

DISCLAIMER

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Day 2: Wednesday 24th January 2018

[PART A]

9:00am

I. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY – reading of Bills

1. Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2016/2017 – debate on second reading continued

1. ILI Setefano Tafili Taateo, Member for Aana Alofi No.2 (continued from Day 1)

The Member noted that he had previously noted the urgent need to improve the Leulumoega Clinic. He then addressed the Minister of Works regarding the poor road conditions within his district, in particular the Faleseela road leading to the Wharf. He urged the Minister to consider repair works for these areas. In addressing the Minister of Education, the Member stated that when the National University of Samoa separated from the Institute of Technology, there was a decline in focus on vocational studies. The Member suggested that the Ministry seek a balance between the two areas of studies to ensure both institutes develop in the interests of all students.

2. AUMUA Isaia Lameko, Member for Falealili West

After noting the 3.5% GDP noted in the Bill, the Member requested that the Minister of Works consider repair works for the roads leading to the schools within Saleilua and Poutasi. He also

noted that the road next to Vaiula required repairs, particularly as it was a major tourist attraction. The Member thanked the Minister of Prisons on the change of the emergency number (911), noting that it would now be easier for the public to remember the number in times of emergencies. In regards to the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Labour, the Member noted that a large sum had been received from the Yazaki lease and then made queries into this issue.

3. LEANA Ronnie Posini, Member for Safata West

The Member addressed issues with the Fire and Emergency Services, noting an incident which had occurred in Palalaua. He requested that a Post should be created in Safata as the surrounding villages of Lefaga and Falealili and Safata itself, was home to many resorts. It was therefore necessary to have a Fire and Emergency Post in this area.

Addressing the Minister of Works, the member requested repairs of access roads, stating that it had been six years since works have been carried out in this area. The Member also requested the connection of electricity for Nuusuatia. LEANA stated that it had been two years since the drainage at Savalalo had been repaired. The Member gave several suggestions as to why the drainage in this area was in a constant need of repair, for example, due to the rising sea level or poor project planning. In terms of the timeframe, the Member stated that if the drainage is not properly fixed, more repairs will be required in the future. The Member emphasised the need for proper planning for major works.

Other issues raised by the Member included the need for the Minister of Health to consider reopening the district hospital in Safata, which is currently not operational. He thanked the Minister for Agriculture for the continued efforts in increasing taro exports. LEANA then noted that there was an abundance of Nonu plants in his constituency. He requested that the Minister look for suitable markets for this plant, which is said to have many medicinal benefits.

The Member for Safata West acknowledged the many improvements that have been made within his constituency. He suggested that a Commission of Inquiry be established to review the merger between the National University of Samoa and the Institute of Technology, to assess the possible pros and cons. The Member stated that students have different strengths and that not all are inclined academically; however, he noted that there is high demand for vocational skills.

In terms of environmental issues, the Member stated that sand minding had a negative impact on sea levels and suggested that the Ministry seek out ways to counter these issues. In regards to the increase of Marijuana growers on island, the Member stated that stringent legislation put in place to deter marijuana growers and consumption.

4. TOOMATA Aki Tupea, Member for Salega West

The Member for Salega West noted his support for the Bill and expressed gratitude for the Government's work and the many projects that have been implemented for the benefit of the nation. TOOMATA acknowledged the Government's efforts in establishing an additional international finance institution similar to the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. He noted his hopes that the bank will prove profitable, and that it may aid the expansion of Savaii developments. The Member also noted the various improvements made to wharfs, and also requested that the Ministry of Education establish campuses in Savaii for Savaii students.

The Member stated that Samata Uta and Fogatuli now have access to water and commended the Samoa Water Authority for their hard work. The Member continued by acknowledging the hard work of the Chief Executive. He then stated that there were rumors of a 30% reduction or discount in water bills for Salelologa, and noted that if this were the case, that his constituency request a similar reduction.

- Several Members requested that the water supplies within their constituencies be tested for safety.

- **TOOMATA Aki Tupea – *continued***

The Member acknowledged the work of the Ministry of Agriculture for works carried out during the festive season. The Member then commented on the poor conditions on roads within his constituency. Toomata then noted the various developments for vanilla farming, noting that the crop has issues with growth on island.

▪ **Hon PRIME MINISTER**

The Hon Prime Minister stated that there is an insect which is required for the vanilla plants to be pollinated; however this insect is not native to Samoa.

▪ **TOOMATA Aki Tupea – *continued***

The member noted that aside from planting issues, vanilla plants are expensive and therefore the profit margins for potential farmers/exporters are low.

▪ **Hon PRIME MINISTER**

The Hon Prime Minister stated that the value of a few vanilla plants is almost equivalent to 10 truckloads of coconuts (i.e., it is valuable).

▪ **TOOMATA Aki Tupea – *continued***

In terms of cattle farming, the Member noted the limited number of cattle farms in Samoa, suggesting that policies be put in place to minimise cattle slaughter. He then suggested that the Government consider investing in private cattle farms which are already in existence and thriving.

▪ **Hon LOPAOO Natanielu Mua, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Member for Vaisigano No.1**

The Minister noted that vanilla continues to be imported via Women in Business (WIBDI).

▪ **TOOMATA Aki Tupea – *continued***

TOOMATA the concluded by suggested that attempts be made to cross breeds of local/international cattle as has already been proved successful with plant species.

5. FAAULUSAU Rosa Duffy-Stowers, Member for Gagaifomauga No.3

In addressing the Minister of Finance, FAAULUSAU recounted on the Government's plans for the new prisons did not include the cost for fences, roads, water and spaces for staff. She noted that it had been stated that the lack of funds, the Member stated that these costs will be addressed once the current contractor completes the set work. A new tender will then be sought to remedy

these remaining issues. The Member queried why the architectural plans had not been drawn up to fit within the allocated budget.

- Hon SILI Epa Tuioti, Minister of Finance, Member for Faasaleleaga No.1 East

The Hon Minister stated that there are many developments in the pipeline for the new prisons; which had not initially been accounted for in the original budget.

- **FAAULUSAU Rosa Duffy-Stowers – *continued***

The Member then acknowledge the work of the Ministry of Education in terms of the increased student exam pass rate, which was noted as being a positive indicator of the Ministry's activities.

The Member then stated that the water within her district needs improvement, noting the results of a recent survey which indicated the water within the area was not safe for human consumption.

FAAULUSAU then commended the Minister of Health for the developments of the constituent's hospital. She then requested that the Minister of Works consider allocating funds for surveying land boundaries within the constituency. The Member stated that it was already been agreed that half of the land at Aopo will be divided with Sasina; however, Sasina did not have the funds to carry out boundary marking; she therefore requested that the Minister of Finance provide financial support for this endeavour.

Proceedings were suspended at 10:39am

Proceedings reconvened at 11:14am

- **MOTION FOR THE EXTENSION OF SITTING TIMES**

The Hon Prime Minister moved a motion to extend sitting hours from 9am - 1pm and for the House to resume at 7pm - 11pm. These times will remain until the Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2017/2018 is passed; the motion was seconded and approved.

6. TAPUSATELE Mauteni Tamasone Metuli II Esera, Member for Vaisigano No.2

The Member noted his support for the budget and acknowledged the work of the Ministry of Finance which supported continued national development. The Member then commented on the current minimum wage, stating that Ministries and relevant bodies must ensure that the right qualified personnel are hired for positions. TAPUSATELE then acknowledged the efforts of the Ministry of Agriculture in its attempts to assist the public with the development of agricultural crops.

The Member then addressed the Ministry of Works, thanking the Minister for various infrastructure projects. He requested assistance for the drilling of a borehole in Sataua, noting that quality tests have been carried out, but that in his personal opinion the water is brackish. Other requested including the installation of additional street lights; repairs to damaged access roads from Papa to Fagasa and heavy duty machines for road maintenance. The Member also stated that the Minister should review the manufacture years of imported cars, stating that trucks and similar cars were more appropriate for Samoan roads.

In terms of health issues, the Member acknowledged the work of the Ministry, commending the move to reintroduce the use of Women's Committees for health purpose. He then stated that for visiting doctors (rural areas etc), their stay should exceed one day, as this timeframe was not enough to tend all patients. He then concluded by supporting comments raised by previous members in regards to the prioritisation of the Polytechnic and then requesting that the Minister of education consider maintenance repairs for the school in Papa.

7. LEALAILEPULE Rimoni Aiafi, Member for Faleata West

The Member for Faleata West acknowledged the development of a new prison, as his consistency has continued to face issues regarding prison escapees. He also recommended that Cell No.9 be reinstated. The Member continued by noting his concern that many new developments were being funded via loans; he stated that there was a need to seek out grants to lessen debt.

On health issues, the Member commended the impending merge of the Ministry of Health and National Health Services—further noting that a bulk of national grants are received for the

Health Sector. He then stated that there was an issue with local eggs, stating that their expiration dates are short (30 days) as compared to those in Pago Pago (60 days). He then suggested that there should be clear public clarification as to the status of Turkey Tail sales; noting that there now appears to be a “black market” for turkey tail sales.

LEALAILEPULE noted that 90% of products on island are imported; however, duty taxes remain high. This, the Member stated, translated into high costs for consumer. He then stated that there are, however, suppliers who are able to import and therefore sell their goods, for much lower prices. The Member requested that the Price Control Board investigate these matters to ensure equal and fair treatment of both businesses and the public.

The Member noted the improvement in student’s examination results, commending the Ministry of Education in this regards. He then suggested that a new college is established in Faleata. He then stated that the fight between Joseph Parker and Anthony Joshua has been scheduled for March 31, and requested the opportunity to attend as support.

On land issues and the recent Samoa Solidarity marches, the Member stated that the group seemed to imply that they were the only people who “loved Samoa”. He noted that 80% of land in Samoa is customary land, and on these issues, he stressed the importance of Parliamentarians educating their constituents and the public at large on legislation before the House which affect customary land. On this issue, the Member stated that the recent trend in using the internet as a medium to expose various issues was in fact a misuse of technology. He stated that the Courts exist to address grievances, which should not be aired one-sided, online. The Member then stated that a gate was recently built in his constituency; however, it was paid for by the village—he noted his disappoint at the lack of allocated funds for such projects. He then recommended that the Minister of Works to consider reassessing the state of the roads in Falelauniu.

▪ **HON Minister for Works: PAPALIITELE NIKO LEE HANG**

The Hon Minister stated that the lack of funding as requested by the Member for the gate was due to miscommunication. He then assured the Member that if there were surplus funds, these could possibly be put towards road works in Falelauniu.

▪ **LEALAILEPULE Rimoni Aiafi - *continued***

The Member stated that efforts should be put towards improving local products such as taro chips, and that the Ministry of Agriculture should stop certain products being imported to support locally made goods. In regards to Samoa Airways, the Member stated that the project was critical but in its unstable stages of development. He recommended the Government to closely monitor the work and development of the Company. The **Hon Minister for Public Enterprises** assured the Member that the Company would be closely monitored. In conclusion, the Member stated that the 911 emergency number was not without its issues.

8. FAASOUTAULO A Pati Taulapapa, Member for Gagaemauga No.2

The Member requested roads repairs to be undertaken in Saleaula and Salamumu, noting that he has already made formal requests to the Minister of Works, yet works have yet to begin. Specific work to be carried out was noted as including the construction, maintenance and tar sealing of access roads. The Member then expressed disappointment at plans to relocate the hospital in his constituency inland; noting that it would be less accessible for most villagers.

FAASOUTAULO A then stated that his village is a prime area for tourist activities which could generate income for the area. He then acknowledged the work of various Ministers and requested that his village be granted permission to utilise the old prison site.

9. NAFOITOA Talaimanu Ketu, Deputy Speaker and Member for Gagaemauga No.3

The Member for Gagaemauga No.3 noted the importance of prioritising funds for Government employee training programmes so that specialised skills may be upgraded. He also suggested that the Government reconsider the minimum wage rate. He noted that many families rely on one sole bread winner, and more often than not, the income earner is earning the minimum wage.

▪ **Hon FAUMUINA Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga, Member for Palauli le Falefa**

In regards to salaries, the Member stated that these were issues that must be decided by individual Ministries and their respective human resource divisions. In terms of hiring consultants/technical advisors, the Member stated that rates were set according the specific

project to be implemented, the relevant performance measures and the outcomes set to be achieved. The Member stated that if we were to increase the minimum wage rate, many would become unemployed as they would no longer meet the adjusted skill requirements. The Member therefore asserted that raising the minimum wage rate was not the answer in terms of national unemployment issues.

▪ **NAFOITOA Talaimanu Ketu – *continued***

NAFOITOA stated that it was time to review the \$2.30 minimum wage rate as Samoa's cost of living continues to rise. The member then commented on the impending merger between the National Health Services and the Ministry of Health, urging Parliament to consider the impact the merger will have on those who will inevitably lose their jobs. The Member then commented on the lack of redundancy packages for Members of the Police service, noting the recent move to force resignations from married couples serving together.

▪ **FAUMUINA Tiatia Liuga**

The Member supported the Member's concerns the redundancy packages, stating that policy dictates that exit packages must be given. He noted however, that this would not apply to Officers who had been dismissed due to other issues.

▪ **PESETA Vaifou Tevagaena,**

The Member clarified that this policy that legally married couples were restricted from working together was not a new law. He stated that this also extended to immediate family members.

▪ **NAFOITOA Talaimanu Ketu – *continued***

The Member stated that the law seems unclear about the status of de-factor couples. He then continued by requesting the Minister for Works consider road works for access roads located in Avao, Lelepa and Vaipouli.

NAFOITOA continued by noting that the tabled Report noted a surplus for the Ministry of Education, and suggested that some funds be used to construct a school in his constituency. The Member also requested that access to health services for some was still an issue. The Member

stated that some had to bus to the nearest health clinic which may cost \$3 or \$5 in a taxi. These extra expenses, stated the Member, should be taken into consideration by the Minister of Health. He also requested that the Samoa Shipping Corporation consider another ferry to service the Upolu-Savaii route.

SSC (MWTI)

▪ **HON Minister for Works: PAPALIITELE NIKO LEE HANG**

The Hon Minister stated that plans were in the pipeline for a new ferry.

Proceedings were suspended at 1:00pm

The Assembly will reconvene at 7:00pm