

DISCLAIMER

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Thursday 18th June 2020

DAY 3 - PART B

6:10pm

I. GOVERNMENT ORDERS OF THE DAY – Reading of Bills

- 1. SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL No.3 2020; and APPROPRIATION BILL 2020/2021 – debate on second reading cont.**

TAEFU Lemi - Member for Falelatai & Samatau (Cont.)

The Member continued his address; he commended efforts by the NEOC in keeping Samoa covid free. Taefu supported the conditions of the SOE, such as the maximum of people at funerals and suggested that this practice continue to lessen the burden on families during funerals. Supported the closure of businesses on Sundays, as this should be a day of worship and not to earn profit.

INTERJECTION – Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure

The Hon Prime Minister stated that Jesus worked on Sunday to heal the sick hence why the Pharisees disliked him; PM iterated that police and medical professionals work around the clock to ensure essential services are provided for the nation.

TAEFU Lemi – Member for Falelatai and Samatau

The Member addressed the following Ministries:

Ministry of Health – Taefu commended efforts in keeping COVID19 out of Samoa. Acknowledged the awareness programs on basic hygiene habits (washing hands) to limit the risk of catching the virus. The Member iterated that the world is awaiting a vaccine and therefore proposed to keep the borders closed and advised the medical professions to operate with caution.

The Member commented on the swine flu and asked that livestock be kept in enclosed areas (prohibited from roaming free). The Member called to keep livestock separate from human

to limit the potential for transmitting the diseases. Taefu urged the public to conserve the manumea and native birds of Samoa.

In regards to the Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture, the Member called for honesty when utilising these grants. Taefu noted grants afforded to Schools, called on the PTA members and those who are involved in safeguarding these funds for the schools to allocate a small amount for utilities needed for schools and its developments.

The Member addressed the Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure and acknowledged the upgrading of the Lefaga to Faleseela roads. He then supported the request for road upgrade in his constituency. Taefu stated that from the 15 requests made to the Ministry only 4 have been actioned. He then called the Minister to consider proper maintenance of roads. In regards to contractors afforded to the public for road maintenance, the member called for transparency in awarding contracts for those clearing and maintaining the side of the roads. The Member queried the period for appeals and advised to enforce the appeal period.

INTERJECTION – Minister of Justice and Courts Administration

The Hon Minister noted that as stipulated in the Section 81 of the Land and Titles Act 1981. The Appeal period is consolidated. The Hon Minister stated that all appeals should be filed on the mandated date for appeals under jurisdiction of the court. The Minister also noted that the Courts has no power to change and further explained there is also a chance to request for more time but only within the 21 days as required under the Act.

Taefu Lemi – Member for Falelatai and Samatau

Member stated that he was aware of the process, however in his experience this process is overridden at times.

VII. SEIULI Ueligitone Seiuli - Member for Sagaga Le Usoga

The Member addressed 3 arms of Government; acknowledged his Constituency in her honorific salutations. Then went straight into his general statements on the budget. Seiuli acknowledged the 35 million appropriated to NPF; acknowledged the raise in Pension for elders. The member then requested that boat trips between Manono and Apolima be made free for pensioners (as free travel is only for domestic travel between Upolu and Savaii). The Member commended the ADRA PROGRAM as this is great assistance for families who are struggling to make ends meet.

INTERJECTION – Hon Prime Minister

The Hon Prime Minister asserted that the rationale behind the suspension of travels using pension was to discourage the elderly from travelling to and from in the possibility that an outbreak occurs (noting that the elderly are the most susceptible to contracting the Covid19 virus).

SEIULI Ueligitone Seiuli - Member for Sagaga Le Usoga (cont.)

The Member acknowledged the revised fees for Water & Electricity. Seiuli acknowledged the Minister of Finance in the preparation of the Budget and acknowledged the Minister for Lands on the approval of 120 acres from his constituency for lease.

VIII. FAASOOTAULOA Pati Taulapapa- Member for Gagaemauga No.2

The Member acknowledged all Members present in the House and commended efforts of the Executive and CEO's in the execution of all development projects for Samoa. Acknowledged his constituency in all her honorific salutations; Member noted that there had been constituents whom have called for him to reject the amendments to the redefined electoral boundaries.

Member stated that change is imminent and dispelled claims that Salega's seat will be removed. Member stated that there will be a time and a place just as the season's they are ever changing. Member stated that the reason behind his concerns is that Saleaula holds distinction of being 'Pule' traditionally which in his opinion will take the backseat to others as a result of the new changes.

The Member then addressed the following Ministries:

Ministry of Justice and Courts Administration - Member commented on the process of Court verdicts; stated that in his understanding, once verdicts are validated by Judges it is final (requested to reconsider this)

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment – The Member requested for a sea wall at Saleaula.

Ministry of Works, Transport and Infrastructure – Member commended the Ministry for their hard work throughout the parliamentary term

INTERJECTION – Hon Prime Minister

The Hon Prime Minister expressed concerns over statements expressed in Parliament by the Member for Gagaifomauga No.3 and Salega East which in his interpretation have nefarious motives. PM proceeded to stress that the matter has been passed in Parliament.

IX. TOFA Foleni Lio Tama Galu - Member for Faasaleleaga No.3

The Member greeted the House and Samoa in all her honorific salutations. The Member commended the hon PM and Cabinet for all their efforts and hard work in developing Samoa and its economy. Acknowledged the development for Maliolio bridge in Savaii, addressed the CEO for their work especially the Minister for Finance for the tabled budget which is reflected through the theme for the 2020/2021 budget namely, "Weaving a prosperous and secure future for Samoa together" He commended the collective responsibility and efforts of the Government for the betterment of Samoa.

The Member requested for seawalls & access roads for his constituency; The Member noted that in 2016 the increase of residents living along the coastal areas has heightened the need for sea walls to ensure the impacts of sea level rise is mitigated. Tofa requested for a bridge/forte at Lano and Sapapalii. The Member stated that the gorge at Patamea floods immensely during torrential rain. Member urged to meet his concerns and cited that this will assist with the transportation of sick patients. Acknowledged the developments at Salelologa. The Member acknowledged efforts of the NEOC in keeping Samoa safe and called to continue the implementation of the curfew on businesses after the SOE is lifted. The Member concluded by urging the public to pray and fast for the safety and wellbeing of Samoa as there has been no cure/vaccine for the corona virus.

X. LEALAILEPULE Rimoni Aiafi- Member for Faleata West

The Member acknowledged Samoa in all her honorific salutations;
Delved into the budget and made the following requests:

- Lealailepule acknowledged the notification from the Minister and the CEO of Land Transport Authority that the Falelauniu roads are on Government's agenda in the last half of the year.

Minister of Education, Sports and Culture:

- He queried the Minister of Education on the progress of the Primary School at Vaitele
- The Member called for more schools to be constructed and suggested to utilize the lands at Tafaigata (previous prison ground).
- Expressed thanks for the opening of Faleata College Hall.

The Minister of Women Community and Social Development:

- Member requested to incorporate the 'beautification committees together with Women committees' and called for a name change to 'Village Developments'

The Member acknowledged the debts kept under 11% and the 20% of revenue. He then proceeded to echo sentiments by the IMF challenging Governments to "LEAVE COMFORT ZONES" Lealailepule stressed that it was imperative to survive the Covid19 era.

He then highlighted 3 pillars to survive:

1. health security
2. food security
3. developments/employment

He acknowledged the Ministry of Health for all efforts to keep Samoa safe. Acknowledged the Ministry of Agriculture for being proactive in ensuring food security sufficient and sustainable. The Member commented on the correlation between Development and the Economy of the Nation; member proceeded to present statistics on GDP:

- In 1990 – GDP was 300,000; in 2000 – GDP of 1 billion; and 2020 - 2 Billion; Lealailepule elaborated that these were the figures which resulted to Samoa graduating from Least Developed to Developing Nations. He then requested to look at the private sector (tourism industry) in regards to employment opportunities as the unemployment levels have risen due to Covid 19.

Commended the Government in continuing to commence operations in light of circumstances of the Pandemic. The Member recommended looking into the growing public sector and formulating jobs for new graduates and the working populace. He called to lift restrictions barring the Borders. Called to extend working hours for shops. The Member called to negotiate to extend the timeframe for loan payments to 50 years.

- *Minister for Revenue*

Member proceeded to request the delay of the implementation of the proposed tax system to the next 3-6months.

- *Stimulus Package*

Acknowledged the Fund appropriated for NPF (35 million)

Member called that the 7% proposed loan be exempt from repayments.

- *Small Loan Companies* - Member requested that they be opened to the public.
- *3 BILLS (Judicature Bill 2020; Land and Titles Bill 2020; and Constitution Amendment 2020)*
 - Member clarified the events leading up to the inception of the Bills.
 - Member further iterated that they are Custodians of the Samoan Culture.

Furthermore, the Member reaffirmed that the three bills have been prepared with the intention to uphold peace and harmony within the nation.

- *Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment*

The Member called for the collection of rusty cars as scrap metal as it is such an eyesore in the CBD area. He then called for the installation of fire hydrants in all Government Ministries. He then stated that the 'vili maa' (where the pebbles for the tar are produced) this is hazardous for the inhabitants. He then acknowledged his Constituency. Conveyed thanks to the Hon Prime Minister and conveyed well wishes. Member has stated that the PM's political career has been plagued with various calamities and commended the PM for his resolve.

**Proceedings adjourned at 8:26pm;
and will reconvene at 9:25pm.**

XI. AFOA Amituanai Maui, MEMBER FOR PALAULI WEST

The Member addressed the House and conveyed his constituency's rejection of the 3 Bills before the Special Committee; he also expressed gratitude to his constituency for accepting an audience before the said Committee to allow Parliament to explain and clarify the merits of the Bills. Afoa noted the disapproval of his constituency, is in specific regard to Government trying to regulate the number of Sa'o

Mr SPEAKER – POINT OF ORDER

Pursuant to Standing order 78(9) the Member should not read out his speech. Furthermore, the Bill to which the Member is commenting on has not been reported back to the Assembly, and therefore should refrain from speaking on the Bills and refer to the Supplementary and Main Appropriation as it is the current Order of the Business.

AFOA Amituanai Maui, MEMBER FOR PALAULI WEST (Cont.)

The Member stated that there is currently a battle going on in America to stem Covid19. Afoa downplayed the Pandemic's severity is over stated and stated that if compared with Rubella & Spanish Flu it is miniscule in severity and transmission and stated that there was a vaccine available for the corona virus.

INTERJECTION – Hon TUITAMA Talalelei Tuitama, Minister of Women, Community and Social Development

Minister refuted claims by the Member that Covid19 is the result of a bacteria due to Humans not being exposed before to the virus, their immunity system does not possess the anti-bodies to fight the virus. Minister used the Spanish Flu Influenza as evidence of the potential destruction that Covid19 poses. Minister proceeded to comment on the process for formulation of anti-bodies (specifically the Measles & Flu Vaccines). Stated that weakened strand of the germ is injected into individuals with the aim at getting the individual's body accustomed to producing the Anti-Body.

AFOA Amituanai Maui, MEMBER FOR PALAULI WEST (Cont.)

The Member stated that he is in discussions with Scientists and has undertaken the necessary research to back his claims.

Minister of Health- Faimalotoa Kika Iemaima Stowers - INTERJECTION

The Hon Minister commented that the virus has been validated by viable sources (WHO). Expressed disappointment at the Member for jesting about the current Covid19 situation considering that it has taken so many lives. The Hon Minister expressed concerns about the dissemination of inaccurate information. Furthermore, noted the Measles effort and stated that if

there is a Covid19 outbreak, the measles will be miniscule in comparison. Furthermore, the Minister stated that if there is an Outbreak Samoa is alone as the Western World is also dealing with the virus. Hon Minister stated that in all honesty the current workforce for the Ministry of Health cannot stem an outbreak if it makes its way into our nation.

SPEAKERS ORDER

Mr Speaker ordered the Member for Palauli West to address the Budget and move away from his general statements on covid19.

Hon PM INTERJECTION

The Hon PM referred to Brazil to illustrate to the Member the detrimental effects of being ignorant to health warning irrespective of valid medical opinions.

AFOA Amituanai Maui, MEMBER FOR PALAULI WEST (Cont.)

Acknowledged the 35 million set aside for NPF contributors and called for extra funds to be appropriated for Farming

INTERJECTION – Hon SILI Epa Tuoti, Minister of Finance

Hon Minister clarified that \$35million is payout for all NPF contributors in response to the effects of Covid19; clarified that the 35million is afforded to only contributors of the SNPF. Hon Minister stated that there will be a bill draft to regulate the small finance businesses within the country and to control the interests of loans. Clarified that no one is refrained from proposing for a loan for development at NPF also stated that the usual requirements are needed (e tutusa lava ma mea e moomia e small loans institutions)

SULAMANAIA Fetaiai Tuivilili Tuivasa, Member for Vaimauga East

The Member moved a motion for additional 2 minutes added to the speech for the Member for Palauli West

Mr Speaker – Motion rejected

XII. FAUMUINA Faaolatane Tiatia Liuga- Member for Palauli-le-Falefa

Member touched upon past sentiments by previous speakers in respect to God; and reaffirmed that if God is at the helm, our targets will always be achieved. Member stressed to his fellow

Parliamentarians to be a blessing for their constituents. Faumuina stated that it is imperative to work with the intention of being on the right side of history as the future custodians of Samoa will look upon with fondness at this Parliament. Acknowledged the Hon Prime Minister and his leadership and addressed the following Ministers:

- *Minister of Works Transport and Infrastructure:*

Acknowledgment for upgrading Access Roads and called for the road upgrades to continue, Member called for water supply and quality to improve. In regards to community water resources in Papa and Puleia; the Member requested improvement on these resources; Faumuina generally noted the roads in his constituency needing upgrade.

- *Minister of Finance:*

The Member acknowledged the tireless efforts of the Minister and Ministry in compilation of the Budget and conveyed support.

2017-101 million 2018- 31 million 2019-48 million 2020-10 million (Member stated that these are unspent funds and he is usually a critic when it comes to unspent funds. Member stated that the Minister might have foreseen the future as these funds are now incorporated in the budget

- *Minister of Education, Sports and Culture*

The Member voiced thanks to the Minister for the 6 million grant for children who are not in schools (dropouts). Urged to continue studies for these students, however encourage other forms of learning, sporting or other vocational subjects for these youths. In such cases, the Member raised the need for rugby fields and sporting grounds in all schools to encourage students to pursue other forms of learning. Faumuina called for 4 million appropriated for Sports - (Stated that the current amount of 150,000 is not sufficient).

- *Minister of Health*

Member stated that the efforts to Keep Samoa Covid19 free brings tears to his eyes. The Member conveyed gratitude for the initiative to staff district hospitals and renovating houses for medical officers in each district hospitals. He voiced thanks to the service provided by nurses and doctors in district hospitals during this time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Noted that the initiative also aims at supplying each district with medicines given that there is a medical doctor present to monitor required medications. Called for beautification committees to assist the Medical Officers in districts hospitals in the hopes of promoting awareness and safety issues.

- *Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries*

The Member called for emphasis on developing local natural resources and be self-sufficient. In regards to foreign reserves which is close to 600 million. Member called for Taro from Sili to assist with the production of the Whiskey at a cheaper price. Stated that Plantations (agricultural developments) can replace the Hospitality sector.

- *Minister of Customs and Revenue*

Acknowledged the Minister for exceeding the 500million revenues collected within the FY 2012/2017 and noted that in regards to response to the effects of covid19, revenue has now dropped by 50 million similarly to the revenue financial status in 2016.

- *Minister of Justice and Courts Administration*

Acknowledged the building of a new office for the Ministry in Savaii (refer to the relocation of the main office of Justice from Tuasivi to Salelologa). The Member proceeded to illustrate that history has justified the construction of the new market, and refuted quotes from the former opposition "We've built it in the bush" and stated that time has justified the building.

Member clarified that the main factors which determine value is supply and demand; in regards to UTOS – The Member called to remove Dividends that the Company is subject to pay as it affects shareholders. Stated that to date, there are currently 3,200 unit holders for UTOS and urged that this be increased to 30,000 unit holders. Member stated that UTOS upon having many shareholders will also directly result in more developments for Samoa. Member stated the net worth of UTOS to date is 200 million; and advised to lend 30million for operations of the Samoa Airways.

INTERJECTION – Hon Prime Minister

Commented on the operations of UTOS and stated that the member understands the process, as he was a former Minister of Finance. The Hon PM stated the Minister of Finance will proceed to clarify when Government responses. The PM stated that the important fact stated by the Member was holding onto a substantial sum of the shares of the Companies that are sold. The Hon PM reiterated the rationale for the inception of UTO's was to be the regulator for sales so Members of the Public can be eligible to be shareholders in companies. Hon Tuilaepa proceeded to explain the rationale behind the inception of UTOS and stated that there are greater returns (if successful) in being a shareholder for a company. PM stated that the budget is formulated post consultation in regards to developments of the Government with Managers & CEO's – Hon Tuilaepa stated that the future is never certain. PM commented on the process of Budget Formulation in the events of no Calamities. On the matter of Unused Funds; the Hon PM stated that these arise in the events of unforeseen circumstances i.e Climate change, natural disasters, pandemic, or delays caused by public interference, etc...

Point of Clarification- LAUTAFI Fio Purcell

The Hon Minister clarified that the initial plan was a 30 million is a loan, payable to UTOS not a grant - in response to the Members suggestion of transferring 30million appropriated under Samoa Tel be utilized under Airways, clarified that this amount is not a grant but loan operated under UTOS (amended proposed loan is 15 million)

FAUMUINA Faolatane Tiatia Liuga- Member for Palauli-le-Falefa

Commended developments on the Tiavea mini airport and noted the well execution this development as witnessed during committee visit. He then suggested extending the Airport so that 737 aircrafts can land there.

**Proceedings adjourned 11 pm;
and will reconvene at 9am Friday 19 June 2020**