

DISCLAIMER

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DAY 5

**PART A
9:29am**

Monday 31st January 2022

I. ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

Hon Speaker of the House announced that the Speaker’s authority is final and must be respected; he then made reference to a ruling he made in previous proceedings that a tabled report was not to be deliberated on or discussed until the Supplementary Appropriation Bill No.1 2021/2022 was passed. However, it was noted that the Member for Faleata No.3 broadcasted on this exact matter which clearly breaches the ruling made in Chambers. The Hon Speaker continued by stating that by doing so, the Member for Faleata No.3 undermined the authority vested in the Chair and questioned the integrity of Parliament. The Hon Speaker noted that similar practice applies to matters awaiting court decisions, these matters cannot be discussed in or outside of Chambers and should not be aired locally or internationally.

Minister for Communication and Information Technology – MOTION

The Hon Minister, Afioga TOELUPE Poumulinuku Onesemo moved that the Member for Faleata No.3 be suspended for 24 hours pursuant to Standing Order 65(f) and 92(3); Motion seconded and approved (without debate)

II. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY

1. SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (NO.1) 2021/2022- second reading debate cont. (Day 5)

i. Susuga Hon TUILAEPa Dr Sailele Malielegaoi - Member for Lepa

The Hon Opposition Leader greeted the Members, Hon Prime Minister, Cabinet, the CEOs, Samoa and our neighboring islands Tutuila and Manua. He then highlighted that in 1984, CEO's were required to attend Parliament sittings to assist their respective Ministers in responding or clarifying any matter raised in Chambers pertaining to their specific Ministry. He then expressed gratitude to those who assisted him when he was hospitalized, and thanked those who visited him as well as those who sent well wishes.

The Hon Member spoke on the Constitution, specifically Part 2 which provides for the Fundamental Rights. He then accentuated that the pandemic does not discriminate on age or status, when it is possibly leaked out to the community, all are at risk especially our most vulnerable (the children and elders).

The Hon Member noted the importance of proper financial management for the country, he stressed that the current number of doctors and nurses are not enough to care for our people if there is an outbreak of the pandemic. He further emphasized that the NEOC role is to advise the Cabinet and not have authority to announce their recommendation without Cabinets approval through FK/CD. He also touched upon the importance of giving out information in a prompt manner to give the public sufficient time to prepare what is needed. The Hon Member echoed sentiments made by his Deputy Leader on the importance of having community sites for ease of community testing. Hon TUILAEPa reiterated that although the Government of the day may change, the workers remain, and these are the people with the appropriate knowledge and expertise to conduct their role. He then emphasized that an engineer cannot perform a doctors role.

The Hon Member then raised the matter of Samoa's aircraft, and pleaded the Government to reconsider their decision as the previous Government had thoroughly planned for this development. He then emphasized that having the plane will help with generating revenue as well as provide numerous spin offs that benefit our economy, such as the hotel industry, restaurants, rental companies and many more. He accentuated that Samoa is surrounded by six large oceans of the world and its location is central which is attractive and marketable to global fisheries Companies.

Hon Prime Minister – Interjection:

The Hon PM stood to clarify statements made by the Opposition leader implying that Government decisions were made solely, however, the Prime Minister asserted that Cabinet seeks its advisers before a decision is made, and those advising the Government are also well versed in their respective fields. In regards to the plane, it seems the benefits associate with tourism, however there are no tourists in Samoa since the borders closed.

Susuga Hon TUILAIPA Dr Sailele Malielegaoi - Member for Lepa

The Opposition Leader clarified that it is not only the tourism industry that can utilize the aircraft but also assist with the transportation of local products overseas for export. He clarified that the Government should not be one-sided with its focus, on the financial side of the aircraft, rather consider the bigger picture and the benefits afforded to our people, such as cheap airfares and convenience. Further echoed the importance of reviving the agricultural sector, acknowledged the assistance of Chinese entrepreneurs in bringing in other goods at a lesser price. Hon Member noted the increasing diseases entering our shores and urged the public to be vaccinated.

He acknowledged Mr Speaker and his role in maintaining order and decorum in the House. He mentioned that although the procedures of the House are provided in the Standing Orders, which only the Speaker can interpret accordingly, this responsibility should be done so accordingly as this authority is intertwined with our customs and practice ‘ava fatafata’. The Hon Member accentuated that the Speaker’s role is impartial and neutral, and affords much patience to Members (despite their political affiliations) to freely express their opinions in the House.

- **Interjection – Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries:**

The Hon Minister moved the removal of the words ‘lima tuli tagata’ from official records of Parliament; motion seconded and approved.

- **Interjection – Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure:**

The Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure moved a motion to remove the word “kuluku” made by the Opposition Leader towards him; motion seconded and approved.

ii. Tofa Hon LAUOFO Fonotoe Nuafesili Pierre Laufo - Member for Anoamaa

The Hon Member addressed the House, he then mentioned the devastating natural disaster which affected Tonga and expressed his grief for the Tongan people. Hon LAUOFO advised the Government to re-evaluate the SDS if they are still relevant and to ensure that they incorporate all the effects we are currently facing with the pandemic, climate change and changes in the cost of living.

**Proceedings were set aside at 10:45am;
and resumed at 11:17am**

MOTION – Hon Prime Minister:

The Hon PM moved the amendment of sitting hours from:

9am – 1pm; then 6pm – 10pm; motion seconded and approved.

Tofa Hon LAUOFO Fonotoe Nuafesili Pierre Laufo - Member for Anoamaa (cont.)

The Hon Member mentioned the grant of USD\$100million for the Alaoa Dam project and expressed his concerns with the progress and continuation of this project within the required timeframe to avoid losing the opportunity. The Hon Member spoke on the importance of the project in mitigating the impacts of climate change and as a means of generating hydro-power. The Member commented on revenue collected from tax on imported goods and expressed gratitude for the assistance of 5million for the Samoa Hotel Association. He then urged to take note of Committees' recommendations in their reports on the budget. He noted the importance of cheaper fares to travel interisland for the general public. Then acknowledged the reduced price for electricity, and reduce in price of issuing passports. Furthermore, the Hon Member noted a decrease in imports and emphasised to ensure a balance between exports and imports to avoid the government going into debt in the future and having to borrow money.

The Hon Member then reminded the House of the Narcotics Act which was also reviewed and emphasized the growing supplies and affect/effect of these drugs and should be reinforced in the current Act. He then noted that the review brought about 2 major changes:

- (i) to include more modern forms of illegal substances and drugs into the Act; and
- (ii) to increase sentencing to not less than 14yrs,

As well as strengthen the enforcement of the act, and to consider having programs which can educate people who possess and consume illegal drugs on the effects of these illegal substance. He then reiterated the importance of bringing in the scanner for our customs office to assist with detection of importation of illegal weapons as well as detect pests (African snail, etc...)

The Member also emphasized that if the government are planning to re-advertise/retender the scanner then may there be proper guidelines/processes followed to ensure our nation procures this scanner

The Member also raised the changing of policies from PCB to Competitions and raised that these Competition does not apply to hardware products such as lumber, metal thus it is why the PCB was removed and the Open-Competition strategy was implemented. This is where service/goods

providers are given the freedom to choose their own prizes. The Hon Member raised feed mills and emphasized reviving it and enforcing it, also suggested to establish feed mills in Savaii

The member queried the minister regarding the operation of the Otahuhu (NZ) market which is funded by the ACC. The member wanted to understand whether this market is registered as a company in NZ and if so, whether there was a Board of Directors, and representatives from the country's agricultural associations, or representatives from a group of local exporters. This is an important issue because there are related fees for running a company/market in NZ. The Hon Member also mentioned STEC as one of the responsible bodies to giving land for agricultural developments. In regards to TIMS (computer software tax system), the Hon Member commended the government on continuing this program.

In regards to the aircraft, for 8 years (during Polynesian Airlines there was always profit from the aircraft which was always over 3million which meant that when the previous government acquired the 737 aircraft there was no capital investment spent on this aircraft as the revenue from the Polynesian aircraft was utilised. Therefore requested the Government to consider other ways in the future of where we can acquire an aircraft when we have the budget for it as this will help the economy.

The Hon Member noted 10 constituencies have registered for the 200k (1million project) and 10 are in progress which leaves to 31 that have yet registered, he then commended the government for this initiative and stated that he is appreciative of the conditions provided for the project and noted that if things are clarified and explained, the less queries raised in the House; then iterated several concerns raised by Members on the million tala initiative; such as whether the money will be given to respective constituencies, to which he responded 'no'; or whether the fund can be utilised for road works/repairs, which has also been made clear that it does not.

In regards to the Minister for Health, the Member queried the status of a booster shot for the public and the possibility of a 4th dose as practiced in overseas countries to increase the safety of the nation from the covid-19 virus. He then raised the need for possible community testing sites to rule out any community case speculation. On the issue of the nationwide lockdown, the Hon Member advised the Minister, Cabinet and NEOC for a report on the flight which brought in the current covid cases as well as to assess the causes and effect and possible changes made to Government policies to counter the impacts of the pandemic.

The Hon Member concluded by offering well wishes to the nation.

iii. Afioga MASINALUPE Makesi Masinalupe - Member for Lefaga & Faleaseela

The Member greeted all Samoans, and emphasised the importance of working together and supporting each other for the benefit of Samoa. The Member then raised his concern with wild boars roaming and ruining the crops of his constituents which also take a toll on the income of

families who rely on subsistence farming/living. The Member then noted that the African tulip (laau faapasi) is good for cows and advised the public not to destroy this tree. The Member then echoed sentiments from previous members on the police database, regarding their record keeping of minor offences and questioned the feasibility of removing such records after the sentence has been fully served and when a certain timeframe has expired such as 10 years.

In regards to seasonal workers, the Member was of the opinion that 3 years was too long for these employees which then gives way for the possibility of our people to commit crime or certain breaches of their employment agreement as they have been away from their families too long. He noted his support for the timeframe of employment for seasonal workers in New Zealand for only 7 months.

The Member then requested for a district hospital in his constituency as the Safata and Leulumoega Clinic is quite far for his people. The Member then noted that the proposal is being drafted. On the issue of tendering process, the Member requested that the process be made more flexible for low income earners, as during auctions it is usually the high earners who bid the most. The Member then requested for road repairs for his constituency. Then requested that the Return to Paradise can be used as a marine reserve conservation site which would also be a beneficial project to maintain our coral reefs.

iv. Afioga MAGELE Sekati Fiaui – Member for Faasaleleaga 2

The Member greeted the house and all those present, Samoa as a whole, CEOs, Clerks at the table and the Office of the Legislative Assembly. The Member then addressed specific Ministers:

- Minister for Natural Resources and Environment:

The Member advised the Minister to consider the lawn mower contractors to practice safety measures when mowing alongside the roads to protect vehicles on the road and the public passing by.

- Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure:

To consider the gravel on the road because it can affect the cars and safety of people

v. Afioga VAELE Paiaaua Iona Paiaaua Sekuini - Chairperson for Finance and Expenditure Committee and Member for Gagaifomauga 2.

The Member greeted the Hon Prime Minister, Cabinet, the Judiciary, fellow Parliamentarians, religious leaders and the different denominations, Head of State and his good lady and the Council of Deputies. He then acknowledged his party's confidence in him to Chair the Finance and Expenditure Committee. He individually commended the Members of the Committee; Hon

Tapunuu, Hon Sala, Tofa Lealailepule, and especially the efforts and contribution of the Opposition Leader in the Committee, as well as the contribution and support from his fellow party members, Afioga Masinalupe, Afioga Magele, Afioga Laumatiamanu. The Member emphasised on the importance of working together for the development of Samoa.

**Proceedings set aside at 1 pm; and
will reconvene at 6pm**