If it is not in the Ministry of Health, it will be in the Ministry of Agriculture or the Ministry of Education. There is corruption everywhere Mr Speaker. There is corruption even in the President's Office. If you take a look at the Auditor General's Report, you will find out that procurement procedures were not followed in most of these Ministries. The Auditor General's Report is a public document. We have to discuss it as well. It has been discussed by the various radio stations in this country. It has been discussed by the civil society. And if they didn't want it to be a public document, it should not have been publicised.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are excess use of fuel without documentation in the President's Office. The international per diem allowances for those going on official functions are not properly documented. Imprest expended on overseas and local travel are not retired. Why does it continue to occur? The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) spent a lot of time and energy in performing their Oversight function; yet, when the PAC Report came out, it is not taken seriously. That is why these things keep happening. Therefore, we must look into the roles and terms of reference of the PAC. We must make sure that the recommendations they make afterwards are treated with all seriousness. Parliamentary Committees are supposed to have the powers of the High Court. This will not stop unless those who are culpable are brought to book. Otherwise, this would continue to reoccur. Seepages in a country will lead to underdevelopment. When the President was in opposition, he blamed the SLPP Government that the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) was not biting. He promised that once he comes to power, he would ensure that the ACC would prosecute all corrupt officials of Government. But Mr Speaker there are lots of cases of corruption in this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, one can do anything these days and go free without any charges as long as you are a member of the APC Party. One can steal and misappropriate Government funds and go free without prosecution. All you have to do is to declare for the APC and they will drop everything against you. We have seen it happened. That is corruption to the highest degree. When Mr Osman Boie Kamara came out as a flag bearer for the SLPP, the APC scolded. They started calling for enquiry into the diamonds case. But immediately he declared for the APC, the enquiry stopped and the case was closed. The diamonds "*turn stone*" case was no more. This is corruption Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, corruption is not just taking money. At the beginning of the Government of Dr Ernest Bai Koroma in 2007, a Commission of Enquiry was set to look into the activities of the SLPP Ministers. A lot of money was spent on that Commission. That money could have been used to provide needed services. It was an open handed Commission. Where is the Report of that Commission? There were two teams: the Transition Team and the Presidential Task Force. Millions of Leones was spent on it to investigate all the MDAs. At the end of the day, they presented over thousands of documents that nobody, not even the President had time to read. That is corruption as well. We should ask the Anti-Corruption Commission to ask His Excellency and the MDAs to pay the money spent on the Transitional Task Force whose report never came out.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, corruption is all over this country. Corruption was also indicated in the GAVI Report of the Ministry of Health. Certain ministers and people are being protected. This was money meant for the Free Health Care Programme. If you go to some of these hospitals, there are no adequate facilities. The infrastructural facilities that this money was supposed to provide in order to keep the medicines in convenient places are not there. This money was also supposed to provide transportation so that medicines would be evacuated quickly to the various health centres in this country. But it did not happen; yet, those responsible are not arrested. Why is that happening? Some people have been used as scapegoats, while others are

treated as sacred cows. There should be no scapegoat and sacred cow. Let us bring to book anybody who must have involved in misusing the GAVI Fund. This is because those funds would have benefited many people in this country. I may not be in a position to give birth; but my brothers, sisters, aunties and uncles who are younger need those medicines. If that money had been properly used, the Panguma and Serabu Hospitals would have been serviced. But that did not happen because the money has been misused. Mr Speaker, this is a joint project. This is a common vision. Let us work on it. Let us bring those responsible to book.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me come to the issue of women's empowerment. My sisters on the other side said that the President is committed to empowering women. I will not deny the fact that women have been employed in areas that were occupied by men. But the question is, where did it start. It started in this Parliament, with the first woman Member of Parliament, the late Madam Ella Koblo Gulama... - *(Interruption)*.

Suspension of S.O 5(2) being 3:00 p.m.

HON. DR BERNADETTE LAHAI: Thank you Mr Speaker. It happens as if God had ordained that I, Honourable Dr Bernadette Lahai would come to Parliament. On the day of that Mock Parliament, I sat in one of those chairs without thinking of politics. I was just a gender activist then. The then President, Dr Ahmad Tejan Kabba said: *"Women are force to reckon with. Women should take your rightful places. Quality women are not afraid of quality men, but that quality men should see quality women as a way of complementing their effort."* And as a result of that, President Kabba employed the first female Electoral Commissioner and the first female Chief Immigration Officer. After the death of that Immigration Officer, he also employed the next Chief Immigration Officer, Alice Kamara. Madam Alice Kamara was a no nonsense woman. It was also under his regime in this Parliament that we had the first female Deputy Speaker. And in this Parliament, under the SLPP, we have the first female Minority Leader. The APC politicians are always saying that their Government is gender sensitive. I want to say

that they are only building on the trend and the change that was initiated in 1996 by having the gender ministry after the war. Let me tell my sisters that this APC government has not done well for them in this parliament. I am not inciting anybody here. I was praised yesterday by one of you. We have elected our leadership in this Parliament. We have the Majority Leader, the Minority Leader, the Deputy Majority Leader, the Minority Whip, the Deputy Minority Whip all being men. We have over twenty Committees here only seven is been chaired by women. When you put a woman in position she tries to bring other women onboard. I came in 2002 in this Parliament and I was made the chairman for the Education Committee even though I was a new member. During my second year I was made Agriculture Committee Chairman which I enjoyed. This is a democratic institution; you are not being magnanimous in your leadership because you do not put women in certain positions. You give excuses that they are new and that they are learning. If you don't give them the leadership position how will they learn and get the experience. Look here my sisters, let them not tell you, that you are new. Being new is not a sickness, it is not ineptitude, and newness is not an inability.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, we are clamouring for a minimum of 30% Quota. It is very good. The president is going all over the country, promising to give us the 30% Quota. He made that promise when he went to Moyamba, Magburaka, to the UN, and Bo when he was launching the APWA. He even asked for Private Members' Bill in that regard. And that was where the mistake was made. I want to tell the President that if he leaves it under the Private Members' Bill, it will never be passed into law. It should be made a Government motion. When the President wanted us not to approve the \$25 million, he had his members voted against it. When he didn't want the Freedom of Information Bill passed, it was not passed.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Paramount Chief from Pujehun was saying that women should be given 2% instead of 30%. I want to say here that women are not homogenous. Women are heterogenous. We have different capacities, different opportunities and different exposures. Therefore, the Universal Declaration of Human

Rights and the CEDAW in their wisdom came up with special measures for women. This is not the first time we are taking special measures. We took special measures for the youths and the disabled. But when it comes to women, we have all the stumbling blocks and the excuses. People will say that it is a western idea. And they will start asking questions like, have the westerners given 30% Quota to their women? Have the American women got 30% Quota? When it comes to women issues, the men will tell us to exercise patient and if they only had cautioned themselves in the way they are handling our economy, believe you me this country would have prospered.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me come to the issue of the youths. The President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma mentioned a lot about youths in this Speech. I was once a youth and a very responsible youth. I have my children who are also very responsible youths. Some of you have responsible children who are youths. This is the way we want our youths to behave. Honourable Emma said we need to redefine the term youths. This is because some people will just refuse to graduate from being youths to be adult. And when they refuse to do that, they refuse to take up responsibilities. We want our youths to develop positively. They are our future leaders. We want our youths to be good citizens of this country. But they must be ready to accept responsibilities. If you create job opportunities for these youths to go and work in the farm, they will say no. They will say farm work is a difficult job. They want easy life. They want to be saying, S. O. 2 "*pa u pikin de ya-o.*" If I go to buy fuel in the Filling Station, I usually come down to open my fuel tank. That will be the time they will come and say, S. O. 2, 'Honourable, mek a opin u fiel tank. And when they finish, they will say: "aw u de lef mi? I will respond by saying: "*aw a mit u.*" This is telling us that we have a crisis in this country. We should take this seriously.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what pains me more is the accusation that is been made by some people in the radio that politicians are misusing the youths of this country. People are accusing us that we are misusing the youths of this country while our children are in overseas countries. My two daughters are in this country. They are presently in the university in this country. They attended both primary and secondary

schools here. Most Members of Parliament have their children living overseas because that was where they were born. And if they are coming to work here and the facilities are good over there, do you expect them to bring them here? The answer is no. Some of us our children are educated here because we cannot afford to pay university fees for them overseas. When our children go to other countries to be educated, they are treated as foreign students. They pay exorbitant fees. It pains me when they say we the politicians are the ones that give these youths Marijuana and alcohol. I always asked these people to name the politicians that are sending their children to perpetuate violence.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, there are a lot of issues in this Speech that we must discuss. Let us look at the last page of this document, Page 105. With the leave of Mr Speaker, I read: *"we need to utilise our heritage of great scholarship to truly commit ourselves to acquiring the skills and discipline required to beef up the blessings God has bestowed upon our country. We need to utilise the best of the traditions and achievements of SLPP and APC to deliver a destiny of peace, development and prosperity for our people."*

Has SLPP achieved anything? You know when I read this statement I said no, no this is not coming from the President, it's not. Maybe during the time this Speech was written, a fairy overnight slipped in and wrote this unknown to him. We have to be true to ourselves. Development is a continuous process. The APC people are saying that in 2007, there was nothing good to write home about. For them, nothing happened from 1996 to 2007. Sierra Leone, according to them was in a deep slumber. The economy was nothing to write home about. Inflation was at 3 digits and foreign exchange was zero. There was no hospital, no health centre and no school. It was only when the presidency was given to Dr Ernest Bai Koroma by Dr Christiana Thorpe on the 17th September, 2007 that Sierra Leone started working towards the development that we are enjoying today. That is not true at all Mr Speaker. I was surprised to have read on the last page of the President's Speech that that SLPP did achieve something. Let us be honest to ourselves.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, all these things the APC Government is building on today were not there during the 24 years of governance of the APC. In 1968, this country was on the path of development. There were paved roads, 24 hours running water, 24 hours electricity and our educational system was the best in the sub-region. We were the citadel for civil servant training in the sub-region. Agriculture was booming; and we were self-sufficient in our food. We even exported food to other countries. But these were destroyed during the 24 years regime of the APC. Today, we are arguing about International Airport at Mamamah. This should have been done during the 24 years regime of the APC. This is because there was money flowing into this country at that time. Our diamonds were valuable. We didn't have these donor conditionalities that we have today. There was liberty in the way we used our money. If we had chosen to use our money correctly, we should have had many airports and flyovers in this country. We should have had many Bumbunas in this country. We should have had many universities. The APC was in power from 1968 to 1992, when it was finally kicked out of power. Nothing happened during those 24 years of governance. Bumbuna started in 1972. By 1996, when SLPP took over the reign of governance, it was not 30% completed. But by the time we left in 2007, Bumbuna was 95% completed.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, APC Honourable Members are not true to themselves. They will die and go to hell because they are denying these facts I am telling them. I am Labby and I will continue to be Labby as long as you don't do the correct things. The war came for 11 years. Even the little that has been made out of the 24 years was decimated by the war. When we came, we worked hard to stop the rebel war. We succeeded in putting an end to the war. We worked hard to revamp the country's economy. We had the largest national recovery programme in this country. We developed the PRSP and other programmes. We created and developed many democratic institutions in this country. Today, you are building on this foundation. Is that not achievement? Will you be working if you have bundles on your head, running here and there like mad men from the rebels? No, you would not have been able to do

all the things you are presently claiming to have been doing. As I have said earlier on, development is a national project. Let us acknowledge this truth. This was what S. B. B. Dumbuya said when he was thanking President Ahmed Tejan Kabba on the Second Allotted Day on Tuesday, 6th July, 2004. I have a copy of the Hansard with me here. With the permission of Mr Speaker, I read: "Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is said that and this is a fact *but unless the foundation of any edifice is strong, all the rest of it would be in precarious state of existence. Now, this can conveniently be related to state governance for instance the foundation for which much of the benefits we are enjoying today in the country from the days of the NPRC to date was made by the APC.*"

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I will not dispute his statement. But the foundation that he was talking about was destroyed during the 24 years rule of the APC. Let me continue with the statements that SBB Dumbuya made that day. He says: "*Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the SLPP in particular owes a huge debt of gratitude to the APC for making use of the foundation that they laid.*" Mr Speaker, the APC also owes the SLPP gratitude for laying the foundation they are building on today and for bringing peace into this country. What is good for the goose must be good for the gander. We have to be true to ourselves.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to talk about the issue of employment. Honourable Veronica Sesay from Moyamba District was saying that before you get employment these days, you have to bear such surnames as Sesay, Kamara, Bangura etc. She also said that the available jobs are for the APC people only. His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma said the same during the SLPP governance that people were moving everyday from the APC party to the SLPP party in order to gain employment opportunities. What he said was that the jobs were for the SLPP boys and girls. He also said that if you didn't have a godfather in the SLPP, you would not get a job.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, His Excellency also said that the 130 Directors and Heads of Parastatals we ratified in this Parliament, all of them were SLPP. He went on

to say that while he was here as a Member of Parliament, the SLPP Government was choosy, tribalistic and concentrated on their own membership. But in his own Government, jobs are only given to those who campaigned, voted and sponsored him during the elections. These are the people they provide jobs for. But when we say these things, there are people who are saying that we are lying. You must be true to yourselves, Honourable Members. You have to be careful with what you say when you are in this Parliament. This is because you may want to be a President of this nation. And as soon as you assume the post of presidency in this country, we will go to the Hansard and use what you have said in this Well against you.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, education is the nucleus of economic development in any country. We may be wondering why America or the United Kingdom is more developed than Africa. If we put all the minerals we have together, we will have more minerals in Africa than in America or UK. But they have developed more than Africa. This shows that there is a positive correlation between the level of development of human capital and the level of development in a country. And that brings me to our educational system. We have had beautiful educational system. Whenever you travel to any African country and tell them that you are from Sierra Leone, some people will tell you that I went to Fourah Bay College. Some will say we were trained there in the Civil Service Academy.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, today, we cannot smile with the level at which our education is falling. We must ask ourselves why. The Gbamanja Commission of Enquiry into the educational system was done. He came out with a lot of good issues. He raised that issues we need to look into properly. He recommended that we change the educational system from 6-3-3-4 to 6-3-4-4 system of education. I listened to a lot of discussions on the radio. Many people are against this new system. What does the equation of quality education entails? It entails early child learning and learning materials. It entails quality and highly trained and professionalised cadre of teachers. It entails good physical infrastructure, good supervision and monitoring, good evaluation

etc. It does not entail the length of time you spend in school. These things do not make for a quality education at all.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when we were in primary school, we went to school in the morning and by 2:00 p.m., we were out of school. They didn't have to add any other years to the educational system. By then, it was class 1 to class 7. We also had form 1 to form 5. We even had Lower six and Upper six before you enter into the university. In the University, you either go to prelim or to intermediate year, depending on your performance. So, you either spend 4 or 5 academic years as in the case of students in the honours class. But the 6-3-4-4 system has added one more year to it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, if those other variable are not addressed, improvement will not happen at all. The length of time will not make for quality education in this country. The 6-3-4-4 System is saying that another academic year is needed. We can even move from the 6-3-4-4 to 6-3-4-5. We can even say 6-3-5-5 or 6-3-6-6. But this will not make any difference as long as the other variables that make for quality education are not addressed. If we do not provide teaching and learning materials in adequate supply so that every pupil has books (not only in class but books that they can take home to read), we are just scoping water in a basket. In our own days, every day we take one book each to read at home and brought it back the next day. The culture of reading is no longer inculcated in our children.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, teachers should be paid on time so that they stop selling cakes in school. If they are paid on time, they will stop forcing our children to buy their cakes. They even loan our children and tell them thus: "*bring di moni tumara.*" This has to stop. During our days, there were supervisors of schools everywhere. You would just see somebody walked in quietly and sat at the back of the classrooms to supervise the teachers. After that, he looked at the teacher's Lesson Note, and Forecast. Teachers didn't just run from the bus into the classrooms and teach. They had Forecast and there was learning outcome. I am a trained and qualified teacher. I have a Postgraduate Diploma from Fourah Bay College. I have distinction in theory and

practice...- (*Applause*). Therefore, I know what I am talking about. But if you go to these schools nowadays, you will find out that some of the teachers don't even know the meaning of Lesson Note or Forecast.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a few days ago, the Deputy Minister of Education went to Vine Memorial Secondary School and the Prince of Wales School unannounced. When he went into one of the classrooms, there was no teacher in that classroom. The pupils were just seated there doing nothing. When he looked at the back of the door, he found a stockpile of dirt they have swept and left at the back of the door. He went to the staffroom. He was shocked to see that it was even dirtier than classrooms. He asked the teachers who were in the staff room to show him their notes of lessons. Mr Speaker they failed to produce it. They rely on pamphlets to sell to the pupils. Anyone who fails to buy their pamphlet will not pass their tests. They don't care whether the person is a genius or not. The Minister of Education should stop chasing ghost teachers all the time. He has been chasing these ghost teachers for the past five years and has not come in contact with any of them. He should be chasing the living teachers to do the right thing. He has spent so much money and time in chasing ghost teachers. The Deputy Minister said when he went to Vine Memorial and the Prince of Wales Schools, he interviewed teachers that have taught for six/seven years with no salaries. I am not exaggerating issues here at all; but that was what the Deputy Minister of Education said. Some of these teachers have taught genuinely and are trained and qualified. But these teachers have not been approved since they entered the teaching service. These are the issues we have to address. Mr Speaker, quality education does not mean that you have to extend the academic calendar by adding one year. You have to make the school favourable for learning.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, this Government is building on the legacy of the last Government. When we came from the 11 year war, parents were so poor that girls dropped out of school. Parents couldn't pay BECE fee for their children. As a result, they dropped out of school. It was wrong; but poverty was persistent and is still persisting. Therefore, it was deemed expedient for those public exams to be paid for by SLPP

Government. These are things that should continue to happen in this country. But the principals in most of the girls' schools are lamenting that subventions are hardly paid. So, when they don't come, they are forced to take school fee from these girls so that any time this money comes they will refund them to the pupils. This is not good because when we make a policy, we must follow it up. It is a policy that when girls go to Junior Secondary School, they should not pay fee. And parents are looking forward to it. But because these subventions are not paid on time, or sometimes the Government owes these Schools two to four years of subvention, it makes nonsense of the whole system.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me end up by saying that all of us are involved. We on this side of this House are doing what is expected of us genuinely. You on that side are also doing what is expected of you. The President spoke about consultation. He talked about togetherness as a Parliament. This is what we should pursue because this country belongs to all of us. There must be constant dialogue among all the political parties on issues that are important, like the Constitutional Review that is coming shortly. We must dialogue and exhaust issues that are bordering the development of this nation. If both of us are to eat, and both of us are to cook, both of us should make the market list together. You should not make it in my absence. Let us go to the market together, cook together and then, we I will eat together. I will then have the pleasure of enjoying the food because the food is the effort of both of us. But when you cook and you ask me to eat, maybe you don't even know that you have cooked cassava leaves and cassava leaves is something I don't enjoy, I will not eat. This is all about governance and democracy. Democracy means consultation and respect for each other, especially in a country like ours that has two main political parties in this Parliament. We must work together. Our people need development at the end of the day. It doesn't matter the political party you belong to. It is the development of this country we need. And once Sierra Leone develops, everybody will develop.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I thank you for this day and I look forward to a good working relationship with the Leader of this Honourable House and even the Deputy Speaker and everybody. I thank you very much (*Applause*).

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA (*Majority Leader of the House and Leader of Government Business*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, it is good for sleeping dogs to lie. If they are now accusing us of corruption because we didn't expose the activities of SLPP Ministers then, then, we will let sleeping dogs wake up and let them bark. I found out that each time the Minority Leader of the SLPP has to round up, Honourable S. B. B. Dumbuya has always been quoted. They go back to find out what S. B. B. Dumbuya had been saying. What does that mean? It means that Honourable S. B. B. Dumbuya has always been speaking sense in this Well and I will continue to speak sense. I am coming to speak sense now Mr Speaker (*Laughter*).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma when he was the Opposition Leader in this Parliament did say almost everything that the Minority Leader said he has been saying. But the fact that at that time the SLPP was in power and Dr Ernest Bai Koroma was opposing them and even with the power of incumbency, Dr Ernest Koroma went on to win the election. This means that people believed in what he was saying and the criticism that he levied was valid. For instance, in the just concluded elections, you have been criticising us but the people say no to you. It means that we were right and we will continue to be right.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the 24 year rule of the APC rule that you talked about and the foundation that you said was rotten was dominated by the SLPP people than the APC Ministers in Government. And when we were overthrown by the NPRC, they went back to their SLPP route. What did that mean? It meant that they were in the APC to wreck the party and that was exactly what they did.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, unless the foundation of an edifice is strong, all that rests on it is in a precarious state of existence. SLPP are saying that they only ruled for 11 years, from 1996 to 2007. No, they did not rule for eleven years. There was an

extension of the Parliamentary time and that was part of the SLPP time. So, you are talking about eleven years of ineptitude, political ineptitude. The SLPP did nothing Mr Speaker. And I will tell you why they did not do as much as expected of them. What we are saying for these new Members of Parliament is that, I will not say that the SLPP then did not do anything. I will not say so at all. If you go back to the Hansard, I did say on several occasions that they did something but the quarrel we had was that, they did not do as much as expected.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, for the new Honourable Members and those of us that did history knows that any country that is coming from war is fully supported by the International Community. That was precisely what happened. The amount of money that was poured into this country then, believe you me Mr Speaker if the SLPP had used that money wisely, we would have been in paradise by now. But what happened after 11 year rule? So much money was pumped into this country but very little was done. The Minority Leader was saying that I should be true to myself. I am being true to myself here. You are a historian; and you know that so much money was pumped into this country but very little was spent. That is why we are saying today that Dr Ernest Bai Koroma is a Messiah. My senior in school here, Honourable Andrew Lungay rebuffed an Honourable Member when he said that Dr Ernest Bai Koroma is a Messiah. He said the Honourable Member was blasphemous. But when we talk about a Messiah, don't just take the biblical sense. You attended the St. Edwards Secondary School where we did very good English under Prof. Newman Smart. And you know that no English word has one meaning. I will give you other meanings of the word 'Messiah.' The Webster International Dictionary defines Messiah as 'an expected deliverer or saviour' (*Applause*). According to the biblical sense, the Messiah is the expected King and deliverer of the Jews. But in our own context and in English, you determine the true meaning of the word according to the context in which it is used. Dr Bu-Buakei Jabbi will agree with me that you determine the legitimate definition of a word according to its context. What are the people saying in Sierra Leone? Sierra Leoneans are describing Dr Ernest Bai Koroma as a Messiah. Why? This is because it is said

according to the Webster Collegiate Dictionary that a Messiah is "*a professed or accepted leader of some hope or course.*" Why do you think there is hope or course? It is because the SLPP had failed this country woefully. I am saying this because I want to be quoted. The five years rule of Dr Ernest Bai Koroma has been a phenomenal achievement in this country. Mr Speaker, what Dr Ernest Bai Koroma achieved in five years was not achieved in the twenty-four years rule of the old APC. What this man has achieved in five years, no leader ever in the history of this country had achieved that much. There is one wrong notion that people have in this country, particularly members of the SLPP. If you ask them why the ten years or 11years war took place, they will tell you it was because of the misrule, corruption, bad governance and nepotism of the APC Government

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I faithfully submit here that those reasons were only used as a pretext to overthrow the then APC Government. Believe you me those people who came under the pretext that they were going to restore sanity in the country became more corrupt than the APC. I will not call names.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to say something on tribalism. A lot has been said by the SLPP about tribalism. If you look at the way the people voted in this country, you will agree with me that the APC had more votes in the strongholds of the SLPP than you did in ours. What does that mean? It means that the people were really impressed by what Ernest Koroma had been doing for this country.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, elections are unpredictable all over the World. You don't know what happens because it is secret ballot. But here was a situation in this country, before the time of the election, people have known that as long as it was Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, the APC was going to win the elections. That was why they were singing: "*Salon Mesaya-e-e-e anpa anpor*" Even before the elections were held, the people had been saying that as long as it was Ernest Bai Koroma, he was going to win and indeed he won the elections. The word '*anpa anpor*' in Themne means everything

is finished. We are going to follow the voting pattern. Once we follow the voting pattern, I am going to tell you that the SLPP will never rule this country again.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Minority Leader talked about the economy. She talked about suffering on the faces of people. Madam Minority Leader, perhaps, you are more of an agriculturist. I challenge you that wherever in this world economies are growing, there must be poverty in some areas. I want you to go to America that has a developed economy. The economy of Great Britain is growing but there is poverty in Britain. If you go to other places that have developed economy, there are more beggars in those places than in any developing country.

HON. IBRAHIM BUNDU: Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I rise on S. O. 33.

THE SPEAKER: What is the interruption for?

HON. IBRAHIM BUNDU: Mr Speaker... - *(Interruption)*.

THE SPEAKER: I will take care of that *(Laughter)*.

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA: Now, the Minority Leader and some of her members also talked about political polarisation. Who is guilty of that? The SLPP is guilty of political polarisation. This is because if you look at the appointments we are making for instance, the Pujehun District has about four to five Ministers. So, why are you talking about political polarisation? At one time Mr Speaker, we went to Bo that was about two to three months before the elections when our office was burnt down. Mr Speaker, it will interest you to note that some parts of Bo City are more developed than Freetown. Dr Ernest Bai Koroma has developed Bo more than Freetown. Some people said in our presence S. O. 2 Mr Speaker, "*a lek wuna put mabul na ya, na Maada Bio wi want*"

And they reflected that in the voting. That is the mentality of the mende people. Whatever good you do for them, they will not appreciate it as long as it is not coming from them. Who are you?

THE SPEAKER: Honourable Minority Leader, you would notice that during your contribution, you were hardly interrupted.

HON. S. B. B. DUMBUYA: Honourable Tunis was made a Director. All of us approved him here and this is a man that has been saying consistently that he would never be APC. He would always be SLPP only that he admires Ernest Bai Koroma and indeed even when we were here between 2002 and 2007, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma was his friend. He knew everything that happened about infrastructure. He was saying the truth and my very good friend who incidentally was my junior in school, Honourable Ansu Kaikai was making grimace because he never liked what the man was saying. But the man was speaking the truth. We admire politicians that speak the truth.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, when Honourable P. C. Kebbie was making his contribution, he was lavishing praises on the APC. Those of us who were here with Chief Kebbie from 2002 to 2007 know that he was doing the same for the SLPP. But on certain occasions at particular times when he knew that he would not want to praise the SLPP, he would keep quiet. But you would realise that since the APC came to power, Honourable P. C. Kebbie has been lavishing praises on the APC simply because he is convinced that the APC has done much more than the SLPP did; and that is only under five as against 11 years of SLPP rule. They have been talking about foundation. Honourable Isata Kabia has described that foundation as "*a foundation of deficit.*" Otherwise Dr Ernest Bai Koroma would not have had cause to be spending so much. He would not have been committing himself into bringing in sanity into a country that had almost being rendered hopeless and useless by the SLPP Government.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was very much shocked when a certain member was saying that she would not praise Dr Ernest Bai Koroma because of the Shenge Road. But the Chief of Moyamba did say something about the Jetty in Shenge. Is that not development? Are you going to access development by the fact that there has to be an improvement on your road? Mr Speaker if that is the case, it is a very poor logic. We don't argue like that. Are you saying that because a particular thing has not been done,

so generally there is no development? Look at the Honourable Veronica Sesay. Today, you are greater than what you used to be. And who made you great? It is APC Government that made you look flamboyant (*Laughter*).

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I enjoyed the contribution of Honourable Mustapha Brima. He said we are flattering the President. Kenney Mustapha, I want to tell you that unless you don't want to be a true politician but if you intend to be, flattery and praise-singing are part of politics. I am a Susu by tribe. Our praise-singers are the Balangi people (Xylophonists). When they go to you early in the morning, they praise you. If you give them Le20, 000 for instance, they will continue to shower praises on you. And what would happen at the end of the day? You will be prompted to give them more. Therefore, you have to praise the President if you want more. Let me tell Honourable Mustapha Brima stingily about Ernest Bai Koroma. If you know him well, you will realise that he is somebody who does not like to be flattered at all. This is because flattering in many cases is insincerity. If you are with Dr Ernest Bai Koroma, the moment you begin to flatter him, you will see some frowns on his face. We are asking you people to say thanks to the President so that you will be able to enjoy more of what you are enjoying now. But you say you are not going to praise him and this is a disappointment. My disappointment is, in this Chamber, I have given a full lecture on why you have to say thanks for little mercies and why we have to be true to ourselves according to Hamlet and Shakespeare. But my friend, Honourable Komba E. Koedoyoma and others did not tell their new Honourable Members the truth. If they had told their new members, believe you me by now they should be thanking the President.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, people are also talking about education. Whatever we do for education (and this Government has done so much for education in this country) it would continue to be the same because from the time when there was the SLPP Government, there have been increases in salaries of teacher but still the standard of education is going down. The standard of education is falling because teachers are not devoted to their work.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Honourable Helen Kuyembeh made a very good point. But unless teachers decide to cultivate this attitude of commitment and devotion, there will be nothing in our educational system. When some of us were teachers, there was no need for any of our pupils to go for any private lesson. There were no pamphlets but our pupils used to pass and pass well. When we were going to school in the 60s, there were no pamphlets. I have always said perhaps, that is why you found out that the quality of my education is so high. But whatever you give these teachers now would be nothing unless they decide to be devoted and committed. In the absence of that, nothing happens.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, somebody was talking about Operation WID. Operation WID has been hailed, even by the SLPP. They are saying that they hope it would be sustained. Those who are praying for the sustenance of Operation WID are doing so here but when then they go out there, they have different motives. This is the mentality of the people. Whatever Dr Ernest Koroma does, as long as it is good, they will decry it.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, people are comparing Ghana and Sierra Leone. I have always said that this is philosophical juries; and circumstances alter cases. I have been saying that here countless times. We had our elections before Ghana but they are saying that the elections case they took to court has started, while ours is under consideration. We don't know what happened in their case, perhaps there was blatant rigging. Can we say that there was rigging in our own case? The answer is certainly not. It could not have been because each political party had representatives in all the polling stations in the country. And believe you me Mr Speaker the SLPP had more representatives than all the political parties that contested the elections in every polling station. If there was any electoral malpractices that the SLPP are complaining of now, they should have been brought out.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, in the time of the SLPP from 2002 to 2007, they came with a Bill, i.e., Trade Liberalisation. They came with this Bill. The Minority Leader

was talking about prices. In a free market economy, prices are determined by the forces of demand. Nobody should go against that rule. And Madam Minority Leader, you did break the rule in your contribution. You were talking about Audit Report. The public is ignorant to have known about it. So, they can talk anything about the Auditor-General's Report. But we should not. We have to determine whether some of the indictments are legitimate or not. It is Parliament and only Parliament that should do that. And until that is done, you should not comment on that at all.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I want to go to the issue of women. Mr Speaker, unless one does not want to be true to him or herself, the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma has done more for women. Dr Ernest Bai Koroma has done more for women than any other Government in this country. People have been advocating for this 30% Quota. In the last Address, we talked about it. But on the attainment of this 30% Quota, it will be difficult to attain that unless one thing is done. The Honourable Deputy Speaker did say something about this Proportional Representation. But there is some merit in it. Unless we have both the PR System and First-Pass-the-Post, believe you me we will never have the 30% for women. There can only be some areas that we will reserve for the women because they really don't have what it takes to contest an election. Women don't have what it takes to contest an election.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I come to water. Water in the city, as Honourable Helen said, I would want to concede here that that has been a problem in the city. I want to inform you that the President is very much aware of that and he is sensitive to the issue. Formerly, there was a blend of the Ministry of Water Resources and Energy. Presently, water resources is a Ministry on its own. This means that President wants to address this issue of water.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, on the issue of Bumbuna, there have been lots of lies about Bumbuna. The APC started Bumbuna in this country during the reign of Siaka P. Stevens. Had it not been for the war and the overthrow of the APC in 1992, believe you me we would have forgotten about Bumbuna long before now. And even when we

started that project, we went so far after that when SLPP came for 11 good years, so much money was given to the Government to complete Bumbuna. But they did not. They did not because they could not. If we started Bumbuna and we finished it, it means God is very fair.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, the Deputy Majority Leader is asking me to have mercy on them. Unlike the Minority Leader, I like the contribution of the Chief from Bo on education. If he were here, I would have recommended him to be made a guest Speaker in all of the school functions. Had it not been for the fact that our own school had already slated somebody to be the Guest Speaker in our Speech day, I would have recommended him because he talked about education, and the behaviour of pupils nowadays. He spoke about indiscipline in our schools today. Mr Speaker, as an educationist yourself, the other day you too were saying that discipline has completely broken down. And when the Chief talked about the breakdown of discipline in the schools, you asked the Chief to tell you any area where there is no breakdown of discipline. In our days, the teachers were looked upon as 'inloko parentis.' This means teachers taking the place of the parents. But it is no longer the case today. If you try to discipline a child nowadays, the parents would take offense. If this is the case, how do you expect discipline to prevail in these schools? I agree with you that no learning takes place in a situation of indiscipline. That was why when the Chief was making his contribution, I was really giving an undertone along those lines. We have to go back to basics. Even in English, the people have some basics. Some of us attended the Grammar School. In our days, we had what we called 'Next Field Grammar.' There is one book I have been suggesting to people when I was teaching. I advocated for us to go back to these grammar books like the Brighter Grammar.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, what do you think is happening in our educational system? Even university graduates put an apostrophe before the 's' if they want to pluralise the noun girl. The apostrophe should indicate possession. Our graduates are guilty of such grammatical offence these days. When I was teaching, we used to interview graduates for enrollment as teachers in our school. Some of their applications

were filled with rotten English. We have to go back to basics. I agree on that completely. But when all is said and done Madam Minority Leader, believe you me you can only have more. You will be greater than what you are now if you continue to support Dr Ernest Bai Koroma.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I like the contribution of the Honourable Bu-Buakei Jabbi. I always call him the Honourable Professor Dr Bu-Buakei Jabbi. I know him very well. He was a Minister in the APC Government. He was my boss. Dr Bu-Buakei Jabbi was a Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs when I was an Ambassador. And if you like to know, all Ministers of Foreign Affairs are the bosses of all Ambassadors. Therefore, he was my boss. But apart from that, let me say it here that Dr Bu-Buakei Jabbi seated there is one of the truly learned people in this country. I deliberately refused to use the word 'educated' because there is a difference between the two words. Most of the so-called educated people are mis-educated. He is one of the truly learned people in this country. I can say it anywhere because even in my teaching days, he was a Lecturer. I benefitted so much from him when we used to have workshops on English and Literature. He is an authority. I can tell you and I've always held the view that truly educated people are honest to themselves. Some of our so-called educated people are dishonest because they don't speak the truth. They even mislead people. I learnt so much from his contribution.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Honourable Bu-Buakie Jabbi talked about one thing that I want us to look into very seriously, the amendments of the tenure of Parliament or the term of Parliament. We have to look into the tenure of the Presidency as well. Five years first term of office and five years second term of office. We are not asking for anything more. All that we are asking for is that, we make very honest and realistic amendments. Mr Speaker, what I want to say is that, if somebody is doing well, why border to change him. Let us examine it realistically. Why bordered to change Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom? She did so well that she was allowed to rule for many terms. I am not only talking about what Honourable Dr Jabbi said. We have to look very seriously into some of these issues. In football game, you don't change a winning team

at all. Dr Ernest Bai Koroma is a winner, whether you like it or not he is a winner. There is always an advantage in incumbency. Madam Minority Leader, there is always advantage in incumbency. But even in your days of incumbency, you lost an election.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I talked about the issue of propagation in 1996. I was not here as a Member of Parliament but I used to come to this Parliament. In 1996, there were many parties in this Parliament. By then, the SLPP was in governance. But the number of the membership put together was greater than the SLPP. If this was so, then, how did we start? How did we begin? You people must always appreciate good things. In the run-off, we voted for Dr Ahmed Tejan-Kabbah because he did well in bringing the war to an end. We voted for him and even when we were in this Parliament, we always supported the SLPP. And if we had wanted to be tribalistic or we wanted to be otherwise, believe you me we should have aligned with Dr John Karefa Smart or Thaimu Bangura. And at that time, the view was that, Dr John Karefa Smart won the elections and it was true. That is to tell you Mr Speaker that we could have used Dr John Karefa Smart more than Tejan-Kabbah because he was SLPP. But we supported Tejan-Kabba. Are you people ready to support us? You are not ready to support us at all. So, this is the problem we have with you. People should be appreciative of others. We should learn to say thanks to Mr President. That is all we are asking here. The President has done so much in five years. Never in the political history of this country has this been done.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, a lot has been said about partnership. Madam Minority Leader, we hope you will join us. We hope you will cooperate with us because you depend on us for your betterment.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Honourable Gladys Gbappy Brima did say among other things that you have so many examiners but the greatest examiners are the people of this country. It is only these examiners that have to decide. In spite of all that, she has said that from 2007 to 2012, they have depended on Dr Ernest Koroma.

Already, they have been breaking my neck with request. They are saying: "*Honourable S. B. B. Dumbuya, bo dis tin na fo luk into am. Da mɔni we dem bi gi wi na half mɔni.*"

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, Honourable J. B. Mansaray, my very good friend was saying that he was looking up to me, in my capacity as Leader of the House and Leader of Government Business for the betterment of this Parliament. Honourable J. B. Mansaray, you would agree with me and even testify that I have always been championing the course of Members of Parliament irrespective of party affiliation.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, let me conclude with the observation made by the Minority Leader about the Ministers that refused to be here. These Ministers must be dealt with seriously. I am hundred percent in support of that Bill you spoke about. I agree with you that when they come here, they appear subserviently. But once they have had what they want from us, they become completely different.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, at one time in the course of the day, Honourable Deputy Speaker did say we have won the debate but Honourable Andrew Lungay said that we have not yet won because he was going to speak. I want to tell him that his contribution did not add anything to the debates. I thank you very much.

HON. IBRAHIM BUNDU (*Deputy Majority Leader of the House*): Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am under obligation by the provision of Standing Orders 32 (15) to do a wrap-up of these debates. In the words of our abled Clerk, I am going to make this wrap-up as short as a mini-skirt; but long enough to cover areas to satisfy everybody. In doing so, I want to emulate His Excellency the President, when he started by thanking those who returned him to power for the second and final term. I am going to thank my constituents for electing me for the third and probably the last time. I used the word probably because I am not under any constitutional obligation to say it. The people will speak for me.

Mr Speaker, Hon. Members in doing so, I want to start by thanking Mr Speaker and with great apology believe me while some of us enjoy the laxity of going in and out

during the debates, Mr Speaker will sit down endlessly and this has happened for five good days. I bow my head; I bow my head and say thank you for your patience.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am going to disappoint my colleagues on this side. I am going to disappoint you because I will not join any one of you to spoil the bad name of the SLPP. I will not do that because their name is already bad in the minds of the people of this country. Let it remain that way. Whether you like it or not, the SLPP know how to oppose. The SLPP are very veracious when it comes to opposition. The only way we can reward them is to let them stay as opposition members permanently.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I am disappointed a bit. Charity, they say begins at home and not abroad. I did not hear Honourable Members on both sides of this House showering praises of thanks to His Excellency the President for what he did for this Parliament and what he is still doing. I did not see that at all. As recent as last week, this House ratify a grant of 2million dollars from the African Capacity Building Fund, solely for the use of Parliament and Parliamentarians. The history behind it is that it is His Excellency the President whilst he was seated there as Minority Leader piloted the Bill that enacted the Parliamentary Service Commission. Those of us parliamentarians who negotiated for the fund would have had the legal authority to say bravo to Mr President. This country is blessed with a dynamic Leader. This country is blessed with a leader that is very caring, God-fearing, and a leader that can cure the blind.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, I was listening to a programme on 98.1 Radio Station last week. Somebody reported that land grabbers who were encroaching on the land belonging to Approved School but no lesser person than the Deputy Minister of Social Welfare went there to see for himself. That problem is now solved. I told you I am going to make my contribution as short as a mini-skirt. I want to thank the noble Paramount Chiefs who took the right position for which they are here. We thank you for the advice you've given to us. We thank the Lecturers who are Members of Parliament for giving their knowledge free of charge. On that note, I move that: *"Be it resolved that we the Members of Parliament here assembled wish to thank His Excellency the*

President for the Address he so graciously delivered on the occasion of the State Opening of the First Session of the Fourth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone in the Chamber of Parliament, Friday, 14th December, 2012.”

(Question Proposed, Put and Agreed to)

(Motion of Thanks to His Excellency the President, Dr Ernest Bai Koroma on the Address he so graciously delivered on the occasion of the State Opening of the First Session of the Fourth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone in the Chamber of Parliament on Friday, 14th December, 2012 has been carried).

ADJOURNMENTS

(The House rose at 3.20 p.m. and was adjourned until Wednesday, 13th February, 2013, at 10.00 a.m.)