

DISCLAIMER

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Day 2: Thursday 23rd June 2016
3:00pm

[PART B]

I. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY CONTINUED

1. Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.2) 2015/2016 – second reading debates continued (*inclusive of the Appropriation Bill, Supplementary Appropriation Bill and the Report of the Finance and Expenditure Committee on the Second Supplementary Estimates of Receipts and Payments of the Government of Samoa for the Year ending 30 June 2016*)

- Mr. Speaker noted that after the Chairperson for the Finance and Expenditure Committee has delivered her speech; the Government will be given the opportunity to respond.

26. TAEFU Lemi, Member for Falelatai and Samatau

The Member opened his speech by acknowledging Mr. Speaker; Members of the Assembly; the Hon Prime Minister and his Cabinet and Ministry Chief Executives. He also acknowledged the support of the *O Le Ao o le Malo*; his Honour the Chief Justice and the Judiciary and various denominational leaders. He then addressed his constituency in all its honourific salutations and expressed his gratitude for their support. He also expressed his gratitude to the candidates who contested the Falelatai and Samatau seat at the General Elections, inviting them to work with him to better their constituency. The Member then raised issues relevant to various Ministers:

(a) Electoral Commissioner

The Member emphasised the need to enforce immediate registration of matai titles after their bestowment. He then suggested the establishment of a Working Committee, inclusive of various Ministries and Agencies such as the Electoral Commission; Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration; Natural Resources and Environment; Communication and Information Technology and the Office of the Clerk. The Working Committee would be responsible for recommending an appropriate system for the easy facilitation of the compulsory registration law, with particular focus on enforcing matai title registrations. The Committee would also recommend various means to address the continued issue of unregistered matai who reside in various constituencies under their Christian name, but are registered in a different constituency under an unregistered title.

The Member also suggested the utilization of a provisional registration system; he stated that perhaps, in addition to the age limit and photo identification requirements, registrations could also be received through the Bureau of Statistics.

(b) Women, Community and Social Development

The respective Ministry should be made responsible for informing the public as to the electoral laws and relevant policies.

(c) Natural Resources and Environment

The Ministry should be responsible for ensuring electoral boundaries are adhered to, particularly in regards to the registration of matai titles. He emphasised the need for Ministries to work collaboratively to ensure that the registration of matai titles and electoral voters are more effective for future elections. The Member then stated that the Ministry should focus its efforts on increasing taro exports.

(d) Education, Sports and Culture

The Member queried the existence of an appropriate 'monitoring system' for recently implemented educational changes, such as the extension of school hours. He stated that it is necessary to assess policy effectiveness and whether further adjustments should be made.

In terms of school examination results, the Member stated that results from SLCC examinations have not improved. In regards to recent inter-school conflicts, the Member emphasised the need for parents to take responsibility of their children and the extent of responsibility to confer on teachers and former students. He then noted his agreement for the Government's decision regarding Avele College.

In concluding his speech, the Member made general comments on the issue of religion and politics in the Samoan context. He stated that the global community is now taking an interest in the opinions of religious leaders, and that despite the various conflicts which may arise between religious leaders, their doctrines and political motivations in general, Samoa should remember that it is a country founded on God. He then concluded his speech by stating wishing everyone well.

27. TOFA Foleni Lio Tama Galu, Member for Faasaleleaga No.3

The Member addressed Parliament; Cabinet; the *O Le Ao o le Malo*; the Council of Deputies; the Judiciary; Ministry Chief Executives and Samoa as a whole. The Member then acknowledged his constituency, his village of Saipipi and its various denominational leaders and his family. He stated that he would endeavour to serve his constituency to the best of his ability and acknowledged the efficiency in which elections were enacted in his constituency. He thanked his campaign committee for their efforts despite the various obstacles they had encountered.

The Member continued by acknowledging the good works of the Hon Prime Minister and his Cabinet, noting that Samoa's overall standard of living has been improved due to the Government's many development projects. He noted his support for the Government and its various development initiatives, stating that progress can be evidenced through Samoa's new 'developing' status, as opposed to its former Least Developing Country (LDC) status. TOFA then proceeded to raise issues relevant to various Ministers:

(a) Natural Resources and Environment

The Member thanked the Minister and the Hon Prime Minister for their recent site visit. He noted that the visit enabled the Minister and Hon Prime Minister to witness first hand the damage caused by Cyclone Amos. He also requested the construction of a seawall to counter the issue of continued river overflow and strong ocean waves which continue to plague the areas from Saipipi to Si'ufaga. He noted that the existing bridge is not able to contain the water flow in cases of heavy rainfall due to the absence of an appropriate drainage system in the area.

(b) Works, Transport and Infrastructure

The Member noted that the frequently used road in Saipipi requires repairs. He noted that it is used by students of Vaiola College and therefore repairs would facilitate easier access for students to their school. He noted that many of the roads in the area have been disconnected due to the effects of water overflow which is a continuing issue. He also noted the need for repairs to be undertaken to the roads in Sasaai and Faga.

The Member said he had observed a helicopter landing at the Wharf at Faga, land which is looked after by the Caffarelli family. He suggested that this would be an ideal location to utilize for emergency purposes and suggested that the wharf be refurbished for this purpose. Furthermore, the wharf is in close proximity to the Tuasivi hospital, posing an additional benefit.

(c) Health

The Member commended the work of the Ministry in regards to the new hospital facilities at Tuasivi; however he noted that the ward, which houses patients needs refurbishment. He emphasised the significance of Tuasivi, in that it is where the hospital, police station and the Samoa Victim Support

Group (SVSG) are all located. He therefore requested the further development of this area. He also stated that the current morgue is too small and it should be extended owing to Savai'i's growing population. The Member commented on the disproportionate doctor - patient ratio, stating that there is a need for more doctors.

(d) Education, Sports and Culture

The Member began his address to the Minister for Education by first thanking the Government for inviting Ainoa College to perform at the recent Independence celebrations. He then noted specific requests such as the expansion of the College's current sports field and the need for general repairs to the school building.

The Member queried the proposed requirement by some Members that teachers holding diplomas must return to university to attain a degree, stating that if this were to occur, there would be an increased shortage of teaching staff. He stated that to require teachers to upgrade their qualifications would force them to neglect their primary priority, that is, teaching. In regards to the teacher shortage, the Member suggested implementing a 'bond system' whereby teachers who are awarded scholarships are bound to return to serve the Government after completing their studies for a minimum of 5 years.

The Member also suggested the reinstatement of school inspectors, noting that historically, they were an important link between districts and the Ministry. He stated that they were an additional monitoring and control body which is needed in this day and age, wherein students are engaging in, for example, acts of inter-school violence. He noted that one of the key roles of a school inspector is to monitor the daily progress of individual schools.

28. AFOA Amituanai Faleulu Maui, Member for Palauli West

The Member began his speech by addressing the House, the Hon Prime Minister, the O Le Ao o le Malo and the Council of Deputies. He also acknowledged the people of American Samoa and addressed his constituency in all its honourific salutations. The Member then raised issues relevant to various Ministers:

(a) Natural Resources and Environment

The Member addressed various water issues experienced in his constituency. He stated that the villages of Fualalo, Fualuga, Satuiatua and Sagone have had recurring water issues. He stated that Salailua has adequate access to water but the quality is poor. He emphasised that the major issues are limited water supplies and the high cost of electricity. For example, he stated that the village of Taga acquires water through boreholes drilled by the Samoa Water Authority (SWA); however it is a limited supply and runs on a timetable. He suggested that a possible long term solution for similar water issues in Palauli is to source water from nearby water springs. He then requested the provision of 2 to 3 water storage tanks for his constituency and urged the Ministry to address the dire water issues currently being experienced in Palauli.

(b) Education, Sports and Culture

The Member commented on the apparent rise of crime, including theft, murder and juvenile delinquency. He thanked Cabinet for its response to recent school conflicts and stated that the Government should consider equating punishments for inter-school violence to those handed down for more serious crimes. He suggested that instigators of school violence should be incarcerated for a minimum of a year and those charged with lesser involvement should be put on probation.

(c) Works, Transport and Infrastructure

The Member requested the construction of access roads at Foailuga and Foailalo. He also stated that the road to Taga blowholes requires upgrading owing to its popularity as a tourism site.

29. FAASOOTAULOA Pati Taulapapa, Member for Gagaemauga No.2

The Member for Gagaemauga No.2 expressed his gratitude to the Hon Prime Minister and his Cabinet for the works achieved within the past Parliamentary terms. He thanked the Lord for his guidance and for granting good health upon all those attending today's sitting. In reference to national development, he stated that Samoa is moving forward at full speed. He stated that his constituency had one request, that a road be constructed at Saleaula.

30. ALAIASA Moefaaouuo Malagaitutogiaia Sepulona Moananu, Member for Anoamaa East

The Member expressed his gratitude to his constituency for electing him to represent them in Parliament.

Proceedings were suspended at 5:00pm and reconvened at 5:30pm

The Member continued by raising issues relevant to various Ministers:

(a) Works, Transport and Infrastructure

The Member noted his constituency's satisfaction with developments so far; however, they requested road maintenance to be undertaken throughout the constituency. He also noted that roads have not been provided for in the budget, but requests that this be reviewed.

(b) Finance

The Member encouraged the Minister to continue his good works, and to be courageous in the face of adversity to ensure the continued development of the country.

(c) Education, Sports and Culture

The Member stated his support for the funding allocated to the Ministry and stated that funding should be allocated for compulsory education. He stated that despite government subsidies to assist with educational fees, there are many children still not attending school. He then noted his support

for Government plans to provide free education to primary school students.

(d) Women, Community and Social Development

In reference to the proposed *Village Fono Amendment Bill 2016*, the Member suggested that Village Fono members be paid to reflect their key role in the maintenance of village stability.

(e) Public Service Commission

The Member urged the Ministry to reconsider the status of long service public servants, particularly those who have been denied wage or salary raises in excess of 10 years.

In closing, the Member acknowledged the good work of his campaign committee and thanked them for their support leading up to, and during the General Elections. He thanked his family for their support and gave particular thanks to his village of Lufilufi. He then wished the Hon Prime Minister and Members of the Assembly well for the remainder of the Parliamentary Term.

31. LENATAI Victor Faafoi Tamapua, Member for Vaimauga West No 1

The Member acknowledged the three branches of the State and various denominational leaders. He then addressed the traditional set up of Samoa and his constituency in all its honourific salutations. He thanked his constituency for their support and in turn asked them to lend him their support as he comments on the budget. The Member then stated his support for the budget and thanked the Minister and his Ministry for their efforts. The Member raised several issues which mainly revolved around construction work.

Works, Transport and Infrastructure

The Member requested the construction of an access road leading to the lower level of Magiagi and noted that roads that area require tar sealing to enable easier access to their homes. He requested the installation of street lights for the main road fronting Faatoia and Maagao, in addition to a seawall for the village of Moataa. He noted that a specific request in relation to a walkway for the Mangrove reserve which is frequently used by the elderly is already in the Minister's hands.

The Member stated that after Cyclone Evan, repairs to the Moataa Primary school were prioritised, but he has yet to evidence any repairs to date. He then noted that the roads leading to Apia Park are in need of repair due to the growing number of residents in that area.

In concluding his speech, the Member expressed his gratitude to all the Ministries and Organisations who were involved in the overall development of the country. In particular, he thanked the Office of the Clerk for their continued support and services to Members and Parliament in general.

32. TAFUA Maluelue Tafua, Member for Aleipata Itupa i Lalo

The Member for Aleipata Itupa i Lalo expressed his gratitude to Mr. Speaker for the opportunity to speak; the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly; Ministry Chief Executives; denominational leaders and the people of American Samoa.

The Member began his speech proper with general comments which included reiterating the significance of the budget theme ("Strengthening the Foundations: Building for Tomorrow") and querying the increased levy on petroleum gas. He then expressed his disappointment at the implementation of the SACEP project noting that he had visited the Project Manager who informed him that there was no vehicle to enable visits to the rural areas. The Member pointed out that funds for this purpose had already been appropriated at the outset of the project. He also noted the increase in rhinoceros beetles which are a constant threat to the growth of coconuts trees. Specific issues raised with various Ministers included:

(a) Works, Transport and Infrastructure

The Member noted that his constituency has made numerous requests to previous Ministers on several issues but to date, no action has been taken. For example, they still await water supplies for Tiavea, Lalomanu and Satitooa. Furthermore, requests for access roads in tsunami devastated areas have yet to be actioned. He noted that there is one more access road in Saleaumua that remains incomplete, in addition to incomplete roads at Lotoipue, Ulutogia, Satitooa and Saleaumua.

(b) Education, Sports and Culture

In relation to the poor quality of roads in the area, it has become apparent that they affect the ability of children to easily access their schools. He also noted that Aleipata College's playing field requires expansion, particularly in light of several Aleipata students being given scholarships to play sports internationally. There is a need to provide adequate resources to further promote sports development within the area.

(c) Natural Resources and Environment

The Member urged relevant Ministries to investigate into possible sanitation issues which may arise from residents who have relocated to higher ground, post 2009 tsunami. He stated that research should be undertaken as to the effects of septic tanks located above water level to ensure surrounding water supplies are hygienic and safe for human consumption.

He then queried the existence of a method to filter water, which has been cycled through a boat's water and fuel filter. He noted that if there is such a method, that it should be closely monitored. He then queried the Ministry as to their efforts in conserving starfish and sea urchin species which are close to extinction. He further noted that the island's coral reef is quickly deteriorating which in turn affects the survival of other ocean species and our food resources. He then requested an update on the turtle conservation project.

The Member then addressed the issue of littering, particularly around the LeMafa Pass area, noting that it has become a dumping ground for rubbish. He stated that people caught littering in that area should be punished and lawnmowing contractors could be given extra funding to also collect rubbish accumulated in that area. He noted that the rubbish is both unhygienic and unsightly, particularly because it is a popular tourist site. He then suggested a ban on the importation of polystyrene products, and a reversion to the use of biodegradable packaging to encourage a clean and healthy environment.

In reference to annual reports from Ministries and State Owned Enterprises, the Member stated that they are generally poorly prepared; particularly those under the Infrastructure sector. He emphasised the need for properly prepared reports to be submitted to the Assembly. He urged the Infrastructure Committee to take his advice before their meeting in the upcoming weeks, stating

that Ministries who prepare poor or late reports should not be allocated funding.

(d) Police and Fire Emergency Services

He commended the Police Academy initiative, noting its possible revenue earning potential; particularly when graduates are sent on United Nations peace keeping missions. He also requested that a raise in salaries for entry level positions as a means for retaining successful graduates in the country.

The Member concluded his speech by thanking his constituency for their continued support.

33. Hon LAUOFO Fonotoe Nuafesili Pierre Laufofo, Member for Anoamaa West

The Member for Anoamaa West thanked his constituency for their support since the 14th Parliament until the present time.

He stated that he is primarily concerned with the allocation of funds to given priority areas. He further stated that he was satisfied with the existing economic outputs and proposals set out within the budget. He noted his support for proposed increases such as the 3 sene petroleum levy, stating that such increases are a normal occurrence. He also noted his support for the 6.5% increase in excise tax on alcoholic beverages, noting that it is better option than increasing tariff tax. However, he advised the Minister to look at Acts which cover consumer rights to ensure proposed changes are consistent with existing legislation.

- Mr. Speaker raised a point of order by reminded the Member that present debates are on the general principles and merits of the budget; specific details are to be discussed during the consideration in detail stage.

The Member continued his speech by raising issues relevant to various Ministers:

(a) Finance

The Member noted that he was making general comments on the Main estimates and recommendations to Ministers. He queried whether the proposed excise tax would include sugary products such as soft drinks imported from overseas.

(b) Health

The Member noted that several international doctors have visited the country recently to provide training on specific medical procedures, and queried the results of these trainings. He also queried the status of the Health Foundation, which was recently established. He suggested that the Ministers for Finance and Health work collaboratively to review the criteria governing the assessment of patients requiring overseas treatments. He stated that such an effort could potentially save money. Alternatively, there could be attempts to utilize modern technology and find ways to hold teleconferences with international doctors for guidance of patient diagnoses.

(c) Commerce, Industry and Labour

The Member for Anoamaa West urged the Minister to review the organisational structure of the SPEC, further noting that additional funds should be poured into the sector generally. He noted that the Finance and Expenditure Committee state one of the conditions of the SACEP project is that

farmers must personally contribute 30%; provide an appropriate business plan; and attend relevant workshops - all of which are difficult criteria for many to meet. He suggested that these criteria are reconsidered to ensure equal access by all to funding under the project.

The Member suggested that the Minister review the possibility of attracting more international flights to Samoa, such as flights from China. He then queried whether the agreement with China to permit direct flights has been signed. In his concluding remarks to the Minister of Commerce, the Member stated that a direct link between local farmers and relevant overseas markets should be established, to meet increasing foreign reserves.

(d) Agriculture and Fisheries

The Member urged the Minister to look into the increased production of nonu products, stating that the plant is underutilised and should be used for export.

(e) Communication and Information Technology

The Member noted his support for the establishment of the broadband highway and queried the Chairperson for Tourism to clarify his comment that State Owned Enterprises are currently bankrupt.

(f) Electoral Commissioner

The Member asked the Electoral Commissioner to review the existing electoral system and its boundaries. He recommended the implementation of a study into the existing system which would identify possible methods and means for improvement. He suggested the adopting electoral system similar to those in place in Fiji and New Zealand such as First Past the Post (FPP) and Mixed Member Proportional (MMP).

(g) Education, Sports and Culture

The Member acknowledged the appropriate appointment of the current Minister given his background in sports. He then stated that Government funding provided to both mission and private schools should be reviewed. He noted that these funds are allocated based on student enrolment, but suggested different criteria be set such as specific performance targets.

In concluding his speech, the Member made mention of the status of the freedom of religion in Samoa. He stated that the Constitution currently provides for this freedom, however, Article 11(2) implicitly refers to the Government's right to impose reasonable restrictions on a such a freedom. Alternatively, there is no provision which prohibits the Government from restricting one's right to freedom of religion. He also stated that there is a need to control social media, perhaps with an amendment to the Constitution.

34. Hon FAUMUINA Faalotane Tiatia Liuga, Member for Palauli West

(a) Works, Transport and Infrastructure

The Member stated that presently, there is a shortage of employment opportunities in Savaii; which reflects the continued relocation of Savaii residents to Apia in search of employment. The Member then stated that this was the reason for his previous requests to the Government to construct a Wharf in Savaii to create additional jobs. Furthermore, he stated that in the previous term, he had advised the Government to upgrade the Salelologa wharf; noting that the upgrade should enable cargo

ships to dock there to remove the need to utilise the Apia wharf. He stated that his requests remain the same; that major developments should be undertaken in Salelologa.

- The Hon Prime Minister queried why the Hon Member did not address these issues during his time as Minister of Finance.
- Hon FAUMUINA replied that past years should be forgotten; furthermore the Member stated that during his time, priority was given to recovery efforts post Cyclone Evan.
- The Hon Prime Minister stated that despite the occurrence of unexpected events, important issues (such as those raised by the Member) should continue to be prioritised.

(b) Finance

The Member requested the Minister to complete upgrade works to the Salelologa Wharf to ensure developments in Savaii as a whole are able to be realised.

- The Hon Prime Minister interjected by stating that the Hon Member should have endeavoured to enact these projects during his time as Minister for Natural Resources and Environment and Minister of Finance. He pointed out that it was unfair to now make such requestes to the current Minister, when he himself (a Savaii native) did not do it.

Proceedings were suspended at 6:56pm and reconvened at 7:27pm

Hon FAUMUINA continued his speech by stating that developments to Salelologa should be considered by the Minister of Finance, as he has advised. He noted that there is prime land available for the establishment of a Police Station, to avoid long distance travel to the Tuasivi Post. He also noted his support for the allocation of 440 acres of land to expand the Salelologa township, noting it to be a possible solution to continued migration to Upolu.

The Member also suggested the establishment of an NUS branch in Savaii, which is in alignment with the Government's proposal to establish Colleges in rural areas and a possible school zoning system. He also noted that of all the land that has been allocated to date, approximately only 10 acres are accessible by road. He then emphasised the need to establish Salelologa as an international port.

(c) Communication and Information Technology

The Member stated that the current utilization of the national broadband highway is inefficient, stating that there are no attempts by respectice sectors to use telecoferencing for tutoring students in isloated areas or to conduct doctor-patient appointments. Additionally, he stated that the time zone difference between Samoa and American Samoa (14 hours) should be fully utilized for such purposes.

(d) Natural Resources and Environment

The Member noted that in the previous term, he had raised climate change issues in light of the signing of the Paris and New York Conventions. He stated that the Green Climate Fund (within the billion dollar mark) depends on country proposals, and are given out on a 'first-come-first-served' basis. He suggested that Samoa give a formal proposal for relevant funding. He then noted that the quality of water is affected by the rise in sea levels. He then suggested the establishment of a

Ministry to be specifically responsible for climate change issues.

- The Hon PRIME MINISTER stated that the issues raised by the Hon Member are currently being considered or in the pipelines for implementation. In regards to the Green Climate Fund, the Hon Prime Minister stated that utilisation is only in the millions. He stated that the MNRE were previously responsible for drafting the national proposal, however given their lack of financial expertise the responsibility has now been given to the Minister for Finance.
- The Hon PRIME MINISTER then stated that constituency requests depend on Government implementation; for example, 90% of projects which are at the implementation stage require prior design. He then stated that there are not enough designers for all respective projects. He stated that 5 years previously, funding was appropriated for the redevelopment of the Leone bridge, yet to date, it has not been completed. This has been due to a lack of qualified expert civil engineers. He concluded his speech by stating the the Hon Member should be well aware of these issues, given his previous portfolio.

35. Hon AEAU Peniamina Leavai, Member for Falealupo

The Member for Falealupo acknowledged the Human Rights Protection Party's (HRPP) landslide victory at the recent General Elections and stated that despite the Government holding majority seats in the House, the 3 independents provide some source of balance. He stated that all Members must work together to achieve positive national objectives and overcome unavoidable challenges. He stated that what is essential is the ideal of unity, as it is only through a unified approach that the Assembly can achieve positive developments on behalf of the Samoan people. In closing his speech, the Member thanked his constituency for their ongoing support.

36. LEALAILEPULE Rimoni Aiafi, Member for Faleata West

The Member opened his speech by acknowledging his constituency's ongoing support. He stated that the current make up of the Assembly reflects a very much "Samoanized" version of democracy. Conversely, he noted that in the absence of an Opposition, there are now more Members sitting parallel to the Government.

The Member continued by stating that despite the various issues raised and requests put forward by various Members, the most important priority for the Government is the continued improvement to overall service delivery. In terms of specific issues, the Member addressed the following:

(a) Finance

The Member noted the need to improve service delivery within the public and private sectors, noting for example existing delays in the processing of payments for the repayment of debts. Furthermore, the Member stated that the processes used for the implementation of grants should be improved to ensure projects are able to be implemented within set timeframes to avoid issues such as those experienced via the SACEP project. He also stated that financial reports and funding allocations must be in alignment with the Samoa Development Strategy (SDS).

(b) Public Service Commission

The Member advised the Commission to review the Public Service Organisational structure and to address existing employment issues.

(c) Electoral Commission

The Member for Faleata noted that there is a need to review existing electoral boundaries. He suggested that electoral issues should not be referred to the Commission, but to Standing Orders, Electoral, Petitions and Constitutional Offices Committee.

(d) Communication and Information Technology

The Member noted that the installation of the national broadband highway was expensive, and therefore encouraged its use by Ministries to communicate with each other. He also requested that the network be continually improved.

(d) Education, Sports and Culture

The Member stated that there have been repeated requests for the construction of a school on vacant land in Vaitele. He requested that the Ministry assist with seeking a willing donor to begin the project.

(e) Works, Transport and Infrastructure

In terms of construction requests, the Member stated that they have already been delivered to the Minister. He stated that he had already liaised with the Samoa Ports Authority (SPA) in regards to possible construction works in Vaiusu; however, the specific proposal was resisted by village matai. He also requested an extension to fencing along specific roads, and tar sealing of access roads, or at minimum some sort of repairs to ensure the public can easily access their plantations.

(f) Health

The Member emphasised the need for all hospitals to ensure an ample and consistent supply of oxygen. Another issue is the lack of medical staff on hand to assist patients, wherein he noted that several of his constituents have died waiting to be seen by a doctor. He also asked the Minister to assess the quality and standard of imported food stuffs.

(g) Samoa Tourism Authority

The Member asked the Minister to source more international flight routes to Samoa, noting the possibility of the addition of another airline.

In closing his speech the Member thanked the Hon Prime Minister for appointing him as Associate Minister for Communication and Information Technology. He then advised Members to be mindful of their health so as to ensure each has a productive, long life.

37. ALIIMALEMANU Alofa Tuuau, Chairperson for the Finance and Expenditure Committee and Member for Alataua West

The Member for Alataua West greeted the House and expressed her gratitude to the Lord for appointing her representative of her constituency. She then thanked her constituency for their support and thanked the former representative, Lafaitale Patrick Leiatuaalesa for works achieved during his term. She stated that she had experienced feelings of worthlessness when not appointed as a Minister or Associate Minister; however, now that she has been exposed to Parliamentary Committees, she understands their value and overall importance to the Parliamentary system. She then expressed thanks to her family and friends for their ongoing support. ALIIMALEMANU then

made special mention of her husband, thanking him for his undivided support. Finally she stated that each of us are blessed to be living in a country blessed with an abundance of natural riches, when so much of the world around us is burdened with violence, turmoil and grief.

(a) Finance

The Member stated that despite Samoa's apparent fragile economic state, Samoa has been able to withstand various economic obstacles which is proof that we are a blessed nation. Referencing the budget theme, the Member stated that the emphasis for this fiscal year is on readjusting national revenue and expenditure. She noted her constituency's support for the budget theme and encouraged the Minister to be courageous and receptive to Assembly support for the achievement of national goals.

(b) Education, Sports and Culture

The Member suggested a possible division to Asau College to service students in other villages such as Asau and Satau. She stated that she has already consulted the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in regards to the construction of the College; noting however concerns that sourced funds may be redirected elsewhere.

(c) Works, Transport and Infrastructure

ALIIMALEMANU requested repairs to access roads, such as the ones in Falelima, and Tufutafoe to Neiafu. She stated if it is not possible to tar seal these particular roads, they request that they be repaired so as to ensure easy and safe access by residents to their plantations.

(c) Communication, Information and Technology

The Member stated that television and radio reception in Neiafu is inadequate, requesting the Minister look into possible remedies.

(d) Health

The Member reiterated previous requests from Savaii Members for the establishment of various health clinics and the need to increase medical supplies. She then specifically requested the establishment of a hospital in the Alataua West constituency. In regards to issues raised by previous Members, all of which she is in agreement with, the Member queried why issues seem to reoccur despite an increase of funding to the health sector. She then stated that these issues cannot therefore be blamed on a lack of funding; perhaps the issue lies with the mismanagement of supplies by hospital staff.

In response to a query made by the Member for Anoomaa West, ALIIMALEMANU clarified that the true meaning of 'bankruptcy' is reflected in the Samoan version of the report, which essentially means 'deficit' (no profit). In concluding her speech, the Member noted the Committee's strong support for the tabled Main Estimates.

[PART C TO FOLLOW]