

DISCLAIMER

This Report provides a brief of the Proceedings of Parliament **Tuesday 24th May 2022**. While all efforts have been made to provide an informative brief, this information must not be relied upon as an alternative to the official Hansard record of proceedings of Parliament. If you have any specific questions about the Proceedings of Parliament on **Tuesday 24th May 2022**, you should consult the official Hansard or seek assistance from the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

1:51 pm**PART B****Tuesday 24th May 2022****i. Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauiiili Tuivasa – Member for Vaimauga No.1**

The Member greeted the Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, and all Members of the Parliament. The Member commended the Chairman of the Privileges and Ethics Committee for their work and resolution regarding the matter. The report reflects unity among committee members, although it was not an easy topic given that there was a harmony agreement between the two (2) leaders of the political parties. Thus, expressed that he is saddened by the Deputy Prime Minister's actions and complaint.

• Susuga Hon Laauli Leuatea Polataivao Fosi – Member for Gagaifomauga No.3

The Minister stated that in upholding S.O it is important to note that the deputy Prime Minister is not present to respond to the Member's accusations.

• Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauiiili Tuivasa – Member for Vaimauga No.1 Cont'

The Member expressed gratitude to the committee and their report and their recommendation to bring forth to the Legislative Assembly to make a decision on the time frame for the suspension. The Member further reflected on the harmony agreement which imposed no penalties on the members for Lepa and Faleata 3, and that what was agreed on between the opposition leader and Prime Minister should not have been brought up again. He further showed his support in the report by the Committee and pleaded the Assembly to consider the suspension and be more lenient considering the Members input and service to the country and parliament. Thus, pleading for forgiveness upon the accused members as this will be written in history as those who made the decision to suspend the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Faleata 3.

ii. Afioga Lupematasila Galumalemana Tologata Togia Tile Leia – Member for Falelatai and Samatau

The Member commended the work by the privilege committee, also showed concern that SO 177 was not exercised in the Appointment of the Privileges and Ethics committee.

• Afioga Hon Valasi Luapitofanua Toogamaga Tafito Selesele – Chairperson for Privilege Committee

The Chairman interjected the Member and wanted clarification on the member's statement that his election to be the chairperson was not in accordance with the SO and the Member wishes to know which SO he is referring to.

❖ SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker of the House ruled that the interpretation of the SO can only be interpreted by the Speaker and the Member should not mention it. Also, it was upon his decision as Speaker that chose the Chairman for the committee.

• Afioga Lupematasila Galumalemana Tologata Togia Tile Leia – Member for Falelatai and Samatau cont'

The Member accepted the ruling and queried the Prime Minister on what the government will gain from a decision that they will make regarding the report and the suspension of the Members of Lepa and Faleata 3 and further highlighted the role of the two members in Parliament.

• Afioga Hon Fiame Naomi Mataafa – Prime Minister

Point of Clarification regarding the example provided by the member. It is important to highlight that LAAULI's case was regarding the price of generators whereas, the matter at hand and in the report is about the contempt of court and contempt of parliament. These are two different matters.

• Afioga Lupematasila Galumalemana Tologata Togia Tile Leia – Member for Falelatai and Samatau cont'

The Member urged for unity among members, and advised the Prime Minister and Cabinet to move forward together by making a decision that will maintain peace among all members.

iii. Susuga Maulolo Tavita Amosa – Member for Sagaga No.2

The Member for Sagaga No. 2 greeted the House in all its honorific salutations. The Member expressed concern that the matter has clouded other important matters and events of this country such as the celebration of the 60th anniversary of our country. He also recalled the Prime Minister saying that this matter will not end today nor tomorrow, it will go on. The Member is saddened by the fact that this matter will either bring them peace or more conflicts. He prays to the Prime Minister and the Cabinet to end this matter today, for the sake of peace and harmony. He expressed that SO is to guide the proceedings of the Parliament as therefore should guide the MPs with their actions during proceedings of the Parliament. He further reminded that this matter would stop here if the report is approved.

iv. Afioga Aliimalemanu Moti Momoemasu Alofa Tuuau- Additional Member for Alataua Sisifo

The Member expressed sincere gratitude to her constituency for the support. She emphasized the importance of today and the matter at hand, especially considering the harmony agreement between the Prime Minister and the Leader of the opposition. This agreement is a reflection of peace founded on Christian and traditional values. The Member then advised the Prime Minister and the Members of the Parliament to reflect back to the hard work and sweat of the 2 accused in serving and developing of our country. She urged the Parliament to move forward and pave a new road that will lead in the development of our economy.

v. Tofa Lenatai Victor Faafoi Tamapua – Member for Vaimauga No.2

The Member commended the Privilege's committee for the report tabled this sitting day. He also acknowledged the recommendations by the Committee to have the Legislative Assembly come up with a decision on the period of suspension. He also expressed that the result of today will set a precedent in regards to the upcoming complaints declared by the Speaker earlier. The Member then expressed his concerns regarding this issue as it is costly for the government if more similar cases arise in the future, and time spent while there are more important and pressing issues at hand that must be discussed for the betterment of the country.

vi. Afioga Peseta Vaifou Tevagaena – Member for Faasaleleaga No.5

The Member expressed gratitude to the Privileges and Ethics Committee for having completed their report and tabled. He then expressed disappointment with the report as it does not have claims from both accused Members, as the Leader of the Opposition was not present during the committee's investigation as a witness.

- **Afioga Hon Valasi Luapitofanua Toogamaga Tafito Selesele – Chairperson for Privilege Committee**

Point of clarification, regarding the member's point suggesting that the Leader of the Opposition was not given a chance to speak or to be interviewed, stating that he has submitted a written response and was able to speak via zoom from New Zealand. The chairperson confirmed that the zoom meeting with the Leader of the opposition took 3 hours which was the longest witness and interview of the day.

- **Afioga Peseta Vaifou Tevagaena – Member for Faasaleleaga No.5 cont's**

The Member clarified that he was speaking from what was in the report, and advised that it would be good if all information relayed by the Chairman be included in the report. The member further stressed the importance of a decision that will be made today, given that the coming week Samoa will celebrate its independence, and it is important to have all leaders celebrate together. The Member wished all the Members of Parliament well and hope this will result in good terms.

vii. Tofa Lealailepule Rimoni Aiafi – Member for Faleata No.3

The Member who is one of the accused Members, commended the Chairman and Privilege committee for their report and approves of the committee's report if it is God's will. Despite the absence of the member for Lepa and the member who submitted the complaint, he acknowledged those who spoke on the matter of parliament privileges. The Member then, recalled the 'harmony agreement' and the chairman stating that without the agreement they would've been imprisoned. Highlighting the fact that this leniency by the court was made by Papalagi Judges.

The Member also mentioned grounds as to why the court did not penalize Susuga Hon Tuilaepa and himself which are; 1. Tuilaepa's service to this country cannot be questioned and 2. Apologies have already been offered. He also stated that if, the Members is seeking another apology from them, he will willingly offer apologies on behalf of him and the Leader of the Opposition. The member further apologised again on behalf of him and Tuilaepa, and urged the speaker to consider the time that these claims were made it was following the general election where both parties were competing for government. The Member further explained that they were never going to write a letter of complaint however with this case and the matter being brought forward to parliament by the Deputy Prime Minister in a form of a complaint, this is why they have lodged complaints to Parliament. The member further apologised to the Parliament of Samoa, to his constituency and asked the Parliament to excuse and forgive the Leader of the opposition as he has done enough for this country. But if anything, let him carry the worst of the penalties.

viii. Afioga Hon Fiame Naomi Mataafa – Prime Minister

The Prime Minister have stressed that the court proceedings and its results does not relate or affiliate to this matter discussed today, it is contempt of Parliament. She then clarified

that the report does confirm that the Members have committed a contempt of parliament. The Prime Minister then moved on to the 'harmony agreement' which was signed between her and Tuilaepa regarding issues about affecting the law, and the electoral petitions and by-elections petitions and complaints against her and Laauli under Public Prosecutions. However, when this case was taken to court to withdraw the contempt of court it was rejected by court. She also clarified that the harmony agreement given in the response letter by Tuilaepa and Leala are only between parties and it was confidential however it has now been publicly published. She then posed that it seems like the remarks by Members to forgive and forget may seem that your high duties will give you a lesser punishment or forgive you of your offence which is not the case. She then, clarified that in reference to the double jeopardy as mentioned by the Deputy leader of the opposition, that is a term and is used in court, it does not apply in Parliament. The Prime Minister stated that this matter will not end today.

ix. Tofa Laufo Fonotoe Nuafesili Pierre Laufo – Member for Anoamaa No.2

The Member reminded the Prime Minister and the House that the Leader of the opposition is not present to answer to any allegations and accusations.

• **Afioga Hon Fiame Naomi Mataafa – Prime Minister cont'**

The Hon Prime Minister also argued that the conduct of the two (2) members by way of statements and comments made are unacceptable. Those comments continue to be done here in the Chamber and it is time to exterminate such inexcusable behavior. In saying that, she stated that to do that, the recommendation put forth by the Assembly "until such a time" is appropriate. The Assembly should monitor the 2 Members behavior before they are accepted back to Parliament.

MOTION

Prime Minister then moved a motion that the Assembly approve the recommendation in the report.

Motion approved

❖ **SPEAKER**

The Speaker also reminded the Members of the SO which prohibits any member from discussing this matter again.

Proceedings were adjourned at 3:43pm and to reconvene on Tuesday 31st May 2022 at 9:30am.