

**DISCLAIMER**

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**PART C**

**6:47pm**

**Government Responses (cont.)**

**i. Afioga LEAANA Ronnie Posini, Member for Safata 1**

The Member questioned the Minister of police regarding past events when HRPP Members were prohibited from entering Chambers, and queried whether these actions were part of the Ministry's role or were they acting on their own freewill.

**ii. Susuga Hon LAAULI Leuatea Polataivao Fosi, Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries:**

The Minister reminded Mr Speaker of his ruling on the subject matter again raised by Members of the HRPP and moved a motion to remove these accusations and statements.

*Hon Mr. SPEAKER:*

*Mr Speaker accepted the motion and reminded Members to please refrain from speaking on these events, the aim is to move forward.*

**iii. Opposition Leader – Interjection**

The Hon Memembr argued that what LEAANA and SULAMANAIA stated are facts.

**5. Hon. FAUALO Harry Jeffery Schuster - Minister of Police and Prisons and Member for Vaimauga No.4**

Hon Minister confirmed to LEAANA Ronnie Posini that all the actions and behavior they encountered last week with the police were not orders from him as the Minister, but of the police themselves.

The Hon Minister then concluded his response by acknowledging his church Ministers, his constituency and their support which has allowed him to represent their constituency. He then expressed gratitude towards the PM for electing him to be a cabinet minister and emphasized the importance of having an opposition within Parliament.

**Hon Mr Speaker:**

*Mr Speaker reminded the Parliament to maintain peace and always remember to abide by the Standing Orders, emphasizing on members who interrupt other members' speeches. Stated the in the S.O 8.2 (3) subsequent interjections should be made to the member speaking and not to members interjecting, and only until permission is granted from the Chair can a Member speak.*

**6. Afioga Hon. MULIPOLA Anarosa Ale Molioo - Minister for Finance and Member for Palauli 1**

Hon Minister began by stating that there are 2 parts to her response; firstly the acknowledgment of all Members and secondly, response to questions on the budget. Hon Minister then addressed her constituency in all its honorific salutations. She acknowledged the unwavering support of her family for she made it this far because of them. She then gave thanks and glory to God for her calling. She acknowledged the leader of the opposition for his service the past 40 years in developing Samoa to its current state, and extended her appreciation to the Hon Prime Minister for allowing me this honor to be the first female Minister for Finance.

Hon Minister also acknowledged and expressed gratitude to her Ministry for preparing and compiling the budget; she then addressed the numerous queries regarding the 1million as promised in their FAST Roadshow. She stated that the current appropriation provides for 11million under the Ministry for Women, Community and Social Development which is hoped to go directly to the development of constituencies. Further noting that with this 11million, it is expected that each Constituency will receive \$200,000 allocated for District Development Committees. This appropriation will also be demand-driven, and released only on the basis that development plans are in-place; Hon Minister mentioned the inclusion of a 'funding agreement' to ensure all requirements are met before the fund is dispensed. Hon MULIPOLA then asserted that the Ministry for Women is tasked with preparing the constituencies in regards to formulating sustainable projects to be funded by the 1 million as promised in the next financial year.

Hon Minister commented on the issue of SNPF dividend payout to its contributors and clarified to the Member for Salega that SNPF have already issued press statements to further clarify the disbursement of that fund, and that the disbursement was an action which was passed by the House in the previous parliamentary term. In regards to the Government's 1 billion loan, Hon Minister asserted that it is anticipated that revenues collected yearly will be used to pay off this

loan. She noted the debt servicing of 71 million is allocated to pay debts and that estimated revenues amount to \$635,000. She noted that the risk factor will always be a challenge given the variations of exchange rate. In response to the Member for Aana Alofi No.3 regarding the scholarship scheme, Hon Minister confirmed that collaboration between the responsible authority and the National University of Samoa continues to address this matter. Hon Minister also commented on the status of collaboration between the Ministry and ADRA Samoa. Hon Minister responded to the query made by the Member for Vaa o Fonoti regarding development of seawalls, and responded that the \$200,000 will be given to the appropriate Ministry responsible for implementing such projects.

The Hon Minister noted the concern regarding the reduction of school funds/grants from 18million to 17.7million, and clarified that the usual assistance was 14million, however due to the impacts of covid19, the increase is relevant and needed by the Ministry for Education. She addressed concerns raised by the Member for Aleipata Itupa i Luga regarding the decrease in revenues for the Ministry for Works, Transport and Infrastructure and asserted that the revenues are increasing but the grants have decreased.

The Minister expressed disappointment on the comments made by the Member for Aleipata Itupa i Luga, regarding the new Government's budget focus on strengthening the Social Sector and disregarding the Economic Sector. She accentuated that there are issues and areas which need development and revitalization in the social sector. Hon Minister then mentioned the development of our new prisons as a sign of increasing number of crimes, domestic violence, violence against women, and the need for victim support agencies to step up.

Hon Minister noted her disappointment with certain Members assertions that the pay-out for certain areas in the social sector will ignite a sense of reliability and dependency on the Government. Hon Minister added that the need for assistance is evidence in the increase of NCD cases, increase in domestic violence, as well as more inmates recorded due to violence hence Government's intention to prioritize the social sectors. In regards to the plane, Hon Minister explained that the Review Committee is currently at the conclusion of their findings and a solution will be made on the plane; further noting that 35 million is reserved for the aircraft and these allocations are funded from UTOS.

Hon Minister stated the plane was in Brisbane and there were a few options to consider; whether it should be brought back or not and whether UTOS Members' units are safe and secured. Another option was to trade in the plane and get three small planes to cater for transporting our people domestically and near our neighboring country such as American Samoa. The Hon Minister also clarified on the issue regarding a driver's salary of 34,000 and stated that there is no such policy in existence. The Minister then stressed on the importance of supporting local businesses (the private sector) and asserted that priority will be given to small and medium size businesses as this will gradually help with agricultural development, which will in turn assist with improving quality of life, health status and generally raising their standard of living.

Hon Minister commented on the distribution of the 5million for hotels and beach fales which currently stand at 153 accommodations, the Minister confirmed that this is not all accommodations in Samoa, hence the need for another review and update to ensure all accommodations are included, but the Ministry will be responsible to determine other similar accommodation type businesses who can also receive assistance from this fund.

**i. Afioga Hon. TAPUNUU Papaliitele Niko Lee Hang, Member for Vaimauga 3**

The Hon Member queried the 250,000 allocation for forensic auditing, and offered his services if needed to avoid the hefty costs associated with the project. He then accentuated and encouraged the government, specifically the Minister for Finance, to be bold and not afraid in making loans and these loans are for the development of Samoa.

**ii. Afioga FUAAVA Suluimalo Amataga, Member for Aleipata Itupa i Luga**

The Member clarified that the people he was referring to when he made his comments were the unemployed people who are unable to ask for loans, hence his constant request to consider the economic sector as it interrelates with the social sector.

**iii. Afioga LEANA Ronnie Posini, Member for Safata 1**

The Member queried why 2 separate appropriations for 250,000 for certain projects for the Ministry for Justice and Courts Administration and the Office of the Legislative Assembly.

**iv. Afioga SULAMANAIA Fetaiai Tauilili Tuivasa, Member for Vaimauga 1**

The Member queried registration of small businesses with MCIL whether this was continuing

**v. Tofa LEALAILEPULE Rimoni Aiafi, Member for Faleata 3**

-queried the debts as mentioned in the fiscal policy

**vi. Afioga Hon LOAU Solamalemalo Keneti Sio, Member for Sagaga 1**

The Hon Member wanted to clarify statements made by the Minister for Finance stating that the Education sector is dwindling and asserted that the education sector continues to generally make promising progress.

**vii. Afioga TOLOGATA Tile Togia Leia, Member for Falelatai ma Samatau**

The Member clarified that it has been 7 years since Samoa has not loaned, however the developments noted have been made possible through grants and further posed the 100m US dollars project he was a part of was used for the power sector development project at the time when the Member was the CEO at EPC. The Member asserted that it was because of the well implementation of this project, as well as the reporting measures made to ensure transparent and accountable practices, this led to the donor nation providing another 100million to support rehabilitation and expansion of the Samoa power sector by EPC. The Hon Member then commented on the importance of having the right, qualified and capable personnel for the job, as opposed to firing capable personnel which seems to be common with the new Government.

**Hon Mr Speaker - SPEAKER'S RULING**

*Mr Speaker ruled to remove the words made by the member for Falelatai & Samatau from parliamentary records.*

**viii. Afioga Hon LAUTAFI Fio Selafi Purcell, Member for Satupaitea**

The Hon Member noted his confusion with the explanation provided by the Minister for Finance regarding the plane and urged the Minister not to trade in the plane as it is not ours to trade and Samoa will be fined by the Company.

**ix. Susuga Hon TUILAIPA Auelua Fatialofa Dr Sailele Malielegaoi, Leader of the Opposition**

The Hon Member wished the Minister for Finance the best of luck on her journey and to be courageous with doing what is right for the development of Samoa.

**Afioga Hon. MULIPOLA Anarosa Ale Molioo - Minister for Finance and Member for Palauli 1**

The Hon Minister concluded her statement by acknowledging the Members who raised concerns with her Ministry and made recommendations and assured the Members that she has taken note of all the concerns.

**7. Hon LEOTA Laki - Minister for Women, Community and Social Development and Member for Palauli 2**

The Hon Minister acknowledged the House, OCLA and all CEOs present in the House; he greeted his Ministry and touched on the 51million as queried numerous times by Members, Hon Minister asserted that the relevant Minister has already clarified on the issue, and generally stated that the major objective of the 51million is for the development of constituencies.

The Minister mentioned the Project Management Unit which will be responsible for reviewing areas that need development within constituencies that can be funded with the \$1million. He then advised members on the selection of committee members who will deal with distributing the \$1million in areas that need development. Also highlighted the importance of women representation within these committees, if there are 10 members 5 should be women (at least achieve 50% representation in respective Committees). Hon Minister further advised respective Parliamentarians to be chairpersons for these select committees to take the lead. Furthermore, the Minister commented on the composition of the committees to be comprised of people with knowledge and skills on management and development.

Hon Minister iterated that these committees are also employment opportunities for the public as committee members earn allowances; providing the example that if there are 51 constituencies and each have committees of 10 people this means that 510 employment opportunities available for the public.

Hon Minister then accentuated that certain typed of developments which can be implemented include, play grounds, parks, and numerous other projects that can generate income within each constituencies reflecting the 'Common good' of all people within the constituency. Hon Minister further noted the advantages of having committees within each constituency as people living in rural areas do not need to travel to Apia for certain services.

**i. Tofa Hon FAIMALOTOA Kika Stowers Ah Kau, Member for Gagaifomauga No.1:**

The Hon Member sought further clarification about the committee members' allowance, and who is eligible to be a member within the committees. She raised concern because she does not want to back to her constituency and not know what to base her selection on.

**Proceedings were set aside at 8:45pm; and resumed at 9:12pm**

**7. Hon LEOTA Laki - Minister for Women, Community and Social Development and Member for Palauli 2 (cont.)**

The Hon Minister reiterated on funding provided for Committees and highlighted that allowance is afforded to women monitoring these committees; the Minister suggested that (primary health) should be encouraged in sub-committees (women's committee) medicine boxes, panadols and other first aid supplies should be made available in these committees for the villagers. Furthermore, as Samoa continues national efforts to prevent the increase in NCDs; by providing basic health checks such as checking vitals and blood pressure as well as to assist the community by offering trainings to the locals to equip them in performing basic health checks; Hon Minister noted that if healthcare can be established at the grassroots level then prevention care can help stop the increase of NCDs in Samoa. The Hon Minister noted several other possible development projects that can assist with the overall development of constituencies. The construction of 'permanent shelter homes' for the most vulnerable and least developed families; Hon Minister noted an appropriation of 2million to assist with development of such homes. Hon Minister further noted that it can also be the task of the district committees to monitor living conditions of families and possibly direct them to the Permanent Shelter for proper care. Hon LEOTA confirmed the continuation of the program to enhance and encourage the weaving of fine mats as was initiated by the previous government. Hon Minister noted that although producing Siapo was the main source of income in the community, this did not discourage the women from continuously learning how to weave fine mats, such as the Women in Business drive in promoting handicrafts.

In regards to the 'Disability Benefit' the Hon Minister confirmed that the funds will be allocated for schools such as; fia malamala, senese, Loto Taumafai and others. Hon LEOTA commented on the National ID project and confirmed that the 1 year delay for this project is due to waiting for the lawyer from New York who is tasked with designing the legal framework, noting that the lawyer could not come due to covid restrictions. Hon Minister further mentioned that the only part completed for this project is the census that was held with the distribution of \$50tala. Hon Minister that the other allocation for NGOs is particularly for social development and accentuated that NGOs are struggling with funds such as cancer society and others; this is also the same support for small businesses (business hub, etc).

The Hon Minister then responded to questions raised regarding the pay of village councils' (Pulenu'u) where currently there is a difference between the pay between male and female pulenu'us. Hon Minister noted that to date Sui o le Nuu is paid \$250 fortnight while women representatives are paid \$150 fortnightly. The Minister stated that the new Government will increase these salaries to \$300 for both Village Mayors and Women Representatives (noting the new budget will accommodate for the increase).

The Hon Minister reminded the House on FAST's motto to increase the standard of living of all Samoa. Noting the concerning percentage of 22% of people living below the poverty line, and it is there aim to reduce this percentage.

Hon Minister noted the drop out percentage for year 13 and 11; (25% - year 13; and 20% - year 11), which was a challenge within our country. Therefore, the new government focuses on the development and assistance given to the social sector to address these important issues. Hon Minister emphasized that stats are imperative to determine the standard of living for all Samoans. Hon Minister acknowledged the Leader of the opposition Party for all the good works and development made for Samoa during their time in Government.

**ii. Afioga LENATAI Victor Faafoi Tamapua, Member for Vaimauga 2**

The Member commended the Minister on clarifying different ways to utilize the \$200,000 provided in the budget to improve and develop constituencies. The Member then queried whether the \$200,000 is received monthly or yearly.

**iii. Tofa Hon LAUOFO Fonotoe Nuafesili Pierre Laufofo, Member for Anoamaa 2**

The Hon Member queried who these district committees report to for accountability and whether these districts projects include sports equipment. Further stressed the need for clarification on the term "manaoga tumau" (disabilities) whether it is only provided for people that are disabled or it includes people that are blind and other losses.

**iv. Afioga SULAMANAIA Fetaiai Tuuilili Tuivasa, Member for Vaimauga No.1**

The Member queried whether the 10year plans that were in place before are now ceased and replaced with the proposed district committees project provided in the budget.

**Afioga Hon LEOTA Laki - Minister for Women, Community and Social Development and Member for Palauli 2 (cont.)**

The Hon Minister clarified that there are plans in place (developments he mentioned before were just examples on ways to use the allocation) but awaiting guidelines, in which the Ministry are working on. In reference to the matter that Laufofo raised, Hon Minister clarified that the plans are there to implement, however the Ministry has to conduct consultations before these plans are implementation.

**v. Susuga Hon TUILAEP Auelua Fatialofa Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi, Leader of Opposition Party and Member for Lepa.**

The Hon Member advised the minister to put into written documents all the plans he mentioned and ensure to have a checklist so that the public will have a clear understanding of these developments (to prevent constituencies from asking whether this project is allowed or not) also, see what can and cannot be achieved; consider the feasibility of projects.

**Afioga Hon LEOTA Laki - Minister for Women, Community and Social Development and Member for Palauli 2 (cont.)**

The Minister addressed his constituency in all their honorific salutations; acknowledged Church ministers, all the women committees, children, family and friends for the support and prayers.

**8. Afioga Hon. MATAMUA Seumanu Vasati Sili Pulufana, Minister for Justice and Courts Administration and Member for Faasaleleaga No.1**

Hon Minister addressed the Head of State and his good lady, the Council of Deputies, the PM, Cabinet, Mr Speaker his Deputy, Associate Ministers and all the FAST Members, the Leader of the Opposition Party, the Deputy and all the Members of HRPP. She then addressed the Chief Justice and the Judiciary of Samoa. Extended greetings to all the clergy locally and abroad; thank you for your prayers. She then acknowledged her constituency and the previous Minister for Justice and Courts Administration.

The Hon Minister commented on the Community Law Center and the Separation of the judiciary noting a separate budget of 30,000 for judges. The Minister clarified on the matter raised and explained that the Ministry wants an independent budget. She then mentioned the relocation of the Court house from Tuasivi to Salelologa and confirmed that \$2million has been set aside for this activity. She acknowledged the opposition for scrutinizing matters posed by the government. Hon Minister commended the law reform on their continuous efforts in reforming laws of Samoa.

Hon Minister concluded by acknowledging her family and children for the support and prayers.

**i. Susuga Hon TUILAEP Auelua Fatialofa Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi, Leader of Opposition Party and Member for Lepa.**

Hon Member expressed gratitude and acknowledged the Minister for her clarification on the Ministry's proposed activities and wished her well on her duties.

**9. Afioga Hon. SEUULA Ioane, Minister for Education, Sports and Culture and Member for Alataua West**

The Hon Minister acknowledged the former minister of MESC for his work and acknowledged his Ministry. He then delved straight into addressing issues raised by Members regarding his portfolio:

The Hon Minister has taken note of the request for the school building of Lepea, and asserted that the same applies for all requests for school buildings. Hon Minister informed the Members that the usual process, is that an application should be made to the Ministry on the request; then the Ministry will look at finding funds to source the projects (Hon Minister noted that the Ministry has stakeholders and partners to assist with funding these projects). Hon Minister reiterated that it is Government's responsibility to hire teachers for schools, and provide the academic curriculum for schools. He then reminded parents of their role in pushing students to do their homework as this is a collective responsibility to ensure the progress of students.

Hon Minister noted the issue of teacher shortage as mentioned by other Members, and asserted that some students and individuals graduate with teaching certificates but choose to pursue other higher paying jobs. Hon Minister responded to queries on whether religious teachers will also be paid by the Ministry, to which the Hon Minister responded that all teachers both government and religious schools will be paid.

In regards to the request for free Wi-Fi internet for Savaii schools, the Minister stated that the Ministry will work on this thoroughly so that Savaii can have the same internet connectivity as Upolu. This initiative and development is for the students of Savaii to have the same access to educational programs as the students in Upolu, additionally, they will be able to have virtual learning from home. Hon Minister noted that the majority of requests put forward by Members was for new school buildings and more teachers.

On the issue of One Government Grant; the Hon Minister clarified that there is an addition to this grant from \$100 to \$150 per child; further noting that this allocation is provided for secondary schools, colleges as well as schools for special needs and disabilities.

In regards to school advisors (assessors): one member requested to revive this initiative and noted that school assessors are back on the Ministry's agenda. In regards to school fees (some members raised that it is too expensive) the Minister stated that there are scholarship opportunities for students who do better in school but cannot afford to pay school fees.

**i. Tofa SEUAMULI Fasi Toma, Member for Gagaemauga No.2**

The Member reminded the Minister about his request in regards to assets in Vaipolu since 1981 - 2012 and where these assets are currently placed, with the village or Government?

**Afioga Hon. SEUULA Ioane, Minister for Education, Sports and Culture and Member for Alataua West (cont.)**

The Hon Minister noted that these assets have been placed under Government assets.

**ii. Susuga Hon TUILAEPA Auelua Fatialofa Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi, Leader of Opposition Party and Member for Lepa.**

The Hon Member emphasized the lack of science teachers in colleges and noted that there was a programme to train science teachers in order to continue their services as teachers but he was not sure whether the program was still in place; he then posed a question whether it was true that there will be no need for science teachers given that it will be done through technology and virtually.

The Hon Member queried whether there has been a date set for the new Chancellor of USP to arrive in country.

**Afioga Hon. SEUULA Ioane, Minister for Education, Sports and Culture and Member for Alataua West (cont.)**

The Hon Minister noted that the program mentioned by Hon Tuilaepa was still active but not as effective as the Ministry hoped; and in regards to a set date for the new USP Chancellor, Hon Minister replied that a date has yet to be confirmed due to covid restrictions.

**Proceedings were set aside at 10:54pm;  
and resumed at 11:23pm**