

DISCLAIMER

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DAY 6: MONDAY 29th JUNE 2015**TIME: 11:31am****[PART B]****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 TUISUGALETAUA Sofara Aveau, Vaimauga East, Minister for
Communications, Information & Technology**

The Hon Minister noted that revenue received by the Ministry depends on various legal stipulations; he noted that the Ministry does not involve itself with overseas branches of companies such as Digicel and Bluesky.

ii. LEALAILEPULE Rimoni Aiafi, Faleata West

The Member suggested whether taxes should be imposed on overseas companies which operate within Samoa and if so, this should be appropriately reflected in

legislation. He stated that many Samoan citizens are impoverished due to poor financial management and many use a large proportion of their income on the purchasing of cell phone credit.

iii. Hon PRIME MINISTER

The Hon Prime Minister noted that the Companies Act governs the operation of all private companies; the authority of the Government is only effective in terms of businesses operating within Samoa. He noted that off shore companies are not covered by the Companies Act and they only need to pay a licence fee to become registered in Samoa.

iv. Hon TUISUGALETAUA Sofara Aveau, Vaimauga East, Minister for Communications, Information & Technology

The Hon Minister supported the Hon Prime Minister's statement and re-emphasised that these companies are "branches" of overseas companies.

v. TAFUA Maluelue Tafua, Aleipata Itupa i Lalo

In regards to the earlier issues raised by the Hon Minister, the Member noted that reception for radio and television is unclear in many parts of his constituency. He sought an explanation from the Hon Minister on this issue.

vi. Hon TUISUGALETAUA Sofara Aveau, Vaimauga East, Minister for Communications, Information & Technology

The Hon Minister noted that he has personally visited the areas which receive bad reception for radio and television. He stated that television stations have stated that they will work to improve their coverage. He also noted that the Government can assist with the improvement of radio broadcasts as there is a Government radio

station. He then put forward the various requests from his constituency and noted his appreciation for road works which have been completed.

vii. Hon TUILOMA Lameko, Falealili, Minister for Revenue

The Hon Minister noted that the Ministry for Revenue is at the heart of the Budget. This financial year's estimated revenue includes approximately 470million generated by the Ministry. He said the Ministry focuses on staff capacity building to ensure new methods are developed which will hopefully lead to an increase in revenue sources for Samoa. The Hon Minister acknowledged a suggestion by one Member, to separate the divisions for customs and income tax returns. Acknowledging the merits of the suggestion, the Hon Minister informed the House that the two had been separated in the past. As a result of a reduction of offices (of responsibility) under the Ministerial portfolios, the two divisions were again merged to ensure effective consolidation of revenue.

As to constituency issues, the Hon Minister noted the need for the provision of an ambulance for the Falealili Hospital to transport patients to the Motootua Hospital. He then stated that Falealili is the largest supplier of taro for export and noted his gratitude to the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries. He suggested that Falealili be the sole supplier of taro for export purposes. He also noted that access roads in Falealili are in poor condition and requested that appropriate repairs be carried out.

viii. Hon FONOTOE Nuafesili Pierre Laufofo, Anoamaa West, Deputy Prime Minister

The Hon Minister stated that he has noted and recorded the recommendations presented by Members for the improvement of all the Ministries within this sector.

He noted that appropriations have been made for the sector as a whole and that additional employment opportunities will also be developed. The Government is collaborating with Ministries to assist businesses such as “SAME” (Samoa Association of Manufacturers and Exporters). He noted that SAME has reported that the promotion of products has led to a 100% increase of consumer purchases. The PSSF (Private Sector Support Facility) programme has assisted with the promotion of goods overseas as well as with the renovations and developments to Samoan hotels.

The Hon Minister noted that the informal sector includes both farmers and fishers; assistance is provided to them through SBEC (Small Business Enterprise Centre) in collaboration with the UN, NZ and Australia. At present, there are over 300 farmers registered with the SBEC. He noted that this has increased due to an increase in overseas demands for products. He noted that this programme will assist with overseas supplies. In terms of cocoa production, the Hon Minister noted that cocoa has been provided for *Whittaker’s* chocolate company. He stated that Samoa is recognised on *Whittaker* labels. He also noted that there is a local company which is attempting to negotiate with an Australian company for the production of banana chips, taro chips and similar varieties of chips.

ix. AVEAU Tuala Lepale Niko Palamo, Faleata East

The Member for Faleata East queried whether Australia has permitted the importation of locally produced Samoan chips. And if so, whether there are programmes in existence which will assist producers with acquiring the necessary equipment for chip production.

x. Hon FONOTOE Nuafesili Pierre Laufo, Anoamaa West, Deputy Prime Minister

The Hon Minister stated that locally produced chips are accepted in Australia. In terms of equipment, he stated that some equipment is available under the PSSF programme. He also referred to the “Duty Concession” programme which provides duty exemption for equipment required for farming. He noted that this was an initiative implemented to assist the private sector. He further noted that when local goods are promoted overseas, the demand increases; however, local suppliers are unable to meet the demands of the overseas markets and this has been the biggest hurdle to date.

xi. LEVAOPOLO Talatonu, Gagaemauga No.2

The Member for Gagaemauga No.2 noted that there are no incentives provided for those in the agricultural sector.

xii. Hon FONOTOE Nuafesili Pierre Laufofo, Anoamaa West, Deputy Prime Minister

The Hon Minister stated that Samoa should not only focus on the creation of employment opportunities, but the development of a “skilled” labour force. This would necessitate collaboration between various Ministries, particularly the MCIL and the MESC. He noted that even plantation workers must be well educated in order to be productive.

xiii. LEVAOPOLO Talatonu, Gagaemauga No.2

The Member for Gagaemauga No.2 stated that these skills are being taught at the National University; however, there are no employment opportunities for these students upon graduation.

xiv. Hon LEAUPEPE Toleafoa Apulu Faafisi, Aana Alofi No.1, Minister for Police

The Hon Minister noted that in 1968, Chanel College students used ploughs to plant taro. He noted that this method is cost effective.

xv. Hon FONOTOE Nuafesili Pierre Laufo, Anoamaa West, Deputy Prime Minister

The Hon Minister stated that there are educational institutions which assist in providing training for those wishing to enter the agricultural/farming sector. Apprenticeship programmes exist in which more than 450 have registered to take part from 2012 to 2014. In comparison to other Pacific countries, the requirements for the establishment of a company in Samoa are less stringent. Currently, the process takes no longer than 10 minutes for registration.

In terms of seamen training, the Hon Minister stated that 4 years ago only 60 Samoan sailors were working overseas for sailing companies. Currently, this number has increased to over 320 sailors. He noted that Samoa receives at least \$4 million from this initiative. He then reiterated the need for Samoa to adhere to the international sailing requirements in order to remain on the “white list”.

xvi. LEALAILEPULE Rimoni Aiafi, Faleata West

The Member queried what the Ministry was doing to promote sailing as a profession?

xvii. Hon FONOTOE Nuafesili Pierre Laufo, Anoamaa West, Deputy Prime Minister

The Hon Minister clarified that he was referring to cargo ships and cruise ships, not fishing vessels as this was already addressed by the Minister for Agriculture.

xviii. Hon FONOTOE Nuafesili Pierre Laufo, Anoamaa West, Deputy Prime Minister

Hon FONOTOE stated that construction work for the Ocean Campus at Mulinuu is underway. The facility will cater for those students wishing to become employed in this sector and will provide opportunities for students to become chief engineers which the current programme does not offer.

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

Hon PALUSALUE stated that there should be courses available for those students wishing to become fishers.

xx. Hon PRIME MINISTER

The Hon PRIME MINISTER noted that there have been many graduates of the Marine School who now seek the opportunity to work on board ships. However, there are limited opportunities and Samoa should be aware that it is competing with other Pacific nations for opportunities. He also noted that students at the Marine school are now able to progress to officer level. He also noted that *Bumble Bee Foods* employ sailors and that the Government is not idle in its attempt to procure much needed employment opportunities in this field. The completion of the new Marine School will enhance Samoa's competitive edge in terms of vying for employment opportunities.

xxi. Hon LE MAMEA Ropati, Lefaga & Faleaseela, Minister for Agriculture & Fisheries

The Hon Minister stated that there are safety programmes offered by the NUS for those who work on fishing vessels. He stated that it is in fact a requirement for anyone operating a fishing vessel to obtain a fishing licence. He then noted that

there are many who take up the courses offered by the NUS, but the problem has been a lack of interest by these same students after graduation.

xxii. Hon FONOTOE Nuafesili Pierre Laufo, Anoamaa West, Deputy Prime Minister

Hon FONOTOE stated that as a result with partnerships with, for example, PFL and Neptune, 5 scholarships were provided for students seeking up-skilling. He stated that international trade talks are still in progress with several trade partnerships to be finalised within the year (for example, with EPA). He also stated that there are partnerships with the EU and other regional/international partnerships with PICTA and SPARTECA.

In regards to lists for “goods” to be displayed by shops, in particular KK Mart at Vaisigano, Hon Fonotoe stated that the pink list (of goods prices) is the current list which was released in January of this year. He also stated that in terms of child labour, Samoa’s standing fares well compared to overseas countries. He noted that the Ministry for Women, Culture and Social Development is putting together an employment policy which will address child labour issues. The ILO recently conducted a workshop in Samoa regarding child labour; the resulting report is soon to be released which will enable a more accurate assessment of Samoa’s current situation.

xxiii. LEALAILEPULE Rimoni Aiafi, Faleata West

The Member stated that there should be more focus on child protection than child labour and noted that there is no current legislation which protects children from being forced to hawk goods on the street. He also noted that there exists no legislation which prohibits parents from forcing their children to sell goods instead of attending school.

xxiv. TAFUA Maluelue Tafua, Aleipata Itupa i Lalo

In response to the Hon Minister's 'goods' lists, the Member suggested that a Ministry representative be made responsible for monitoring and ensuring the proper display of these lists at conspicuous places like shop windows, and ensure that the old lists are removed.

xxv. Hon FONOTOE Nuafesili Pierre Laufo, Anoamaa West, Deputy Prime Minister

The Hon Minister noted that a reason for still displaying the old list is for comparison purposes. In terms of child labour, he stated that the Minister for Education has already commented on these matters and that the Police are enforcing the relevant legislation.

xxvi. LEALAILEPULE Rimoni Aiafi, Fealata West

The Member for Faleata West noted that the Hon Minister did not comment on product labelling. He then queried the Hon Minister as to whether he was aware of a proposal for the establishment of a cigarette factory.

xxvii. Hon FONOTOE Nuafesili Pierre Laufo, Anoamaa West, Deputy Prime Minister

Hon FONOTOE referred the question on 'a cigarette factory' to the Hon Prime Minister and stated that there is a Child Protection Bill being developed by the MWCSO.

xxviii. Hon AEAU Peniamina Leavaseeta, Falealupo, Deputy Leader of the Opposition

Hon AEAU sought clarification on the child labour issue, particularly in terms of who is responsible for the enforcement of existing labour laws. He then stated that it is everyone's responsibility to enforce these laws.

xxix. Hon PRIME MINISTER

The Hon PRIME MINISTER noted that electoral issues which have been raised cannot be answered by the relevant Minister, as she is absent (Hon FIAME Naomi Mataafa). He informed the House, that despite this, he has personally reviewed the matters raised. In terms of "corrupt electoral practices", for example the practice of performing an "o'o"; these have been addressed with the Amendment Bill. He further noted that the judiciary has addressed these issues and sought to remedy them by restricting the performance of "o'o" one year post general elections.

The Hon PRIME MINISTER then moved a motion that Standing Order 30(1) be set aside to permit the extension of sitting hours from 7:00pm to 11:00m to permit the consideration in detail of the Budget; the motion was approved.

Proceedings were suspended at 12:55am.

Proceedings will reconvene at 7:00pm, Monday 29th June 2015.