

DISCLAIMER

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Day 16

Wednesday 10th February 2021

9:26am

I. OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM MR SPEAKER

Hon Mr Speaker reminded the House of Standing Order 24 in regards to Members' attendance when Parliament is in session and further stated that the Chair will not hesitate to enforce the Powers afforded to the Speaker if Members do not comply.

Members to Attend Service of the Assembly:

- (1) No member shall be absent from the Assembly for 3 consecutive sitting days without obtaining leave of absence from the Speaker.
- (2) Any member who is absent from the Assembly in contravention of this Order shall be disqualified from holding his or her seat.
- (3) Subject to this Order a member is considered absent if he or she fails to occupy his or her seat for at least 2 consecutive hours in any sitting day.
- (4) Where the Assembly sits for less than 3 hours in any one day a member shall be considered absent if he or she fails to occupy his or her seat for at least half of the period the Assembly sits on that day

II. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY

- i. SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (NO.1) 2020/2021- second reading & Debate on the Bill cont.**

Hon PRIME MINISTER – POINT OF CLARIFICATION

The Hon PM extended greetings to the House and Samoa who are listening in; furthered the prayers offered by Mr Speaker this morning. Hon PM acknowledged the 37 Members who

are in attendance this sitting. The Hon PM mentioned that proceedings cannot progress unless the quorum is reached, that is., more than half of Members in attendance.

The PM asserted that all Members have numerous commitments in other areas; however, all other matters are put on hold while priority is placed on the proceedings of Parliament. Hon TUILAEPA, emphasized the importance of the Oath taken by each Member to represent its respective constituencies. He further noted the humble teachings of Christ such as the 'washing of his disciples' feet' which portray humility as a key aspect of a true leader (leaders should be of Christ-like). He reiterated on Members not going by their registered Matai names which is an indication that they do not value their oath made in Parliament; an Oath made before God. Hon PM asserted that the 4 Members absent from Chamber should be noted as 'contempt of Parliament' (and should not be taken lightly) as it implicates the integrity of Parliament.

i. Afioga AFOA Amituanai Faleulu Maui, Member for Palauli West (cont.)

Greeted the House and Samoa listening in, Speaker, Leader of the House, Cabinet, Associate Ministers, OCLA, Minister of Finance for compiling the Supplementary. Reiterated that his constituency supports the 3 controversial Bills which were recently passed by Parliament. The Member noted that he wishes to speak on three issues to speak on:

1. Olioli, Rover and Boom vodka have detrimental impacts especially to the youth who consume these beverages as it is affordable; the Member recommended to closely look into this matter, as the number of youths consuming such products is increasing at an alarming rate.
2. On the matter of TV Bingo, the Member requested the responsible Minister to consider the pros and cons of this program on public television.

- **Hon TIALAVEA Fea Leniu Tionisio Hunt, Minister for Customs and Revenue**

The Hon Minister responded that TV bingo does not affect kids academically, rather that the government garners more income from the license of these businesses and accentuated that revenue collected from these gambling games will contribute in developing other essential sectors of government.

- **Afioga SALAUSA Dr John Ah Ching - Member for Faleata East**

The Member noted the social factors associated with bingo, specifically when the mother takes her female children with her to bingo, when at bingo the mother is focused on the game rather than monitoring her child's whereabouts, which may also lead to other issues, such as teen pregnancy and others. The Member urged the relevant Minister to consider all factors, not just the economic benefits.

Hon Prime Minister - Clarification

The Hon PM clarified that the Government considered all the factors when permitting TV bingo to take place, it was also a dilemma for the cabinet to permit such gambling to take place given the condition of Covid. Hon PM stated the reasons behind the TV bingo, was to avoid the mothers from leaving the children while going bingo elsewhere.

i. Afioga AFOA Amituanai Faleulu Maui, Member for Palauli West (cont.)

The Member further noted the impacts of covid on Samoa's economy, especially the unemployment rate within the tourism and hospitality industry. The Member then urged the Minister of Finance for further means to assist these individuals and families.

• Hon SILI Epa Tuiofi, Minister of Finance - Clarification

The Hon Minister clarified that Samoa is not the only country affected by Covid, and that the Government has provided in the past 'stimulus packages' to try and alleviate the impacts of covid19. Furthermore, the Hon Minister elaborated that the hotel industry have progressed with local packages catered for the community at special rates which has been going well for most hotels and resorts. Furthermore, the government has also provided incentives and support by promoting local accommodations through the Samoa Tourism Authority.

i. Afioga AFOA Amituanai Faleulu Maui, Member for Palauli West (cont.)

The Member concluded his speech by paying special acknowledgment and recognition to Hon Mr. Speaker for his admirable service and all other Members who will not be contesting in the upcoming elections. Afioga Afoa acknowledged the Hon PM for his leadership of the nation and the Human Rights Protection Party.

Hon Prime Minister - Point of CLARIFICATION

The PM acknowledged the clarification made by members of the HRPP regarding statements made by Individual Members of the House, that the PM runs the nation like a dictator with no freedom for the Members to express their opinions; as various Members of the HRPP have clarified that each Member has the freedom to express their opinions. Hon Prime Minister accentuated that the stability of the HRPP ruling party is owed to honest and strong leadership 'everything rises on leadership'

The Hon PM elaborated that Political party is not a term formulated in Samoa but was emanated from overseas. further stated that stable political party is formed from good leadership but not money. He then recalled past times when the HRPP was rallying for funds

to construct a building for the HRPP headquarters. He then touched upon the importance of unity and integrity within political parties.

Furthermore, the Hon PM also mentioned the developments made for more women representation in Parliament, stated that the incorporation of the women quota reflected the importance of women in Samoa (which was the first of its kind in the Pacific region).

Hon Prime Minister mentioned the issue involving the Member for Gagaifomauga No.3 Laauli Leuatea Polataivao Fosi's resignation; whereby he was advised to resign from his Ministerial role as he was charged in Court but the Member in a public statement, told that he had resigned on his own will. The question was then posed, how can one fit to lead the nation, let alone a party, if one cannot be honest with the miniscule issues.

- **Afioga LEALAILEPULE Rimoni Aiafi, Member for Faleata West and Associate Minister for MCIT**

called upon the speaker to write a letter to the 4 Members who are neglecting the Parliaments proceedings to ensure this does not occur in the future; the Member asserted that this should not be taken lightly, as Parliament is the law making body of the nation.

Mr Speaker - Clarification

Mr Speaker assured Members that the Speaker has the power to make relevant action when the time is right.

Proceedings were suspended at 10:54am
Proceedings resumed at 11:43am

ii. Afioga Hon FAUMUINA Tiatia Liuga, Member for Palauli le Falefa

The Hon Member greeted Samoa in all her honorific salutations, acknowledged the PM and Cabinet for their work. Commended the Speaker for all his service to Parliament and the nation as a whole, especially for presiding over parliamentary proceedings. He then addressed the 3 arms of Government and the clergies whose prayers have blessed Samoa and its leaders.

The Member asserted that as parliamentarians, the ultimate aim of the role is to improve the economy and the standard of living for all of Samoa. The Member recalled that Samoa came from nothing, whereas today there are various developments implemented and have come to fruition in Samoa.

The Member also acknowledged his constituency and good lady for their prayers and support. The Hon Member recalled back in 2001 when he informed the Hon Prime Minister of his intentions to contest in the general elections, to which the Hon PM advised him to continue running his business as he is receiving good money. Afioga FAUMUINA iterated that he entered Parliament as it was his passion to serve his constituency and be remembered for his services, rather than being a wealthy businessman and not remembered.

Hon Prime Minister – Point of Clarification

The Hon PM clarified that whenever an individual informs him of any intention to contest in the elections, he poses a question to the individual to inform the wishes to enter politics, it should be purely to represent the constituency and improve the conditions of the constituency rather than self-gain.

Afioga Hon FAUMUINA Tiatia Liuga, Member for Palauli le Falefa (cont.)

The Hon Member expressed appreciation on the \$1.2 million allocated for a dam in his constituency. He also acknowledged the \$1.8 million for Gataivai's water development, also acknowledged the government for the improvement upon the independent water scheme for Sili. Hon FAUMUINA commended the MWTI for current road works in progress; reminded the Minister that his constituency was promised 3 meters wide for roads but the current contractor only measured 2 meters.

The Hon Member acknowledged the Minister of Health for the development of the district hospital within his constituency and requested for a fence. He further requested a funeral parlor in Satupaitea for convenience to his constituency. Mentioned the relocation of the Police main office from Tuasivi to Salelologa to develop the township in Savaii.

The Member then noted his involvement in ACP-EU Parliamentarians Forum, and commended the government for the opportunity afforded to him. The Hon Member then recalled developments since HRPP took over the reins. Government reforms, such as the restructuring of Ministry of Works, outsourcing certain functions of the Ministry, which has been a cost-saving mechanism. The Hon Member then spoke on the National Kidney Foundation and the increase of patients currently treated at the dialysis (from 7 to 136 patients), and commended Government's efforts to ensure the Foundation continues to operate effectively.

- **Afioga SALAUSA Dr John Ah Ching, Member for Faleata West and Associate Minister for Women Community and Social Development.**

The Member noted that in regards to the Members for Palauli le Falefa noting that with the increase number of patients is good; however, he believes that the government should rather focus on decreasing the number of patients and preventing our people from getting dialysis.

Hon Speaker – Point of Clarification

Mr Speaker clarified that the Member for Palauli le Falefa was referring on the developments implemented by Government to cater for these patients, as Samoa did not have the capacity in the past. However, the views put forth by the Member for Faleata East are also vital.

Hon Prime Minister - Clarification

The Hon PM touched upon preventions to avoid the increasing number of patients getting dialysis, which is by unhealthy eating habits. Further noted that there is also a unit of the NKF in Savaii, for convenience and ease of access. The Hon PM also mentioned that there is a high number of patients on the waiting list for treatment at the dialysis plant. Hon PM asserted that the issue, is the lack of exercise as there are different types of processed foods readily available for the public.

Afioga Hon FAUMUINA Tiatia Liuga, Member for Palauli le Falefa (cont.)

The Member asserted that ‘your health is your choice’. Afioga FAUMUINA, noted that in 2003-2007 the government developed sports facilities, which have been used to host the Pacific Games and other international sports events. He further commented on the rationale of the establishment of the SROS; hence, why the government has had a stronger push for students to pursue science fields in academic studies. The Member also noted that Samoa is the only pacific country that changed its time zone to make trading and business transactions easier with overseas countries and trading bodies; noting that we are 25 hours ahead of American Samoa and an hour ahead of New Zealand. The Hon Member then touched upon the road-switch, which was highly debated during its passage through the house, with numerous accusations of the detrimental impacts of such a change in Samoa. However, it is evidenced from the increasing number of private vehicles that the switch has proven beneficial for the entire nation.

The Member then spoke on the operations of the Unit Trust Office, and stated that at the outset the establishment of the UTOS was to attract the markets from Singapore and Hong Kong, however it has positively grown with the involvement of the local community. He then mentioned the dividends on units and stated that the surplus should be injected back to unitholders at UTOS.

**Proceedings were adjourned at 1:11pm
Parliament will again reconvene on Thursday 11th February 2021 at 9am.**