



September
2021

PARLIAMENTARY SITTING SUMMARY

DISCLAIMER

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PART A

Day 3

9:42am

Thursday 16th September 2021

I. ANNOUNCEMENT BY HON MR SPEAKER:

The Hon Speaker addressed Samoa in all her honorific salutations; he then spoke on the events of yesterday, noting his feelings of humility as His Highness Le Ao o le Malo and his Masiofo, the Council of Deputies and his Masiofo, the National Council of Churches had peacefully walked to Parliament grounds seeking peace and forgiveness for Samoa and her people.

Mr Speaker recalled the argument made by Counsel Robert who represented the Law Society that it is a must for Members to be sworn in within the 45 days period. Regardless, of being elected Members for respective constituencies, it does not change the law, that they must be sworn in by the Speaker yet the Opposition continue to not accept the Court of Appeals decision. Hon Speaker recalled their meeting with the Hon PM and Le Ao o le Malo yesterday regarding HRPP breaching the order to not attend the sitting and therefore, noted that the issue of determining whether HRPP members need to be sworn has been referred to the court, whatever they decide, Parliament will abide. As of now, Speakers’ orders are to be complied with, thus strangers are not allowed on precincts of Parliament. He then urged Members of Parliament in the Chamber to be the beacon of respect and to maintain the peace.

Hon PM – Afioga FIAME Naomi Mataafa

The Hon PM acknowledged Mr Speaker and his announcement this morning and asserted that the Fast Party has always acted in accordance with the law. Expressed gratitude for the advice and that Members will abide by the encouragement expressed.

Mr Speaker

Hon Speaker acknowledged the Hon Prime Minister for the encouragement and supporting the Chair of the House.

II. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY**APPROPRIATION BILL 2021/2022 – debate on second reading (Cont.)****1. Afioga NIUAVA Eti L Malolo (Member for Vaisigano 1) Cont.**

The Member continued his maiden speech and address on the Appropriation Bill 2021/2022

- Minister of Natural, Resources and Environment:
 - Mentioned an appropriation of \$4 million tala set aside for waste managements and noted that it has been problematic for some families. The Member then suggested the establishment of a separate Waste Disposal Management Unit to counter the issue. He then mentioned the appropriation for contracted lawn mowers to be redirected to villages so the ‘aumaga’ is tasked with cleaning and tidying the villages.

- Minister for Works, Transport and Infrastructure:
 - Commended efforts to reduce charges of water and electricity units.
 - Requested the widening of the Asau wharf and suggested the use of other methods to deepen and widen the reef, noting that in the past, contractors used means to blast the reef. The Member further noted that this development will benefit the people of Asau, as it can provide means to set up local businesses and provide means of employment for the constituency.
 - The Member noted that the access road at Masamasa used often by the forestry division in Asau is in poor condition and needs repair work.

- Minister of Health:
 - Commended efforts by the Ministry in encouraging the public to be vaccinated and implementing the mass vaccinations planned to take place.
 - Suggested the establishment of Village health centres.
 - Acknowledged the placement of a doctor at the Sataua District Hospital and the work carried out by the staff, however, noted that all prescriptions are issued by respective District Hospitals but can only be dispensed at the Tuasivi Hospital when medicines are in short supply, raising the importance of proper sourcing of such facilities.
 - Urged Government to follow up on a used generator for the Sataua District Hospital which has not been operational for a few years now.

- Raised the need for proper equipment and proper resourcing of the Hospitals, ensure there is sufficient supply of oxygen machines also raised the need for a CT scanner.

- Minister for Communication, Information and Technology:
 - Look into the SNBH Cable as the internet connectivity in Savaii is still slow.
 - He noted that he spent 5 years as a teacher at Avele College and more than 20 years served in Savaii, yet having access to communication, specifically the internet continues to be a challenge.

- Minister for Police and Prisons:
 - Commended the services provided during general elections.
 - In regards to the Office of the Electoral Commission, the member proposed to continue the mandatory voting of registered voters for Savaii constituencies in Savaii, and suggested the free transportation of voters to and from Savaii or allow candidates to provide transportation to respective voters.

- Minister for Customs and Revenue:
 - Urged the Minister to immediately cease the payment of tax by religious ministers

- Minister for Finance:
 - Urged the Minister to clarify the issue of drivers receiving a pay rise and recalled that when he was a driver, the starting salary was \$11,000 tala per annum and the supposed \$34,000 tala needs clarification as these are tax-payer monies.
 - Recalled that when he worked for government for more than 26 years, he would go every fortnight to NPF, he then urged the Government to increase the dividend for contributors to 8%, or 10% if there are enough funds.

He wished the Mr Speaker and the House well and concluded his speech.

2. Afioga LAGAAIA Tiatuau Tufuga (Member for Palauli 3)

- The Member commended the Minister for Finance for her work in preparing the tabled budget. He made note of a \$31million tala appropriated for a plane, then queried the entitlement criterias of the \$10m appropriated for small businesses as it does not clarify who are eligible and who are responsible for the distribution of this fund, as he recalls that Savaii specifically his constituency has never participated or profited from this fund. The Member then spoke on small retail shops in Savaii which cannot afford to keep afloat due to the rejection of applications for business loans and therefore the small business entrepreneurs cannot sustain their businesses and result to closure.

The Member then queried the \$5 million appropriated to assist with the tourism sector (hospitality industry) whether beach fales were included in this appropriation; The Member queried whether this development can include an appropriation for Agagoa as this is most common to surfers. The Member called upon the responsible minister to pave the road towards this site as he believes it will be another source of income for his people. He further noted the star mounts at Vaitoomuli (Puemele'i), requesting to fix the road to these mounts, however roads are in poor condition, therefore requesting for repairs for ease of access to these sites.

- The Member raised the promised \$1 million per constituency by the FAST Party during its election campaign and queried when these funds will be distributed and noted the importance of this fund to help with the development of each constituency.

- Ministry for Works, Transport and Infrastructure:
 - Concerned about the water reserve in Palauli which the Ministry tends to use for its beneficial purposes and requested that their constituency should not be charged as the reserve is from their constituency and was given by God to his constituency therefore should not be metered.

- Ministry for Health:
 - Noted the lack of proper resourcing at the Tuasivi Hospital and asked for a permanent doctor stationed at the newly opened Palauli District Hospital to cater for its people.

- Ministry for Works, Transport and Infrastructure:
 - The Member raised the airport at Tiavea and asked that this airport cease to operate as it is a misuse of funds, and further suggested to the Minister not to take heed the previous requests by his fellow parliamentarian for the development of the Asau wharf as it is also a misuse of funds.
 - The Member raised proper compensation of employees, noting that sailors work 24hours and mostly sleep at the wharf yet do not receive an allowance, called the Minister to look into the matter.

- Minister for Commerce, Industry and Labour:
 - Advised the Minister that if the aircraft is not needed at this time, then do the right thing and do not bring it into Samoa, as it will be an added cost on our already fragile economy.

- Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries:
 - Acknowledged the efforts of the Minister thus far and stated that his constituency has good and fertile land, however the roads inland to plantations need to be repaired and reconstructed.

The Member concluded his speech by noting his disappointment with the religious leaders who intervened yesterday, advising them that they should leave the politics to the politicians and focus on praying for a peaceful and blessed Samoa.

Hon Mr. Speaker

Mr Speaker reminded the Member for Palauli 3 that he has already made his ruling on the incidents of yesterday thus refrain from speaking on the matter.

3. Afioga LAGAAIA Tiatuau Tufuga (Member for Palauli 3) cont.

The Member concluded his speech by acknowledging his constituency and thanking them for choosing him to represent them in the House.

Proceedings were adjourned at 11:01 pm; and resumed at 12:01 pm

ANNOUNCEMENT BY MR SPEAKER

Mr Speaker announced to the House that he has been informed that the matter regarding the 'swearing in of HRPP Members will be heard in Court at 2pm.

MOTION – Hon Prime Minister

The Hon PM moved a motion to change the sitting hours, from 9:30am – 1pm, adjourn until 2pm – 6pm; these times will stand until the Appropriation Bill 2021/2022 is passed; motion seconded and approved.

4. Afioga TEA Tooala Peato (Member for Faasaleleaga 4)

The Member noted he entered Parliament in 1982 and continued to 1985, 1988 until 2001; mentioned that he did not intend to contest in the past general elections, however his constituency has decided for him for this parliamentary term (2021/2026). He then emphasised that this party continues to remain its 26 seats after the general election despite all the hurdles they went through. The Member believes that they made it this far because of the change in leadership for the betterment of Samoa and asserted that this is the Will of God.

Mr Speaker - Interjection

The Hon Speaker advised the Member to refrain from mentioning the opposition party namely HRPP as they are not present to provide a response.

Afioga TEA Tooala Peato (Member for Faasaleleaga 4) cont.

The Member praised the tabled budget and the Minister for Finance, and expressed disappointment over statements made by the previous government that the economy of Samoa has improved, however, the distribution of this improvement only catered for HRPP constituencies. He then acknowledged the new government and their budget which already portrays future success for the economy starting from increasing pension, reducing electricity and water charges. Noted that Rome was not built in a day.

- Minister for Health
- The Member requested to prioritise the development of the hospital in Tuasivi as the facilities are in poor conditions such as beds for patients and equipment to provide adequate health care to the people, noting that most of air-condition units and other defects need to be repaired or replaced. The Member noted the importance of healthcare on the economy of Samoa.

The Member acknowledged his constituency and expressed appreciation for their trust in him to be their representative and asserted that he will be as vocal as he can be to voice the developments needed in his constituency.

The Member then addressed each Minister and acknowledged their efforts and commitment and wished them well and encouraged the Hon PM and Cabinet to be brave and perform their duties with love for Samoa.

5. Afioga Fepuleai Faasavalu Faimata Sua, (Member for Salega 1)

The Member greeted Mr Speaker, Hon Prime Minister and her Cabinet. Thanked the Minister of Finance for the budget and briefly expressed his support for the budget.

**Speech to be continued in next sitting summary- Part B.*

**Proceedings were adjourned at 1:07pm;
and will reconvene at 2pm.**