

**DISCLAIMER**

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**DAY 6: MONDAY 29<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2015****TIME: 9:05am****[PART A]****I. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY****1. SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (No.2) 2014/2015 and APPROPRIATION BILL 2015/2016 (debate on second reading resumed)**

***i. Hon TOLOFUAIVALELEI Falemoe Leिताua, Aana Alofi No.2, Minister for Women, Community & Social Development (continuation of speech from Friday 26<sup>th</sup> June)***

The Hon Minister stated that of the 34 Independent Water Scheme projects which have been registered, 17 projects have been completed and 4 are in progress, 3 of which are at Fagaloa, (Uafato, Salimu and Samamea) and 1 at Nuusuatia. Consideration is still being given to a project in Vaiee, the outcome of which is dependent on funding. The Sili water project will soon be implemented. The Hon Minister also stated that there is appropriation for the development of the Alii and

Faipule as well as women's committees. In support of the objectives of the Village Fono Act, 2 million has been appropriated support village chiefs and other village groups; this is to ensure that stability within the villages is maintained. His Ministry is seeking the support of villages along the west coast road towards Faleolo for the beautification of these villages in anticipation of the upcoming Manu Samoa vs All Blacks game. With regards to the Samoa Victim Support Group (SVSG), the Ministry has assisted in the drafting of legislation which address child labour and child abuse. It is anticipated that relevant legislation will be introduced in the near future. He also noted that the SVSG will be supervised by the Ministry to ensure that victims in their care are well looked after. Further to this, the Ministry will assist in ensuring that victims' transition from the SVSG to their families is not only smooth but safe.

The Hon Minister touched on the issue of poverty in Samoa; he noted that there is a youth programme which has been operational in Samoa for three years. He further noted that Samoa has won international awards as a result of Samoa's efforts to encourage youth employment; particularly in terms of farming, fishing, printing and other related sectors.

**ii. Hon PALUSALUE Faapo II, Safata, Leader of the Opposition**

The Leader of the Opposition clarified that his previous statement about poverty was in reference to "poverty within families". For example, there is a village within Samoa where water access has been limited; only two families in that village have running water as most other families cannot afford this service.

**iii. LEVAOPOLO Talatonu, Gagaemauga No.2**

The Member noted that there are different avenues by which each family in Samoa earns income. He stated that despite recorded statistics, there is a large percentage of “economically inactive” families within Samoa.

**iv. Hon MANUALESAGALALA Mati Tuigamala Enokati Posala, Safata, Minister for Works, Infrastructure and Transport**

In response to the Leader of the Opposition’s comments, the Hon Minister stated that the current cost for water is .50 sene per 44 gallons. He stated that the main issue in terms of water supply is water leakages. The Hon Minister then expressed his gratitude to the Ministry for Women, Community and Social Development for the completion of water supplies at Sataoa and Lotofaga and for works to be implemented at Nusuatia.

**v. Hon PRIME MINISTER**

The Hon PRIME MINISTER informed the House that his village has an independent water scheme. He stated that the chiefs oversee the water supply and charge for its usage at the prices agreed to by the village council. In terms of employment, he noted that the majority of Samoa’s population rely on subsistence farming which is not recorded in the national statistics as formal employment. However, evidence of this is visible if one personally travels around the island. It is reflected in the number of small family stalls which sell vegetables and the like. He noted that the Bureau of statistics only records figures obtained from official departments such as the NPF and through VAGST.

**vi. Hon LEAUPEPE Toleafoa Apulu Faafisi, Aana Alofi No.1**

The Hon Minister expressed his gratitude to the Ministry of Women for the various initiatives as elaborated by the Hon Minister. He noted that, as Members of

Parliament, it is their responsibility to encourage and strengthen village development. He noted that this can be achieved through the promotion of subsistence farming. He further stated that poverty will only increase if the government attempts to spoon feed the population.

**vii. *Hon TOLOFUAIVALELEI Falemoe Leiatua, Aana Alofi No.2, Minister for Women, Community & Social Development***

The Hon Minister informed the House that while in Fiji recently, he learnt that approximately 46,000 of its “employed” population have since begun to harvest cassava as a means of self-employment.

**viii. *Hon PALUSALUE Faapo II, Safata, Leader of the Opposition***

The Leader of the Opposition reiterated his previous comments in regards to water being too expensive for many Samoan families.

**ix. *LEVAOPOLO Talatonu, Gagemauga No.2***

In response to the Hon Prime Minister’s assertion that self-subsistence employment is not recorded; he reiterated that his previous comments were in reference to the 2011 National Census and that such statistics are included in the Statistics Bureau’s national survey on income. Therefore, self-subsistence farming is indeed recorded.

**x. *Hon PRIME MINISTER***

The Hon PRIME MINISTER offered several examples of why national statistics should not always be relied on as an accurate reflection of a country’s employment situation.

**xi. *Hon LE MAMEA Ropati, Lefaga & Faleaseela, Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries.***

The Hon Minister reiterated that Samoa has won several awards for its efforts to eradicate hunger and poverty as well as on the promotion of food security.

**xii. Hon TOLOFUAIVALELEI Falemoe Leiatua, Aana Alofi No.2, Minister for Women, Community & Social Development**

The Hon Minister noted his objection to several Members' comments stating that Samoa is impoverished. He stated that Samoa has been blessed with an abundance of livestock and crops.

**xiii. Hon PALUSALUE Faapo II, Safata, Leader of the Opposition**

The Leader of the Opposition stated that many families cannot afford the cost of water or electricity. He reiterated that many of these services remain unaffordable.

**xiv. Hon TOLOFUAIVALELEI Falemoe Leiatua, Aana Alofi No.2, Minister for Women, Community & Social Development**

The Hon Minister noted that there are cases where water supply is disconnected due to irresponsible users not paying their bills when they are due.

**xv. Hon PALUSALUE Faapo II, Safata, Leader of the Opposition**

The Leader of the Opposition reiterated that many Samoan families simply cannot afford the cost of these essential services.

**xvi. Hon TOLOFUAIVALELEI Falemoe Leiatua, Aana Alofi No.2, Minister for Women, Community & Social Development**

The Hon Minister again stated that Samoa is not in poverty and that through God's grace; Samoa continues to be blessed with an abundance of food and basic

necessities. He noted again that the current cost for water stands at .50 sene per 44 gallons.

**xvii. Hon PALUSALUE Faapo II, Safata, Leader of the Opposition**

The Leader of the Opposition stated that a Tanumalala resident has a water bill which totals in excess of \$6,000. He stated that the water pressure in the area is insufficient to service the water needs of all the Tanumalala residents.

**xviii. Hon MANUALESAGALALA Mati Tuigamala Enokati Posala, Safata, Minister for Works, Infrastructure and Transport.**

The Hon Minister stated that there are many similar problems across Samoa. He noted that there are residents who have arrears dating back to 2002. He acknowledged the existence of water leakages in various areas and noted that the Ministry is continuously investigating possible solutions to issues hampering effective services in water supply. He also noted that there is a family which has not paid their water bill for 5 years.

**xix. Hon PALUSALUE Faapo II, Safata, Leader of the Opposition**

Hon PALUSALUE stated that the family in question will not pay their water bill as the supply is intermittent and unreliable.

**xx. Hon TOLOFUAIVALELEI Falemoe Leiatua, Aana Alofi No.2, Minister for Women, Community & Social Development**

The Hon Minister encouraged Member's not to ignore the positive economic improvements across Samoa. He emphasised the Ministry's collaborative efforts with villages and various institutions to ensure that land is worked and farmed as a means of supporting Samoa's economy. He noted that Samoa has won awards for

efforts in promoting youth development for 3 consecutive years. Other programmes in progress are those for village councils and women's committees.

The Hon Minister then noted that efforts are being made, in collaboration with the Ministry for Finance, to ensure that revenue is utilised to upgrade equipment to be used in the upcoming elections and for the continuous services by the Savali newspaper. He then expressed his gratitude to the villages near the airport (such as Leulumoega, Fasitoo and Faleasiu) for their efforts in beautifying the road side. The Hon Minister noted that this will make guests arriving in Samoa for the All Blacks vs Manu Samoa game, feel welcome. In regards to constituency requests made by Members, he asked for patience and noted that necessary work for these requests will commence in due time.

**xxi. Hon TUISUGALETAUA Sofara Aveau, Vaimagaua East, Minister for Communications and Information Technology.**

The Hon Minister addressed requests for current internet charges to be lowered. He stated that it is the Ministry's vision to offer internet services which are both affordable and safe. He stated that the Ministry is currently reviewing the cost of utilising the various new technological services which have been introduced in to Samoa.

Hon TUISUGALETAUA noted however, that there has been a significant decrease in the cost of internet services. He stated that 8 years ago, it cost USD\$2,500 per megabyte per month; now it costs \$250 per megabyte. He noted that once the installation of the submarine cable is complete, internet costs will decrease significantly. He also noted that the "National Broadband Highway" is being utilised for several Ministry's networks, both in Upolu and Savaii. 199 Ministries in

various locations are using the NBH with 116 of those Ministries using the Highway consistently. This means that only 70 or so Ministries have not opted to use the NBH. The Hon Minister also noted that the NBH is not currently connected to the internet, this is due to legal issues; however, an amicable resolution should see the implementation of Phase 2 and subsequent connection to the internet.

The Hon Minister noted that there has been on-going advertisement of a tender for a company which can manage and operate the NBH. In terms of television coverage, Vaisigano has lodged complaints in regards to the coverage within the area. However, the underlying issue is that antennas are not appropriately placed outside residential homes. He also noted that if families opt to connect via Bluesky, the reception is clearer.

**xxii. LEALAILEPULE Rimoni Aiafi, Faleata West**

The Member noted his appreciation for the improvement in Samoa's internet services. However, the Member raised the issue of capacity building for the Ministry's staff so that the Ministry can better control internet costs. He stated that if a private company controls the gateway, internet costs become expensive. If however, control is given to a government Ministry or corporation the Government should oversee the company's work.

**xxiii. Hon TUISUGALETAUA Sofara Aveau, Vaimagaua East, Minister for Communications and Information Technology.**

The Hon Minister noted his agreement's with the Member for Faleata West's comments. He noted that it was for this reason that the Ministry was searching for an appropriate company to administer the network. He noted that their preference is for a business which may aide the government's revenue seeking efforts. The Hon Minister then noted with appreciation that the World Bank has approved funding

for the installation of the submarine cable. He further noted that all interested parties have provided equity for the establishment of a new company which will oversee the installation of the submarine cable. This company will also take on the duties of the steering committee. It is intended that by August 2015, the handover will become official and tenders will be accepted (including international bids) for the management of the cable. He noted that the cable will run through Fiji to Australia and the United States. There is also a second cable to American Samoa which will connect to the ASH cable. He noted that the use of these 2 cables concurrently will enhance connectivity.

Hon TUISUGALETAUA noted that there are other Pacific nations which have shown interest in utilising Samoa's cable. It is envisioned that partnerships of this nature should be confirmed next year and noted that it would further reduce the cost of internet access and usage as well as provide faster technological services. The Hon Minister recommended that local officials govern the operation of the submarine cable and noted that the project will cost approximately USD\$42 million. Funding will be shared between the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, the Australian Bank and the government of Samoa.

**xxiv. LEALAILEPULE Rimoni Aiafi, Faleata West**

The Member for Faleata West noted that connectivity issues will always be apparent but that the Ministry should not overlook security issues. He noted the ability of terrorists cells (such as ISIS) to hack secure networks. He then queried revenue obtained from both Digicel and Bluesky. He asked the Hon Minister if Samoa receives revenue for promoting their services internationally; according to the Member, development by the two companies appears to be "slow".

**Proceedings were suspended at 9:45am for morning tea.**