

16 JUNE 2020

TUESDAY 16TH JUNE 2020

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.07am pursuant to the Parliamentary Sitting Program 2020/2021.

Prayer.

MR SPEAKER: I now announce that Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly have commenced.

NOTICE FROM THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Pursuant to Standing Order 76 of Parliament, Notice is hereby given to the Legislative Assembly to consider the Bill as follows:

1. Miscellaneous (Salaries Conditions upon Suspension) Amendment Bill 2020.

GIVEN ON this day 15th June in the year 2020.

Hon TUILAEP Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi
LEADER OF THE HOUSE

MR SPEAKER: Allow me this opportunity to greet the dignitaries of Parliament to the Hon Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and Cabinet, Associate Ministers and Chairpersons of the various Parliamentary Committees and members. You are all elected members to this Parliamentary Forum to seek providence for the people of Samoa.

In the same token I welcome the Chief Executive Officers of Government Ministries and Public Enterprises here this morning in your supportive role with the implementations of Government developments through the recommendation of Cabinet.

Other Announcements by Mr Speaker

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I salute the prayerful support of our people particularly the prayers of the clergy of the various denominations. I acknowledge His Excellency Le Ao o le Malo, the Member of the Council of Deputies and the extended salutations of Samoa. Lent us your support and may it be well and may the role of Parliament be a success.

OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS BY MR SPEAKER

AMENDMENTS TO THE STATE OF EMERGENCY ORDERS

I announce that I now have in hand the Amendments to the State of Emergency Orders for COVID-19 as it was officially declared on Thursday 11th June 2020 until further notice.

The other provisions of the State of Emergency Order that were initially announced remains.

This Amendment repeals the State of Emergency Order Number 16 announced on the 3rd of June 2020.

PRESENTATION OF PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE REPORTS

The Clerk read out the list of Parliamentary Committee Reports pursuant to S.O 52(5)

1. P.P. 2020/2021 No. 20, Report of the Standing Orders Committee on P.P. 2019/2020 No. 161, Annual Report of the Ministry of the Prime Minister and Cabinet 2018/2019.
2. P.P. 2020/2021 No. 21, Report of the Standing Orders Committee on P.P. 2019/2020 No. 212, Annual Report of the office of the Ombudsman 2018/2019.
3. P.P. 2020/2021 No. 22, Report of the Standing Orders Committee on P.P. 2020/2021 No. 11, Annual Report of the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly 2017/2018 & 2018/2019.
4. P.P. 2020/2021 No. 23, Report of the Finance and Expenditure Committee on the Supplementary Estimates (No. 3) 2019/2020.

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5. P.P. 2020/2021 No. 24, Report of the Finance and Expenditure Committee on the Main Estimates 2020/2021.
6. P.P. 2020/2021 No. 25, Report of the Economics Committee on P.P. 2019/2020 No. 206, Annual Report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade 2018/2019.

MR SPEAKER: Pursuant to Standing Order 132 debate will now continue on the two Bills as announced and members must address the Bills in the context of Financial and economic laws of Samoa and the financial policies of the Government.

This is the opportunity for members to speak. I call upon a member to instigate our orders for today.

I call upon the member for Lefaga and Faleaseela.

**SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (NO.3) 2019/2020 &
APPROPRIATION BILL 2020/2021 – second reading debates**

Afioga TOLEAFOA KEN VAAFUSUAGA POUTOA (Lefaga and Faleaseela): Thank you Mr Speaker for the opportunity to comment on behalf of my constituency on the last Main Estimates for this Parliamentary term which is coming to an end this year.

Mr Speaker, I appreciate the invocation you have offered to our Lord this morning seeking the Holy Spirit to accompany members during the consideration of the Main Financial Estimates for the prosperity of Samoa. On that note I concur with you in prayer.

It is said that the salutations of Tiafau is such that, it is a court where the inner self of our being is revealed, it is thought provoking to counter adversity and eventually basking in tranquillity. It is the court where all families in Samoa have pride. It is protected by the families of *Tumua and Pule, Ituau and Alataua, Aiga I le Tai and Vaa o Fonoti*. Hail Tiafau! The Court where Samoa's grievances are heard and sorted. I acknowledge His Excellency Le Ao o le Malo and his Good lady, the member of the Council of Deputies and his Good lady, your Honor Chief Justice and the Judiciary.

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I wish to express the well wishes of this constituency to the newly appointed Chief Justice. I extend the courtesy to the Hon Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, Cabinet and Associate Ministers, Mr Speaker and members of the Parliament of Samoa including the Chairpersons of Parliamentary Committees.

Let us praise God, for His grace that has enabled us to be here today. I cannot forget to mention the Chief Executive Officers of Ministries and Public Enterprises. I also acknowledge the support of *Samoa i Aiga ma Tama, le Usoga a Tumua ma Pule, Ituau ma Alataua, Aiga i le Tai ma le Vaa o Fonoti*.

I extend greetings to the clergy throughout the country for their prayers day and night for blessings upon us.

I also greet the Government of Tutuila and Manua, the Hon Governor, the Deputy Governor and their Government with respect to *Fatulegaae ma Malotumau, o Laloifi ma Gagamoe, o paia na o le Faleagafulu, ae tainane oe le Tootoo o le Manuatele*. Those are the salutations of Samoa from the rock at Tau to the wet rock.

Mr Speaker before I comment on the Main Estimates, I would like to express my commendations to the Minister of Finance and the Chief Executive Officer and staff of the Ministry of Finance for the compilation and analysis of our economy in this Main Estimates. Well, continue to steer your ship forward, congratulations on your vision and thank you for your allocation. Parliament have been waiting for the portioning of Nafanua's fish, how about the support for the distribution of the Main Estimates this year, why? There are two Supplementary Estimates introduced into Parliament which is unusual.

We are witnessing this morning your sharing nature and Parliament are aware of your deep vision and foresight. It does confirm what the faithful always say about God not forsaking us. A recommendation to the Hon Minister of Finance, consider the Ministry of Police and Prisons in the future for a suitable budget for their Ministry. They are responsible for the security of the country and particularly Prisons. The Ministry of Police provides protection for our country. The Ministry of Education is the future of our country. The Ministry of Health is the life line of our country. The Hon Minister should look into this matter. The shortage of staff, which is what happened two months ago.

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I will leave that with you maybe it will be heard by the Chief Executive Officer of Finance present, I am grateful for the funds allocated for *Komiti Tumama*. This is crucial because a country with a clean environment also have happy people. Hon Minister of Finance, with COVID-19 causing problems at this period in time, financial benefits should be allocated to all types of farmers and fishermen around the country to assist with pesticides needed for the plantations, I think a million should be allocated for constituencies. Hon Minister of Finance, ideas arise because of this constituency, needless to say. The produce of their labour from the land and sea is remarkable. The Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Chief Executive Officer are aware of the stability of this constituency due to its hard working people.

Thank you for the \$35 million allocated to NPF members. My question is what percentage would be available for everyone eligible? But I also advise the Minister to consider the current hardship faced by the contributors to base your allocation.

I also applaud the old age pension and I will share with you the appreciation of my constituents for the proposed increase to \$160.

Hon Minister of Police and Prisons, I thank the Government initiative to merge the Ministry of Police and Prisons. I applaud the Commissioner of Police and staff for executing of their duties to ensure the safety of the people. I commend them for their patience.

The recommendation of this constituency is that the Hon Minister look into increasing the number of prison guards at the Tanumalala Prison along with the wages of police officers of the Ministry. Is it not time to arm those working at the prison for their safety during times when the enemy strikes and have them undertake trainings to improve the service. It is also that a signal or siren be installed in the event of an emergency, as is the case with overseas countries, to alert all communities, neighbours to be prepared and respond quickly to ensure safety. I actually emphasised this point in my maiden speech. Why? I value the safety of my constituency, one cannot sit by when breakouts like this occur. We certainly do not want to see problems like this in future if this place is not safeguarded.

On that note allow me to convey my gratitude to my constituency, with the Government representatives and each particular village for your response in support of the police during the course of this trouble. After all peace is sometimes disturbed by trouble and I applaud your patience and vigilance.

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I congratulate the Hon Minister of Justice for the legislation currently being opened to public opinions courtesy of the Committee. It is evidently clear from the feedback of communities the support of constituencies for this legislation handled by the Parliamentary Committee. I applaud the Chairperson and the Committee in your role. The recommendation from this constituency concerns the selection of our judges. My advice is to choose individuals from each constituency to be judges of the Land and Titles Court. The same requirement should be accorded when interviewing our judges, there should be a representative from the rural communities that understands our traditions and culture.

The Hon Minister of Health, Chief Executive Officer and staff I commend you all for your perseverance and courage. I express my appreciation to the Government through the lady Minister for the allocation of male and female doctors to the sub-centres throughout the communities. It is a delight to see this happen as it is a relief to the rural communities that have to travel all the way to Motootua and Tuasivi.

For the information of the Hon Minister, I have already written an application in 2016 for a sub-centre at my constituency and I spoke on it in my recent speech when the former Minister was in charge, but I want to remind you again. This constituency is now close to 3000 in population all residing within the constituency. It is the reason I am reminding you of my request for a sub-centre for us and a doctor during the next term.

My commendations to the Hon Minister of our airline Samoa Airways for the handling of the company. I applaud you for your exertion of accomplishment for we have heard that there will be another plane. I urge you though to ensure that the flight crews are local people. Every time I give a speech I make it a point to remind the Minister about having two airplanes but I believe there has been an adjustment due to this period and the global impact on the disease.

I also praise Government for handing over \$5million which is part of the repatriation payment for the land at Fagalii to assist with the various developments at this time.

Hon Minister of Works on behalf of my constituency, I would like to thank the Hon Prime Minister and the Government through your Excellency, for the works currently being done at Faleaseela, it has been 30 years since maintenance work was done to the road linking Faleaseela and Falelatai. It is a huge elation for myself and especially the residents around this area.

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I am also grateful to Lucky Construction for the thorough and remarkable construction. I will only gently encourage the Minister to please consider the other roads of my constituency, but I do believe that you are aware of them and you do have the insight to contemplate my request.

Hon Minister of Education, thank you for being vigilant in the way our schools were run after the closure of schools due to COVID-19. I humbly ask the Hon Minister to look into the reasons why the degrees from our National University of Samoa cannot be recognised in New Zealand and Australia as they do with APTC. It has been reported that one needs to attend further schooling for a few more years to acquire a certificate in order to gain work. Could you look into this problem and I am certain that a solution would be sorted as the new Chancellor of the University has been employed for many years in Universities overseas. I believe the problem would be quickly resolved.

I would like to thank the Hon Minister of Communications for our Tui Cable which is now being used and enjoyed by children for their learning especially our digital TV receptions now clear, the benefits of that, is our people are now able to watch the proceedings of the Parliament Samoa.

Mr Speaker I would like to convey my gratitude to the Hon Prime Minister and Government, but particularly the Committee...

MR SPEAKER: My apologies to the member, but I will allow the interruption from the Hon Prime Minister.

Susuga Hon. Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi (Prime Minister): Mr Speaker, there is a small matter I wish to correct and this relates to people graduated from our University. Now there are different types of degrees, for it seems that our degrees are not recognised. This revelation is not true. Except for medical and technical degrees, when you go overseas you are required to undergo further studies for a short period of time, there are specific provisions on the types of skills which is a prerequisite from Professional Organisations overseas. Otherwise our degrees are recognised.

MR SPEAKER: A correction has been voiced by the Hon Prime Minister, I beg tolerance of the member to not speak on this matter again since Government has made a correction.

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Afioga TOLEAFOA KEN VAAFUSUAGA POUTOA: I thank the Hon Prime Minister, I believe the matter is now understood with respect. I want to voice my gratitude to the Prime Minister and Government particularly to the State of Emergency Committee, for your perseverance to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure it does not infiltrate our shores. A request of this constituency to the Hon Prime Minister and Cabinet, whether it suits your opinion, why not make Sundays sacred like we used too in the past, let us praise God for one day only which will coincide with the statement in our Constitution, Samoa founded on God.

That is a suggestion of this constituency and may I say to my constituency of Lefaga and Faleaseela that in due course the Parliamentary Committee dealing with the legislations currently being taken around the country will be visiting our area. For the information of my constituents, the legislation that has been thoroughly compiled to emphasize our Land and Titles Court, and what does the Land and Titles Court deal with? The protection of our cultural treasures through land and titles which makes us proud throughout the world. It does provide second chances for matters which will be a relief and cheap when going through the court process. It also recognises the rights of Alii and Faipule as essential and it does not mean that the right of the individual is taken away.

My advice and prayer, and I am certain that it would be the case and that is to apply the legislation in relations to judgements after it has been passed. The judgements already in place should not be reviewed as it would possibly evoke feelings of discontent amongst our people. As far as land is concerned, Section 102 of the Customary Land Act is clear, which states that no customary land is alienated. That simply means that customary land cannot be transferred except in cases where the law allows customary land to be used for Government developments in return for compensation. Just look at the intelligence of our forefathers when enacting this law. I have also met with Government lawyers and have interpreted the laws for my understanding. The country has heard the precise view of the former Chief Justice. Meaning our constituency need not be concerned with the legislation being consulted around the country by the Parliamentary Committee. I now have the opportunity during this debate on the Budget to inform you so that when the Committee do come around, you have gathered your views concerning this legislation.

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Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: Mr Speaker, there is a minor point whereby I need a clarification from the member.

MR SPEAKER: I beg tolerance of the member but I will allow the interruption.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: Thank you Mr Speaker, I do not understand the statement of the member, when he spoke of Section 102 of the Constitution. The member first said that customary land cannot be alienated. He then continues to say in his second line that, only for development reasons. I am lost since he states in his first sentence that it cannot be done. But in his second sentence it is allowed. I do not know which is correct.

MR SPEAKER: I call upon the Hon Prime Minister.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi (Prime Minister): Mr Speaker such are the provisions of the Constitution. The member is correct unless it is a case of land needed for major projects for public use. Like roads where there is a provision in the Constitution for such purposes. A law has also been passed to instigate that provision which is the Land Taking Act. I am trying to recall and I think it was the first Parliamentary term in 1963 when it was done to allow for the implementation of Government projects. The majority of rural communities badly needed these kinds of projects, including my constituency. We were desperate for the Government to build a road within our village to link us to Aleipata. Most villages required major projects like the Hydro Electricity Supply at Afulilo for the whole country. Mr Speaker that is my elaboration and the member is correct.

MR SPEAKER: I call upon the member for Lefaga and Faleaseela to continue, and you are correct.

Afioga TOLEAFOA KEN VAAFUSUAGA POUTOA: Thank you Hon Prime Minister for your assistance. I had thought that the member has been around this place for many years and would understand, but never mind. Mr Speaker.

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MR SPEAKER: The Hon Prime Minister has spoken, your statement is correct.

Afioga TOLEAFOA KEN VAAFUSUAGA POUTOA: Thank you. My constituency of Lefaga and Faleaseela this is the last Main Estimates for this term, and I congratulate you for your support, I duly acknowledge the community at Matatutu, *o le malae o le toto, e afio ai Lemalu ma Le Mamea, susu ai le usoalii, alalatai ai le mamalu ia Saleleaalii*. I am happy that my term had gone well due to your support. I must also mention the sacred land of families at Vaiana, *Vaipu ma Olofa e susu ai Sua, afifio ai Faumina ma Tuaupepep, alalatai oe Gagaifoivao*. I feel invigorated by your support. The view of the full moon is clear and bright *e afifio ai Fui ma Malama, afio ai Tusani e puipui le mamalu ia te oe le Atiali'i Faiga*. I really do appreciate your fervent support during this term.

MR SPEAKER: The member has two minutes remaining, but it seems that you are just warming up with your budget address. Utilise your time wisely...

Afioga TOLEAFOA KEN VAAFUSUAGA POUTOA: I am just beginning to address my constituency. The mountains of Utumanua is silent at Lepau and Tafagamanu, with respects of *Tuala ma Tusani ma Leaupepe susu ai Leafumatino ma le matua ia Lepale, le mamalu ia Saleiauta*. I appreciate your support. The courts at Muliau and Sualo is significant for it is the home of venerable Uso and Ailaoa, it also refers to the oratory group of Tuisavailuu and in the same token applaud your encouragement. I acknowledge the sacred grounds at Mulivai and Lalotoa where the Taulagi and patriarch of SaTuala resides. It also refers to the orators of Maauga and the four sides of Aana. I thank you for your fervent support which has allowed your representative to be inside the crystal clear pool and not the opposite.

I recognise my spiritual fathers throughout the various denominations within my constituency. I take my hat off to your role in prayer. I do feel renewed strength and fresh ideas every time because of your prayerful support. I recognise the dignitaries of *faletua ma tausima saooa*, I admire your support and advice, thank you for the important role you play in serving our constituency.

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I applaud the strength of our community for working the land which is our contribution to the country through the fruits of your labour from the fields.

Hon Prime Minister I admire your courage and perseverance, your service and compassion for Samoa. Although you constantly encounter challenges but that is where your faith is tested. Troubled times brings out the best navigators. It is said in the scriptures that love conquers all and we are not forsaken by God.

Mr Speaker, that is the contribution of my constituency in support of the Main Estimates 2020/2021. May God bless Samoa, and this Sitting, Soifua.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you.

Susuga Hon Laauli Polataivao Leuatea (Gagaifomauga No.3): Mr Speaker...

MR SPEAKER: The member for Lefaga and Faleaseela continues the trend of being the first speaker on the Main Financial Estimates and as well as Supplementary Estimates. Well done, thank you. Your constituency should be proud to have their member opening the floor during Parliamentary sittings and it is a mark of someone that is organised. God bless the member. I call on another member to speak.

Susuga Hon Laauli Polataivao Leuatea: Mr Speaker I seek an opportunity.

MR SPEAKER: I call upon the member for Gagaifomauga No.3

Susuga Hon LAAULI POLATAIVAO LEUATEA: Greetings Mr Speaker on this new and blessed morning to the dignitaries of this Assembly at Tiafau. You have raised the flag of victory in recognition of the love and grace of God which has enable us to come together. In saying that let us join together in spirit and uplift our praises to the altar for He is God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. He is the Father of this nation and Government of Samoa. I respectfully acknowledge the dignitaries of this House, to the Hon Prime Minister and Cabinet, the dignitaries of this side of chambers with Associate Ministers and Chairpersons and also the distinguish members of Parliament.

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I believe that the ancestors of Samoa have all passed as the shoal of bonito disappearing into the deep ocean, as our country's sailing ship prepares to make its final round of this term now concluding. We have prayed to God for an occasion like this for us to meet. Just like when the kings of Samoa met, with Malietoa and Tuimanua at the yellow sea to disclose their gratitude due to Gods love and grace. To convey gratitude for your support Samoa, and as we often say, that no one however wise they may be, can change the course of things or modify anything. For you are sacred and compared only to a fish with countless bones that no one can rearrange.

I sincerely respect the revered religious honorifics of Samoa of the clergy, whom are offering invocation to God for prosperity upon Samoa today and the future. I recognise the support of the people at large representing the ceremonial salutations of Samoa, with the families and their royal sons protected by the oratory group. I acknowledge our relatives in the East, the salutations pertaining to Sua and Vaifanua, Fofu and Aitulagi, Saole and Saleaumua and Launiu Saelua. The Government presided by the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, The Speaker and the President of the Senate and that side of the world our neighbours Tutuila and Manua.

I respectfully acknowledge the dignitaries of our Government and its three established pillars, Mr Speaker and the Samoan Parliament, the Hon Prime Minister, the leader of Government and Cabinet and our sacred relationship with the Judiciary. I acknowledge the Chief Justice and Judges of the Supreme Court. The President and all the judges of the court of Samoa. On this note I convey my well wishes and commendations to the members of the Judiciary that have been in charge of the workload. Now that the ship of Salemuliga is approaching shore with the arrival of His Honour the newly appointed Chief Justice. May your appointment be successful and your wisdom must depend on the Lord. Do remember the support of the people and the independence of the Judiciary.

Mr Speaker, I am humble to stand before you today but allow me to express my appreciations to you Mr Speaker. I know that you clearly understand the stance of this constituency. On behalf of my constituency with respect to *Satupua, aiga Satupua, aiga sa Malietoa ma le mamalu o le faletolu.*

To this side as well, the respects various constituencies, for the advice, I extend to you my apologies I am most cautious and respectful of the status of the Chair which you occupy.

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Mr Speaker I totally understand the difficulty of your role and I appreciate the way that you recognise and uphold our status. Your regards to the prominent and venerable kings and the respected orators. Since the beginning of this term, I applaud you in your role and service to the Government. Throughout our history I believe that you have done a great deal for the office of Speaker. Afioga Toleafoa Faafisi, I do not need to praise you, I do not necessarily need to spell out or divulge the knowledge and wisdom which you possess. I had been following your footsteps and learning from you. Listening and observing and I am happy that I had the spirit to master and absorb the knowledge of those before me. But I must also apologise to you during the course of this term, everyone knows what I am facing as of this morning. Whatever I may have said or an action that was unacceptable Afioga Toleafoa Leaupepe, forgive me. My shortcomings exposed I appeal to your forgiveness and may they pass. May they be cleansed at the pond at Faletuamamsaga and hopefully forgiven by the pond of Salemuliaaga.

Everyone understands the situation I am in concerning our political party, and how I left without a word. I feel that I must be humble in my quest for victory. There has also been recommendation from my constituency to keep the peace which is my stance today. Mr Speaker I am of the opinion that I shall now be an independent member to represent my constituency as a result of the circumstances involving me. Afioga Toleafoa Faafisi, I appreciate and accept the authority which you have exercised. I am of the view that the man who rules his heart is better than the warrior that charges the fort. In saying that this will be my maiden speech as an independent member.

The respects of the Leader of Government the Hon Prime Minister and our Political Party. I am very grateful for everything during our union. I am of the view and out of respect that love must be upheld to bind the agreement which we were entrusted in, it has ended in tears but our passion and focus for forgiveness and arbitration will grow.

Your decision had been given and I know that frictions within village communities do not last forever. I have walked away in compliant of your decision due to an incident in which I was referred to have spoken out against you during our relationship. Therefore, I apologise to the Prime Minister due to a flaw on my part.

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As I have often said, only God knows a person's heart, but if it has come across as inappropriate to you well you do have the last say. But I will not be silent, I will not leave like how Faleata did, nor will I disappear like Aana did. Because I cannot forget the difficult times and the days of deceptions and the good times. It is like coolness of the cloth upon a person's eyes it shall remain. It is as Ruth said to Naomi, "Your dwelling place and status and God shall be mine also", let love bind everything.

My compliments and regards to our Political Party, but my ship will now change course to find fortune for myself. But as far as our relations is concerned well I have apologised for my weaknesses in service and I do ask for your forgiveness. My objective and focus today is that we are servant to the people. Whatever I may have shared on social media, well no one is perfect. But once we are here in this House at Tiafau well we are mirrors and the people look up to us as role models to lead Samoa into the future. We are approaching the end of this term and so I hope that our remaining tasks before us will be a success. I do believe that our genealogy from the beginning connects and we connect again at the end of the line. We shall meet at river heads and when it reaches the sea. May your sun remain high above Gideon and the moon above the valley of Aikaron, that is, may blessings remain upon Samoa.

Mr Speaker I will now share my views on behalf of my constituency concerning the Budget. My appreciations first to the Hon Minister of Finance and I do feel a sense of compassion due to your allocations of limited sources. It was said that they are trying to weed the taro plantation to find whatever is left. The situation with your allocation is sad. We are now in a period which we did not anticipate, we are in a time where we live in peace only to have catastrophes destroy it. We are now in a period of death plagues where each country finds itself the means to survive and reviving their economies, health services and everything else in order to find life.

But I must congratulate you, I mean, what can we do? But I am of the belief that we, work today to build tomorrow. The 40 years that went into building financial policies must be reviewed to see what we can change to take us into the future as we have been affected by the catastrophe now happening.

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I know that the Hon Minister of Communications has often heard the views concerning the policies being put in place by the Government to protect our communications system which is vital. I am concerned with the way our gateway for Samoa is handled. My memory goes back to the time when Samoa-Tel was sold off and we took on BlueSky, and now it is Vodafone. What really concerns me with our gateway is the fact that it is under the control of Fiji. Fiji oversees every aspect including the security of information. Every dialogue we make is under the scrutiny of the company from Fiji. We do have shares in the company but we do not have control of the gateway. We must explore this Government asset and consider its future. The reasons for the situation at the time occurred due to the incapability of people at the time. It is unfortunate Blue Sky bought this company of ours for \$11million and they in turn sold it to Vodafone for \$86million. It felt as if these companies were playing games with our assets.

Afioga Hon Afamasaga Lepuiai Rico Tupai (Minister of Communications, Information and Technology): Mr Speaker...

MR SPEAKER: I beg tolerance of the member but I will allow the Minister of Communications, Information and Technology.

Afioga Hon Afamasaga Lepuiai Rico Tupai: I rise with respect... the beautiful speech of the member. I rise with respect on a point of order concerning the view of the member about our gateway which is not the case.

The two companies both have their own systems of direct communication to the outside world. We are not under the control of Fiji under these circumstances and we are independent. It is true that our Tuisamoa cable comes through Fiji, but it does not go into Fiji, our cable goes straight out. It does not enter their gateway but does go overseas then the cable is hooked to send it straight to America, it does not go into Fiji. As for our communications here in Samoa, they are all under the administration of the company here in Samoa. The acquisition of Samoa Tel acquired by Blue Sky, the major shareholder of that company was Vodafone. There was no change of management or any financial exchange of any sort, the only changes were to do with name and flagship. It is the same company that bought Samoa Tel at the beginning. So with connecting to the outside world, Digicel and Vodafone have their own system of connection. There is no gateway of sort that they need to enter to connect to the outside world.

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That is my clarification for the understanding of the country. In case there might be concerns due to communication situation, but I do appreciate the member for raising of the matter.

Susuga Hon LAAULI POLATAIVAO LEUATEA: I am merely reminding you, after all, the stance of the Hon Minister differs from the information that I have received. I have not raised this for any other reason but to caution you. It was initially sold for \$11million which was a total loss of that asset due to the negligence of employees at the time. Recently sold for US\$86million just look at that transaction and who gets the money from these Government assets? But if you have the strength, buy it back, return Government assets, as it costs a lot of public money, this is my suggestion. There is still word that our internet service is still expensive and slow. I can concur to this fact as I too use the internet.

I think it has been over two years since I have been addressing this issue to the Hon Minister of the Liquor Board. This concerns the whisky product that is now being halted. When it first came out it was called boom vodka but was later sold as olioli.

The records show this product to be very strong and you have seen people becoming intoxicated from it. People become so drunk that they faint, this whiskey is known to be dangerous. It is why I have been reminding you of the effect of this product. Even students drink it like soda, they even carry it in their school bags. I have been asking for proper control regarding prices and every factor relating to it. You all know the tricks being applied, and you are seeing on the newspapers all the cards being pulled with false receipts to deceive the Ministry. Everything is in the open now selling it cheap to avoid paying taxes. It has been almost 2 ½ years, but it looks like the Ministry is being ignorant. I am very happy that an investigation is now pursued. I ask that we not allow these types of companies that provide bad products to our people. Some of the invoices indicate over \$15,000 so we will leave these up to the Minister to assist with the investigation. It does not end there, and if you go and find out there is more, and people had been relaying this information to me, to please look into this company.

It was a company from China who received a lot of support from Government, but now it is bearing fruit which is not good for our country.

The other development I have seen happen, is the Digicel Le Lava Hotel, Mr Speaker...

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Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker...

MR SPEAKER: I beg tolerance of the member whilst I allow the interruption of the Prime Minister.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Before the member moves on to a different matter he has said a lot about this company. This is the nature of people in business where they submit applications to officials in charge, who decide whether to accept them or not.

I was shocked with the announcement and interviews, I have already looked at the data given, the Ministry did investigate perhaps the Minister will later give a statement, it was confirmed that there was nothing wrong with the whisky. My only observation was based on the information published was that it was too sweet. I have already made a statement that the Ministry must look into it and make a decision on it. If this is the situation with this product, then it should be stopped. Do not produce it again. If it is provided under the law then by all means, otherwise deport that Chinese.

Mr Speaker that is the situation. However, I am concerned about the statement that the Government supports it. But these types of situation are the everyday operations of Ministries and when we do ask them to do an investigation they will do so and make their decision. Many of the retailers have been approached and told to keep an eye out on the situation since some of the retailers have been reserved for our own local people. But then there is also the drawback and I have not once spoken in this regard, in the case of our people married to foreigners. Be it a Chinese, a German or British but they marry a girl from overseas this will be used as a means to submit their applications for these types of businesses under the name of the spouse. Well, what are we supposed to do? We cannot establish at that time what will happen until the business is up and running. What we have also realised is that some of these businesses have been leased out to people from overseas.

I thought I will respond as the recommendation of the member is crucial, but it seems there is another meaning behind it. It is being twisted yet he was in Cabinet and very well knows the handling of such business transactions. But I guess you would have received my letter which was given out yesterday to advise on looking into this matter.

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The difficulty of the matter is considering the degree of sweetness that should be accepted and used and this where a decision should be made as well as the colour which should be set to one and not several colours as it mistakes some mothers thinking it is cordial. These are the areas that need to be looked at by the Ministry responsible for these types of businesses.

Mr Speaker that is my clarification as for the member who recently spoke he was in Cabinet and understands what was going on.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you, I call upon the Minister responsible for the matter now discussed, the Hon Minister of Revenue.

Afioga Hon Tialavea Fea Leniu Tionisio Hunt (Minister of Revenue): Thank you for the opportunity and I appreciate the member now raising the issue and I would think that there would be more members speaking on this matter.

The matter concerning the wine house, well olioli is not a beer but wine. The process which is made is of a wine. All the bottles of soda and wine were taken to the Scientific Research Organisation of Samoa and tested, and records show as of March this year they are all safe.

This company was launched in 2015. The partner of this Chinese is Samoan. There have been provisions set up for this company and they have paid for the penalties imposed. The production of this wine has been ceased at the moment. The Ministry has locked down the premises of this wine making business whilst investigations take place to ascertain whether the allegations are confirmed. The Liquor Board yesterday made their decision. Special attention was paid to the subject. Resolutions which are appropriate for the law have been made.

The monitoring of such businesses is directed by the Ministries regulations as well as the Liquor Board imposing penalties and steps that need be taken. So penalties have been imposed on this company and their premises continue to be closed to allow SROS to undertake further test. Whatever the outcome will be we are trying to avoid the use of these plastic bottles. But this said bottle is wine. The alcohol percentage is no more than 15%. Every wine made be it here or anywhere else in the world has a maximum level of 15% alcohol.

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The Liquor Board treats every business in the same manner and do not desire otherwise. The operating of businesses that deal with liquor are all at the same par in terms of regulations in which they operate. But I do appreciate the member for raising this issue but the Government treats all companies the same.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you, the Leader of the Government has spoken about these wine bottles. Be aware of these issues in case COVID from overseas does not get us but this COVID from China and their wines. It is best that it be stopped also prevention is better than cure. What do we achieve from those licenses, we should do away with it in case someone dies.

I call upon the member to continue.

Susuga Hon LAAULI POLATAIVAO LEUATEA: Thank you Mr Speaker. I do not want to make up any stories, as for the things stated by the public, all of us have tasted beer. We also know drunkenness, no matter how drunk you are, I say, once you drink this liquor you become mindless. I want to say that you will completely blackout.

That is why I am constantly asking you Hon Minister. I have been asking you, then you came the other day and whispered to me, we will stop when the shelves are empty. But look at where we are? This report from the police is shocking when you read it, and you will understand the effect it holds, however the Chair of the House has spoken. Stop let us not do it again....

MR SPEAKER: Thank you, I advise the member to move away from this matter since have been clarified by the Minister.

Susuga Hon LAAULI POLATAIVAO LEUATEA: On that note, Mr Speaker, I raised this due to my concern for this very company who also buys nonu. The Nonu association are listening. The complaints made regarding the price for green nonu and the price of leaves used is discouraging. You all understand the process, and if our market overseas is blocked it will not only be this company but all nonu companies here in Samoa. This is the same situation we went through with our kava. It was so stressful with our failed attempts to get it going again but it was prohibited right throughout the world yet we are allowing these guys to continue.

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Let me just say, there was a delegation from China who took all the orders for nonu whilst the other nonu companies sat back and watched. It is why I am suggesting that our Government must review their process of allocation, with respect.

MR SPEAKER: I want to remind the member, you have very little time left.

Susuga Hon LAAULI POLATAIVAO LEUATEA: The Hon Minister of Health thank you for your patience, I feel sorry for the difficulties and hardships you face at this particular time. We have not really recovered from the measles and here we are challenged by this deadly pandemic, I convey my commendations to the Ministry for their efforts and patience. Just a few points to assist with the situation of people arriving from abroad. In my view since I have had relatives arriving and they have all been justified and cleared from their point of departure. So there is no reason for them to be quarantined upon arrival. Once a person arrives they should be quarantined at home saving us time and money being unnecessarily wasted.

There is also another very small matter I want to voice for the information of the Minister and Ministry. I have been informed by doctors and nurses that they have yet to receive their allowances during the measles. I will leave this matter beside the Minister to look into.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker...

MR SPEAKER: I call upon the Hon Prime Minister.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalamana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: The issue in regards to the matter being raised and advise given, a recommendation has already been made yesterday. A recommendation was made to Committee to look into this matter. Cabinet will be meeting today to look at this again as the idea has evoked to consider this, particularly the doctors and our people that are wanting to return home. There is a high number of people that went on the Seasonal Workers Programme, which need be prepared to come home. We are currently reviewing this issue whether these people should be released to go home once they come back.

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What we are really concerned about is the situation going around of people testing positive and after that it comes out negative and then positive again. That is why we are being really cautious with Mr Speaker. It is the goal of this Government that once our people arrive, they are allowed to go home. But in this respect, we must adhere to the advice of our doctors, because no one else will deal with the problem when we get affected.

Doctors are the ones that will become affected first but this is our nature, insisting on getting what we want done. Cabinet have been wanting to allow our people to return including those in Tutuila. But we are cautious and mindful of the fact that once we allow this and problems occur we would be blamed. People will turn around and say why did we accepted the recommendation.

Mr Speaker we are in a world full of problems which we are not aware of. Our desires are infinite. We want to take the easiest avenue but once problems occur. Who will carry the responsibilities? It is the Government.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you Hon Prime Minister. The member has 2 more minutes.

Susuga Hon LAAULI POLATAIVAO LEUATEA: I appreciate the reminder from the Leader of the government. Since I have 2 more minutes.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: Mr Speaker, a humble request, since the explanation of the olioli bottle with a wine label is not complete. Pardon me Mr Speaker I move a motion *that 10 minutes be added to the wonderful speech of Afioga Laauli Fossie Schmidt if you please.*

MR SPEAKER: It is best to put forward the question if anyone seconds it. It seems no one seconds the motion...

Susuga Hon LAAULI POLATAIVAO LEUATEA: The judgment of Salega need not be bother, but I do appreciate your respect. I had thought that since this is my maiden speech, I would not get cut off but it is okay Mr Speaker. This is the first maiden speech with a time limit imposed. Nevertheless, I accept my fate after all I have just become independent, I am free. Though my moment has been robbed...

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Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, if only the motion stated that it is a maiden speech. But the trouble is the member lost his purity a long time ago. I am glad to speak on this as I had thought that the member understands the policies of this Party. If no one from this side objects I will not interfere.

MR SPEAKER: Apologies to the member, I ask that you conclude.

Susuga Hon LAAULI POLATAIVAO LEUATEA: Do not be concerned old man, as you like picking on young people.

Mr Speaker, well this is how things proceedings go, rejection is not a novel idea.

Mr Speaker out of respect of your ruling I will not cover the other Ministers but will move straight now to the Minister of Finance.

MR SPEAKER: My apologies to the member but the other member for Gagaifomauga No.3 is upstanding.

Afioga Faaulusau Rosa Duffy Stowers (Gagaifomauga No.3): Mr Speaker, I wanted to second the motion moved by Tofa Olo Fiti, however since my brother is now independent. I too will say no.

MR SPEAKER: The good thing is you have done the right thing. Tofa Olo Fiti is one of the most convincing people around.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: Mr Speaker it is quite alright. But it is clear now that Afioga Laauli Fossie Schmidt will return but not Afioga Faaulusau Rosa Stowers.

Susuga Hon LAAULI POLATAIVAO LEUATEA: Do not be, since our good relations must be maintained. I am not like Gagae whom we differentiate on ideas. Afioga Faaulusau Stowers our connection can be compared to two identities being slashed with a razor blade. That is how close we are. I will not counter you as you are the village maiden of our community. You are the apple of my eye in sacred traditional terms. You may say no today but I will say yes to you tomorrow. That is how I feel.

Hon Minister...

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Tofa Nafaitoa Talaimanu Keti (Gagaemauga No.3): Mr Speaker...

MR SPEAKER: You may have the floor since you were mentioned.

Tofa Nafaitoa Talaimanu Keti: The speech of Gagaifo has been awfully good until he mentioned Gagae. I beg tolerance of the member but do continue with your speech and not mention myself because when you do, you will see what will happen. With respect.

MR SPEAKER: This is why I advise the member for Gagaifomauga No.3 not to listen to Tofa Olo Fiti, as he is one of the trouble makers. But do continue with your speech.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: Mr Speaker I am not a trouble maker. The only thing which I pity Gagae is the fact he no longer holds the principal court of Vaituutuu as he lost it. He has nothing since he discarded it.

MR SPEAKER: Conclude with your remarks.

Susuga Hon LAAULI POLATAIVAO LEUATEA: I will react as you are and will create an altercation as you describe.

Tofa Nafaitoa Talaimanu Keti: That is your habit using your two hands. Anyway let the member finish his speech as his time is up. I did not reject Vaituutuu with respect to my village of Saleaula listening in. If you are not running for Saleaula do not speak of Saleaula. With respect.

Susuga Hon LAAULI POLATAIVAO LEUATEA: Do not cause trouble, sit down.

MR SPEAKER: I ask that the member conclude his remarks.

Susuga Hon LAAULI POLATAIVAO LEUATEA: Gagaemauga No.2 do not be objectionable as this is how we converse being people from Savaii. Matautu, you are the defender of Government, be calm. Whatever Salega may have said, well the leaves of the fiso is the same as the leaves of the tolo. You are of the same origin. Yes! you are. The only person that I know that is truthful here is Levao Olo.

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There was a time, Nafaitoa, I do not need to say this but the riddle has been solved and I came to Vaituutuu to guard it. Do not forget it and that is the reason I am saying it.

It cannot be separated, though you say we are different I will insist that we are one.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Maleilegaoi: Mr Speaker, I believe the 2 minutes of the member is finished.

Susuga Hon LAAULI POLATAIVAO LEUATEA: To conclude, Mr Speaker, it is the friction of the celebration of me becoming an independent. It is instituted by the Independent State of Samoa, pure independent.

This morning Hon Minister of Finance, I wish you well for your allocation. I know that wisdom and foresight is with you. When I look at this Budget, it is in fact, a deficit, which is what makes up our Budget for this year. We are deficit, we are broke I do not know what the term was, but it was translated into Samoan by Afioga Asiata Saleimoa. I am reluctant to say it in case I might swear. The situation with our budget is that it should be accurately described as it is in deficit. I advise the wisdom and prudence.

MR SPEAKER: My apologies to the member but your time is up.

Susuga Hon LAAULI POLATAIVAO LEUATEA: How do we balance the \$205 million that is missing in the Budget? How can you deny it? How will you fix it?

MR SPEAKER: Respectable member...

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, I think the member has forgotten that we were in a similar situation last year.

Susuga Hon LAAULI POLATAIVAO LEUATEA: Yes we were in that situation last year and then we went and loaned the \$205million for the budget. Why have we only loaned \$11million this time? Are we prohibited from taking out loans?

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MR SPEAKER: The old folks use to say, although the car has a problem when going but it still goes and nothing cannot be fixed. Everything that is noted are still continuing. Pardon the member your time is up.

Susuga Hon LAAULI POLATAIVAO LEUATEA: Mr Speaker the contribution of this constituency is done. Despite my desire to submit recommendations to assist the Government, I think I will stop here. I do not want my intentions to be interpreted as false and causing Cabinet members to all come at me.

This is our role of sharing and putting out there our recommendations to the Hon Prime Minister and Cabinet for their wise consideration, and if they decide otherwise that is fine. I think I will convey the rest of my speech on ET Live, that way it would not be interrupted and would be clear and understood. My thoughts and ideas on our relations I have shared. To the distinguish members, well you are all brothers through blood and ties, and we are all representatives of the people. Our ship has set sail for our destination at Fogapoa for the grounds of Pule. Fuifatu are the grounds by which I seek refuge, in need of rest.

Respectable Chairperson of Committee, for this legislation, I wish you well in your calling after all you are a lady from the island of Savaii. I only advise, remember the Parliamentary Committee is a Committee of Parliament. You should be neutral in your views. Do not defend the legislation but allow the voices of the people and then submit your report afterwards.

The other thing is that I am delighted to see that Saleaula is complete, that is Safotulafai, Leulumoega and especially Tuisamau. Yet Afioga Gafatasi always speaks. Where is your protection of aiga? I am just saying but you have the wisdom and prudence. Samoa if I may have erred today return it back to Laauli but I am grateful Mr Speaker, I also acknowledge the support of my constituency, I shall see you next week and then we will begin with our register. With respect all the best with our meeting.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you, I call upon...

Afioga Fuimaono Teo Samuelu Teo (Falealili East): Mr Speaker, now that the member has taken his seat. Everyone knows and the prominent orators of the country is known. Who will the orators turn to when the sea becomes rough so to speak? They rely on the wisdom of prominent chiefs to uphold the dignity of the country.

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It was out of respect after deliberations between Leulumoega, Tuisamau and Fuifatu as who would speak. They said Fuimaono today is exceptional. Afamasaga whom prophesized future Governments matches your calibre the venerable one. I want to remind you that we do not just sit back. The wisdom of our people is protected by the prominent chiefs, thank you.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you, I beg tolerance of the member...

Susuga Hon LAAULI POLATAIVAO LEUATEA: I do have regards for our salutations as I do observe our mutual relations. I accord the same to our group on this side of Chamber. If my statement is out of line I will take it back, with respect.

MR SPEAKER: I beg tolerance of the member. Very well.

Tofa Ili Setefano Taateo Tafili (Aana Alofi No.2): Mr Speaker, I seek an opportunity for the sake of the listening public.

MR SPEAKER: My apologies to the member but if you are wanting to make your general remarks, well I will allow you. Otherwise, you need not be concerned with Samoa.

Tofa Ili Setefano Taateo Tafili: I have the utmost respect for you, thank you.

MR SPEAKER: The status of Tumua and Pule, Ituau and Alataua, Aiga i le Tai and Vaa o Fonoti is known. It is the same scenario with Aiga. The orators defend the dignity of Aiga. We all enter parliament as matais, our ancestors established this Parliament to be occupied by matais only. When you become a matai you should not reside in town but the rural community. Yes, then you will understand when you must drink your ava. You begin from the back with the calling of the ava.

The matais that serves first will be known from this aspect. I call upon the member for Siumu to take the floor. If the community of Siumu are listening in well your representative is about to address the Budget.

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Afioga FAALOGO IOSEFA SOPI (Siumu): Thank you Mr Speaker. First I convey greetings to the Chair this morning. I also want to thank you for the administration of our proceedings. Greetings to the Hon Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, Cabinet and Associate Ministers. I acknowledge also the Chairpersons of the various Parliamentary Committees and this side of Chamber. I recognise the Chief Executive Officers of Ministries and Public Enterprises present here today.

Mr Speaker, I also greet Le Ao o le Malo and his Good lady. I bid the same to the member of the Council of Deputy and his Good lady. Greetings also to all the Leaders of the Chirstian churches throughout Samoa tuning in at this hour.

Mr Speaker I also acknowledge the dignitaries of Samoa who are listening from all sides at this hour, *le paia i Tama ma Aiga, Aiga ma a latou Tama, le Usoga a Tumua ma Pule, Aiga i le Tai ma le Vaa o Fonoti.*

I also recognise the Eastern Group of islands in the presence of Kings and Nobles and the two Houses of the American Samoa Legislative Assembly.

Mr Speaker I take this opportunity to mention my constituency of Siumu with respects of *Sa Asomua ma Aiga e Lua, Tuuu ma lo outou Aiga Sa Tuuu, le falelua o Tulafale ia Mano ma Faoagali, Lio o oe o le Fofoga o le Alataua, Utaileuo ma le faletolu.* Thank you for the support and prayers it is the source of strength enabling me to give this address today within the Parliament of Samoa.

Mr Speaker, before I comment on the Third Supplementary Estimates and the Main Estimates 2020/2021, I first want to express my appreciation to the Hon Prime Minister and Cabinet and Chairperson of the State of Emergency Board for their ongoing efforts right up to today in keeping us safe from COVID-19. I applaud the Board for their persistent advice to the Prime Minister and Cabinet which is shown by the constant lifting of applied restrictions every week.

I also acknowledge the contribution from various Ministries particularly those in the frontline battling this pandemic. I would like to thank the doctors, the police and everyone at the frontline everyday including the staff of the airport and the staff of Samoa Airways and everyone confronting people coming in and going out of the country.

Mr Speaker I am grateful to our partners and stakeholders assisting us with this effort or our attempts in fighting this pandemic confronting our nation. I appreciate the various forms of assistance from money to vaccines and everything we are using to prepare ourselves at this point in time.

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As of now a lot of the restrictions have been lifted which causes gratitude to the Chairperson of the Committee for your recommendations to the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Mr Speaker I will firstly accord my congratulations to the Hon Minister of Finance and the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry for the compilation of this Main Estimates for the financial year 2020/2021. Your role is most difficult when deciding which projects are priority and which ones must be taken off the list of things to be done by Ministries.

We would also like to thank the various Ministries and their contribution in the Budget, as the Budget is different, the Executive officer and staff always strive to get money to perform various functions of each Ministry.

Every year when I speak on the Budget I would say, what if we had more resources which our economy can depend upon. What if we had more money for the projects which members are asking for to be done. What if we had the same capacity as overseas Governments with sufficient resources to cater for the needs of every constituency and every village.

Mr Speaker, I would like to begin with a summary of the work required by our constituency. My constituency is listening, and I have submitted our letters and requests to the Hon Prime Minister and the Minister, we should not have to worry since he assured us that all our requests will be met. Let us then be happy and show support. I know that it will all be done within this term, perhaps in 6 to 7 months our access roads will all be tar sealed including all the demands you have relayed to your representative, it will be done as stated by our Leader. I know that once he speaks it gives a sense of relief.

But just to summarize a few works like the 4 working roads, the roads in the district are mostly damaged. The road to the Coconut Beach Hotel, which is no longer passable for cars this season, is the canal or ford in one part of the constituency. Well, the drainage pipes of one of the villages in our district are requesting water for their village.

The Hon Minister of Agriculture, I express gratitude for the distant buoy which the fishermen of my constituency are now using. I also appreciate the ramp that is currently being built for the boats to access the water. My only other request as you mentioned at the beginning of this term concerns buoys for the lagoon. A lot of my community fish in the lagoon, if you would kindly look into this matter for a buoy.

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Thank you Hon Minister of Health. I want to thank you for the current operations to protect our country from the possible effect of COVID-19. I take my hat off to you and the Chief Executive Officer and staff for your engagement.

I will just put this to you again regarding a health centre for us which I have already requested. We have the old health centre which I think was last used 20 years ago, the premises are still available. I ask for your consideration as we really need a health centre.

The Hon Minister of Revenue, you have spoken about wine, and I want to say this to the Minister. When you look at the outside world there are only two types of wines, red and white wine. But what we have here is I think about seven different types of wine. The Hon Prime Minister was right when he advised to concentrate on one colour if it is wine. If not, I support the opinion to stop the production of wine.

On the other hand, overseas production of wine is supposedly thymidylate for about two months for this process. When our Committee visited the site where production is done here, we were told that after three nights it is ready now I do not know what they put in there. Because overseas things like grapes are thymidylate. The wine made here is confusing whether it should be classified as such. I do not even understand why it is labelled wine and I do not understand how it can be sold here as wine after all when it first came out it was called whisky. My recommendation is that the process applied here should be reviewed otherwise stop this production.

MR SPEAKER: I call upon the Hon Minister of Revenue.

Afioga Hon Tialavea Fea Leniu Tioniso Hunt: Mr Speaker, the process of this wine according to the information provided to me by my Ministry, is the same process involving the production of wine. They actually use rice which is fermented before extracting the final liquid product which is mixed with colouring. As discussed, that is the information as to how wine is produced according to the information received by the Liquor Board, which we also went and oversee.

As for the colouring factor that too was permitted by the Committee. Currently the Committee are looking at whether to continue the varieties of colouring or to have just one colour. With the bottle, plastics bottles should not be used except for ones that can be replaced.

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That is the dialogue currently taking place and really reviewing the production of this wine will depend on SROS with the result they give us. The other alternative is to send all these bottles overseas since there is also another production line of the similar product. But the Committee are looking at it before continuing it.

MR SPEAKER: I beg tolerance of the member, I call upon the Hon Prime Minister.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, circumstances are thought provoking. There is a bottle made by the Japanese called SAKE which is brewed from rice.

Perhaps that is another avenue we could look at and come up with a Samoan name and do not add colouring but keep it clear. This has been evoked from within this Assembly and maybe we could look at exporting it to Japan and China.

MR SPEAKER: Since we have arrived at our...

Afioga FAALOGO IOSEFA SOPI: Let me conclude Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: Is that right? We have reached our recess hour, but if you are going to finish up well then I will allow you to do so.

Afioga FAALOFO IOSEFA SOPI: Thank you Mr Speaker, I will now conclude my speech after this small matter. The only other thing I want to say about this wine made from rice is the fact that in the Bible it says that wine is made from grapes. Please look into that factor.

I want to congratulate the Minister of Statistics for the proposed National ID programme which will be rolling out next month. Perhaps this is an area that should have been done a while back as it is very convenient during elections, schooling and so on. I appreciate this idea.

I am delighted that Samoa Airways will have another plane for our travelling public. My suggestion is to maybe defer this plan until the lockdown is settled.

Mr Speaker to conclude, I would like to thank men and women Ministers for their ongoing work.

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The only thing is to my constituency tuning in...

Afioga Hon Fiame Naomi Mataafa (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Natural Resources and the Environment): Mr Speaker I do not understand what young Minister the member for Siumu is referring to, whether it is youthful or young as in young pony with all due respect to the Assembly. But do speak in proper language.

MR SPEAKER: Well, do...

Afioga FAALOGO IOSEFA SOPI: I apologise to the lady Minister, I did mean lady but it did not all come out. But I do congratulate the Speaker for his role in conducting the proceedings of the Assembly of Samoa.

May I say to my constituency tuning in well that is our contribution to the Budget debate, may this forum be blessed, thank you.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you, I caution all the members to be well prepared so when you do get your opportunity you are confident. Some members tend to stutter in speech. But I do appreciate the member for respecting the Chair. This is the only member that respects the Speaker. My pledge to your constituency is that you return.

Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly will be set aside for its usual recess.

Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly was set aside for usual recess at 10.55 and resumed at 11.40 am.

Proceedings resumed on the second reading of the Supplementary Estimates Bill (No.3) 2019/2020 and the Main Estimates Bill 2020/2021.

MR SPEAKER: I announce that proceedings of the Legislative Assembly have resumed.

I do believe that Cabinet and members have acquired a boost in strength from the refreshments. The same can be said about the Chief Executive Officers of Ministries and Public Enterprises.

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Before recess the member for Siumu had concluded his remarks. With respect I call upon another member to take the floor.

I call upon the member for the Urban West.

Afioga FAUMUINA ASI PAULI WAYNE FONG (Urban Seat West):
Thank you Mr Speaker, I do believe that the refreshments had been enjoyed by everyone today, particularly the Hon Prime Minister and Cabinet.

At this point in time I will proceed to voice the contribution of Urban West for this Main Financial Estimates for this year 2020/2021. It is no secret that this constituency no longer exist. But it is important that I acknowledge the Clergy and their good wives, father and deacons and the constituency throughout. As you realise the region is divided into four.

Before a statement on the status of the Budget is made, I want to firstly greet the constituency of Faleata No.2 in the context of 2020/2021 elections. I will be running for this new constituency for the opportunity to be in the Parliament of Samoa 2021. I therefore greet Seiuli, the son of Malietoa, and also the various chiefs, orator Ulugia and Ulugia pertaining to Vaiusu.

I also recognise Nuu and Leatinuu, Siliga and matua Siliga pertaining to the village of Vailoa. I also acknowledge the other 11 villages within the boundaries of this constituency. Although the constituencies may be different but I know that we are still relatively on the same note as we were back in 2016 right up to today. I would therefore like to thank the old constituency for their support as this Parliament is coming to an end and welcome the new constituency with a proposal for the New Year. Thank you very much.

At this hour perhaps it is now time to speak on the Budget. Hon Minister of Finance, thank you for the thorough report, I have observed with compassion as you engage in the preparation of the Budget, it is magnificent. I also believe that you have the knowledge to exercise your duties well with the allocation of our finances. I also acknowledge the staff of the Ministry in their functions trying to meet the demands for every area, so that everyone gets a slice of benefit. Though things are most difficult particularly at this time of the pandemic but you are trying. We could only accord you our well wishes and support as you do have the expertise to appropriate our finances for the future of our country.

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My only request Hon Minister and I believe it has been four years since I have been asking you for the road at Falelauniu, now Parliament is coming to an end. I have witness the wonderful Government projects that have been blessed and opened, I envy those constituencies for the opportunities they are getting to drive to their plantations and farms via access roads and over bridges. I have noticed that the bridge at Moamoia is currently under way. I am grateful to the Government for this prompt implementation.

I humbly ask the Hon Minister if there are funds left if it could be allocated to the Minister of Works for this project. I understand that the initial word was that it would be between Samoa Land Corporation and Land Transport Authority well it has been 4 years of dispute over this road project. But I will only remind you Minister so the work can be done before the end of this year.

Susuga Hon Papaliitele Niko Lee Hang (Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure): Mr Speaker...

MR SPEAKER: My apologies to the member but I call upon the Hon Minister of Works.

Afioga Hon Papaliitele Niko Lee Hang: Thank you Mr Speaker. I do not wish to interrupt the member's speech. The project at Falelauniu is in the pipeline and once the budget is approved that road will be done. We have visited the area and have witnessed the terrible state of the roads at Falelauniu, Vaitele-uta and Nu'u. But leave it to us, it will be included in road projects. With respect.

MR SPEAKER: Well done. I call on the member for Urban West.

Afioga FAUMUINA ASI PAULI WAYNE FONG: Thank you Hon Minister. I thought I will remind you since we are discussing the Main Financial Estimates. But have directed my request to the Minister of Finance since he allocates the funds from time to time.

I appreciate your favourable response and the community of Falelauniu are tuning in, that their road will be done. I also understand that street lights are needed as it is quite dark at night. I believe that you have plans for this too. Hon Minister of...

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MR SPEAKER: My apologies to the member but I will allow the interruption from the Prime Minister.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker whenever Cabinet discusses these issues, this member is known to be the most disturbing person to the Minister, particularly Afioga Lautafi Purcell, because he is on that side. Perhaps Ministers tend to regard other Ministers opinion of great importance, but the addition of the member demands adds more pressure.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you. I call on the member. If you put pressure on the Minister he will tire.

Afioga FAUMUINA ASI PAULI WAYNE FONG: Thank you and I appreciate the Prime Minister and the pressure he is placing today but am merely voicing my request. It is best to put it out there in the open. But I am happy that the Minister and the Prime Minister have both responded which is evidence that the project will be done.

As for the Minister of Technology, Hon Minister I am looking at the state of the budget appropriated, have you noticed the Office of the Regulator building that was destroyed by the fire. I believe you have the vision to find another building for the office of the Regulator, this Ministry is important to our Government at this time. The importance of this is to do with technology so far this year. Although the Regulator has resigned I know there are other capable applicants. My recommendation to the Minister is the speedy construction of a good building for the Ministry as they have a lot of work to do. I will not discuss the cable companies but I know you have the skills to prioritise and improve this area. Thus you also have the skills in cable work in order to value and improve further.

I am overwhelmed with empathy towards the Minister of Justice at this particular time with the various legislations concerning yourself and our relations with the Courts. This is going to be outstanding and you will be outstandingly good if it goes well, and on the other hand you shall be outstandingly bad if it goes wrong. I will say no more on the matter as the Committee are currently considering it with the public.

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I am worried with the general views on these Bills but we will await the Committee findings. They are after all very knowledgeable and a few of them are on this side of the House and their opinion will not fall short of disappointment. But we will await their report and we pray that God will render assistance to them and return with a favourable solution concerning the matters on debate and where the legislation will stand. There are critics whom are saying that it is not good. But there are also Ministries and Chief Executive Officers of the Government saying that it is 100% perfect. But we shall wait for a favourable response which we can all accept and to improve the state of the courts.

I want to say this to the Minister of Education that the term is ending and how good of you that our schools have been built. One is complete and preparations for the other one is starting. The school for Vaigaga now underway will be done through the assistance of the World Bank. But I have heard an unfortunate story that the contractors have charged so much for the plan and supervision of the project which uses up all the money and the school is yet to be built. I urge you Minister if another contractor could be secured to do the job and saving us this money for the actual school premises itself. I do applaud you for the school at Falelauniu and Tafaigata. Everything you say does eventuate, and you have taken a stance between our constituencies. Falelauniu is currently attracting a lot of people from all over the country especially from the island of Salafai. Reality has been the schools are quite a distance away and now that the ground work is beginning with the boundaries marks for the work to start. I admire you because you have a bigger chance to come back. For me this school is enough to cater for the children of the constituency. Thank you very much for the respect you have accorded me.

The Hon Minister of Revenue, our revenue this year has dropped due to the extent of your charity, it has been allocated out to the country as gifts due to the pandemic. But you will get more revenue as long as you allow more gifts to come in. God will provide you with more funds in the coming year. I am not certain whether I will come back, but for you I know your kindness to our people, let us sacrifice for our country at this stage.

I want to say to the Minister of Health that I do have fondness for her for the various plans in the pipeline countering the pandemic and everything affecting our country. But you continue to remain calm and it is an advantage for a mother to be in this position with that composure.

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I know that you are advising your Chief Executive Officer and staff and your patience is admired. You did not anticipate yourself to be in that position and the pandemic, no, it is the plan of God, and Samoa is blessed. I want to ask you Madam Minister whether the opportunities for people to travel abroad is still available. I normally travel for my medical check-up, but that is now restricted. If my name could be put down in the list, I need to get a check up very soon in case I am harmed before the elections.

My friend Tofa Lopao'o Mua, my congratulations to you for your wellbeing. Since you have taken on the portfolio, a lot of good things have happened and at the same time problems are occurring yet you remain steady. My recommendation is that you review the situation concerning our taro, coconut and cocoa since the programmes by the Ministry seems to be disorganised. But I know that the target is our exportation of taro and coconut not forgetting the fact that this is the staple diet of our people. I know that if every family has a taro plantation all you need to do Minister is to sort out a market for these products. We will just bring them to you and our people will get their money. You should also review the state of our cocoa. You should understand the huge benefits to us in the past from this product. It was our livelihood and you, hail from the area well known as the king of Samoan cocoa. I know that you have the wisdom regarding this matter.

I appreciate the favourable response from Afioga Papalii and I will not say anything further since you have responded to what I requested and that is good enough for me.

To my dear father Afioga Tuitama Tuitama, I admire your good state of health, I would like to remind you of our programme of guidelines for constituencies. The framework for these guidelines has been prepared by villages and communities. However, some village communities have not done this yet due to the newly drawn boundaries of constituencies. They are still not yet familiar with their newly formed constituency which is making them hesitant to approach the new constituency as directed by your Ministry to attend for the guidelines purposed. The guidelines are very ideal Hon Minister but the only hiccup is that each community have to come up with funds to finance the programme.

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I wonder whether the Minister and Ministry can provide a framework for these communities to follow in order to achieve this guideline. Otherwise it is all very good, there was a meeting at Vaigaga last week highlighting this COVID-19. The address was very well presented. The only factor that was not very good was the song when hands are washed. It was the happy birthday song and it was sung in both English and Samoan. By the end of the song the water tank had almost been all used up for the washing of hands. A short but good song should be used. The programme was well delivered and my constituents were very pleased and we congratulate you for leading in constructive ideas this year.

I now come to my friend and I applaud him for the way things are with our airline, I will not say anything on the matter. I have been in the airline business for a long time and I do have high regards for the airline company and those were the good old days with Polynesian. Despite of the numerous F.O.C tickets issued but the airline continued on with more than one plane flying. We even had a 747 operating at one time which took me to America to take care of things at that end. I ended up staying there after the plane was no longer in operation. I do believe that you have the expertise to run things and I do not support getting another plane. It would be too much for us. One plane would be sufficient for us to concentrate on right now. Since there was a situation with former airline employees currently being unstable. They approached me on the matter and my response was, I am sorry I was not involved in the negotiations of the airplane, though I do believe that you have the vision.

What is your opinion of the road at Falelauniu? Why not discuss it with the Minister and the Chief Executive Officer and find out what the Land Transport Authority wants and let them get on with the road. I know you have the solution.

The Hon Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister both of you are doing well. Your Excellency the Prime Minister, I listen to you, I respect you, and what you want, and if there is any problem in our relationship, I am your son, you are my father, but do not scold me too often, because I am a little afraid to approach you, otherwise I applaud you both in your leadership. I guess that is all I wanted to share.

I hope that God will continue to grant Mr Speaker good health to run again in the next general elections. I do believe you still possess the strength to do so. I apologise concerning some people reporting myself to you but I do advise them on it. May the Lord bless you with good health.

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That is all I wanted to say, I have received a response regarding the road which is the most important matter to me. May we have a constructive meeting today and I extend well wishes to Government employees here today. Thank you.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you to the member for Urban West for his contribution. The floor is open to any member who wishes to speak.

May I remind the Assembly that with the members opposing the Government, the Chair has the final say on when the Government can start their response to the four members that have already spoken, but let us proceed with our Main Estimates.

I call upon the member of Safata West to commence with his speech.

Afioga LEAANA RONNIE POSINI: Mr Speaker greetings to you first and foremost, I extend the same to the Hon Prime Minister, Cabinet and Associate Ministers and this side of the House.

I also recognise the support of His Highness Le Ao Mamalu o le Malo and the Member of the Council of Deputies and the country at large. I rise to make our contribution to the Main Estimates now before us. I will convey first my appreciations to the Leader of the Government.

First of all thank you, concerning the pandemic now sweeping the world. We hear stories from abroad of the huge devastation around the world. This morning we hear stories of other countries like India where it sounds like it has just taken off, and other countries are really bad. Our country was perhaps the first to apply travel restrictions which really evokes the sense of gratitude to the Leader and Cabinet and also the Committee in charge for their recommendations to Government enabling us to quickly initiate these restrictions which has kept the pandemic away from us. I must also acknowledge the Clergy for their prayers concerning this disaster we are in. That is the reason for my appreciation for keeping us protected from this pandemic. That is my feeling on the issue in case the pandemic is subdued and our country finally may become affected.

I congratulate the Hon Minister of Finance and the Chief Executive Officer for the preparation of this Financial Estimates. I do note the seriousness of the current financial situation for economies around the world. However, our economy continues to stay afloat and it is a reason to applaud the Hon Minister and the Ministry of Finance.

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On behalf of my constituency I will now continue to address the single issues. I will start with the Minister of Health since I have noted that the architectural work for our health centre at Saanapu is in progress. I think this is timely considering the number of diseases arising. As some members have stated it does minimise the trouble of travelling to Motootua.

I applaud the Hon Minister of Education for the improvement in high quality education, not only for primary but college level. Also with the allocation of teachers within schools, I want to thank you.

The other point I raised was the introduction of vocational courses into the secondary school syllabus. I did hear that it was to be introduced in some colleges but am not certain whether it has taken off yet. I know that the difficulty now is the shortage in teachers to teach these vocational subjects at colleges. Hon Minister and members should understand that children have different skills and abilities. Whilst some are mentally good and some are good with trades that are done by hand and the likes. When you do introduce this at college level, by the time they get to Polytechnic and University they will have that knowledge and experience. Mr Speaker, our Government should review the process of scholarships for our people overseas. I have noted that every year people are sent away on scholarships, but I am inclined to vocational studies. It should also be a priority of our Government at other times. As we can see anything that is built in this country requires different professions in terms of skills and performance. Let us put aside the demand for doctors as we do need it and also with engineers since there are several types. But with trades, we have prioritised the development of our people, but this an area that must be reviewed. We do not want to concentrate solely on general academic since there is a lot. So we must strike a balance but this is my view on general trades.

Our environment, I respectfully remind the Deputy Prime Minister about climate change which I did speak about concerning sea walls. Particularly my constituency, a request have already been made and submitted, the sea level has risen, flooding the land and encroached on existing lands affecting parts of the country.

I applaud the Hon Minister of Works as the majority of access roads have been tar sealed in constituencies around the country. I convey our thanks. As we have requested in the past there are some communities that have huge areas being cultivated with an abundance source of farming supply.

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Is it not time to have two access roads particularly these villages, I believe that it should be based on the testimony of the Minister of Agriculture, he can vouch for where there is an abundance supply of produce, especially taro and the likes which require vast area of land for cultivation. I know that all of the access roads have been tarsealed but my request concerns my village of Saanapu.

MR SPEAKER: I call upon the Hon Minister of Works.

Susuga Hon Papaliitele Niko Lee Hang: Mr Speaker, I do not wish to interrupt the beautiful speech by the member, but I rise on a point of order. In case the public may be misled that all access roads have been tar sealed. No, that is not the case, the programme which we have is that access roads that are 1km long are tar sealed. But the 2km roads will be covered in gravel and the surface hardened by roller machinery. The people are listening, not all roads are tar sealed, only part of it. But in case the public is deceived, thinking that all their roads should be tar sealed. The program that we have, is to save money and there are a lot of access roads that can be fixed, with 1 km being tar sealed and the rest 2km is hard gravel. This are the facts Mr Speaker, thank you.

MR SPEAKER: Is the member understood...

Afioga LEANA RONNIE POSINI: I thank the Minister for clearing that up. I had also requested the Minister for street lights for the area going inland to my village of Sataoa as there are families living along there. I humbly ask the Hon Minister to consider this matter.

The other thing is the water supply for our rural villages. I should also tell you that trees along the power lines are well trim to ensure that during bad weather the lines will not be affected. My observation of the areas around town there are a lot of trees that overgrow the power lines. A light wind will cause these branches to fall on lines. I wonder what the Ministry's stance is on this. They should ask families to prune the trees and if they refuse and the power lines become affected they should bear the cost.

MR SPEAKER: I call upon the Hon Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure.

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Susuga Hon Papaliitele Niko Lee Hang: In order to save the members time, and with regards to what he has raised. The Electric Power Corporation are currently using contractors to prune trees growing over power lines. So if you do know of tree branches over growing power lines then do call us. Since that is a function carried out by the contractors working with EPC.

MR SPEAKER: Well done. Some families like to grow trees and when they do get big they are lazy to remove them. It is common sense that when you do desire electricity then safeguard the power lines. I call on the member and if it is your constituents that are doing this then order them not to do it anymore.

Afioga LEAANA RONNIE POSINI: Thank you Mr Speaker, I think you understand that I do tell you about the role we are playing to keep things in order. But that is my observation of Apia but is not the case at my constituency and the rural areas including Savaii.

MR SPEAKER: We are trying to help but that is another role of members which is to advice people. The member may continue.

Afioga LEAANA RONNIE POSINI: Moving along to the Minister of Agriculture, may I say that I have noticed that since the pandemic outbreak our people have returned to farm the land. I am as excited about this as it indicates our people not depending on families abroad. The land has an abundant source of supply we can live on.

I went to Australia with a fellow member at the beginning of this year. A lady that was on the same flight took over a cooler of fish which was restricted and disposed of by airport authorities. I am relaying this as it seems that there is inadequate dialogue between the quarantine unit and our people regarding what to take time to time. New Zealand and Australia which is a common destination for our community seems to change their rules from time to time. For instance, now and then they will change the maximum weight of coolers to be brought resulting with Australia getting rid of all the food stuff that was brought over. I mean, why not give it to the airline company that overlook passengers, or give them a list every time it departs.

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So when people do approach the airline they can remind them of what to take, what is allowed and prohibited in certain countries particularly New Zealand and Australia. For it seems that they keep changing their rules on imported items especially food stuff. It has completely thwarted the efforts of our families travelling overseas.

I want to address the Ministry of Police and Corrections. Because it seems that Police are now in charge of vehicles. I did mention before cars with awfully bright lights. As far as I am concerned this is prevailing. Last night a car passed me and the flash light in the back was turned on and was really too bright for every commuter behind. If the Commissioner would look into these bright shining lights. In addition, high speed vehicles, the route from us to Aleipata towards Lotofaga, Falealili continuing on to Siumu, Safata and Lefaga heading towards the airport. I have noticed that during the late hours of the night cars dodge the main coastal road as this other route is quicker. I wonder if it will be possible to install cameras on this stretch of road to catch these speeding vehicles.

I now arrive to the matter regarding the prison, the time when the prisoners escaped, during which time they also had time to thank our constituency. As soon as we were informed, every village in my constituency congregated and the un-titled men were instructed to start the search.

This is also where I noted the importance of upholding our traditional values. Only one voice dictated the terms of the search for matai and the un-titled men until the next day we were on the lookout for the prisoners.

The only thing to be thankful for is that we did not catch any of the prisoners. But the fact is we were all becoming annoyed since it was not easy for our local community in rural areas. I went and had a look at the prison and from what I saw I want to tell the Minister to look at the locks being used at the main gate for it seems like a cheap one. I did tell the officer minding the gate on that day to check whether the lock needs to be replaced for the main gate.

Hon Minister, this is one thing I raised at the start of this Parliamentary term. It has been observed that not only hospitals but also schools, residential homes and hotels are located on the southern side, is it not yet time to set up a Fire Station in that direction, towards Lefaga, Safata, Siumu and Falealili. Such service can also cater for Aleipata, since the southern region of Upolu is populated with businesses like accommodations and can be salvaged in cases of fire and similar incidents.

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The other factor I want to mention are this group of people that are allegedly dealing in drugs. I would like to thank the Commissioner of Police and the Ministry, especially after seeing them engaged in these unsafe environment. Seeing them in such circumstances is a concern after all they are the public protector. But now I see on TV the weapons that are obtained from outside our country and drugs, I pray to our Government to strictly enforce the punishment in these cases. The cultivation of illicit drugs in the country seems to be prevailing, I would like to express my gratitude to the Commissioner and police in their efforts to try and eradicate these drugs.

The Hon Minister of Women, Community and Social Development, I beg your pardon in the case of Village representatives and Government representatives. I have noted on the side of the roads the fences planted with hibiscus and such, especially around the coast here in Apia. Vehicles barely can go through it since it has over grown out to the road. I humbly ask that you advise the Government representatives because it does affect the safety of the travelling public.

MR SPEAKER: The member has 2 more minutes.

Afioga LEAANA RONNIE POSINI: Thank you I am just about done.

The Hon Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour, I have noticed Government land on lease, some lands are 50 acres however it seems it is not cultivated. My take on things at this time is that a lot of the public are needing land for developments. So why not minimise the blocks to about 5 acres per person so that other people can get a block of land, especially those who are keen to start up plantations. Not only that, but there are other developments it can be used for on these lands. But I will leave the matter to you.

Another matter is our Apprenticeship, hence I was in the Apprenticeship Board concerning Grade 2 and Grade 1 subjects which is conducted by MCIL. It seems that people taking part in this apprenticeship taking Grade 2 and 1 are only there for a short time. But Apprenticeship normally takes about 4 years. It seems that a lot of people are taking it just to get a certificate. But I do remember when the Board of Directors said that the programme should be dropped and let everyone attend the Apprenticeship school for 4 years.

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Mr Speaker I just have one matter to discuss. Now there are people from my constituency who have become involved in adoption of children from one set of parents to another. They have approached me for assistance as the fees being charged are quite high. They tell me that it is \$2,000 to process an adoption. My understanding is that it is a matter which can only be done by lawyers.

But the thing is the fees being charged is \$2,000. Is there no way Government can assist along these lines since they cannot afford the fees. Because not everyone are able to meet the expenses for adoption.

In conclusion I want to acknowledge the support of my constituency which is great encouragement in delivering our contribution and service to our constituency and Government. I hope for a constructive meeting.

MR SPEAKER: Well done, I too salute your constituency for their support. I commend the member on a wonderful speech. The floor is now open.

I call upon the lady member from this side of the House, the member for Gagaifomauga No.3.

Afioga FAAULUSAU ROSA DUFFY STOWERS (Gagaifomauga No.3): Thank you Mr Speaker and greetings to the Chair and distinguish members. I also acknowledge the general public tuning in and the traditional ceremonial salutations of the country. I commend the Minister of Finance for this budget. I also applaud the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Chief Executive Officers of Ministries and Public Enterprises. After all no matter how good and transparent a Budget can be if it is not in good order and the execution of its operations is not done right we will not achieve our objective.

It is the reason I am congratulating you for your leadership, perseverance and compassion for our country in the discharge of your duties. The final product of the Budget is the culmination of the operations of Ministries and Public Enterprises which is the process of annual reports from them towards the Parliamentary Committees. This is evidence of Government operations in all areas and it reflects whether we have achieved our targets every year.

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I have noticed that every year the level of service for the country gets better. I am talking about the 2019 Budget where the appropriation capital was high. Once Ministries and Public Enterprises proceeded to manage their operations, I noticed the perfect management of operations which resulted in their effort to minimise expenses. Proof of what I am saying is in the last two years, there have been unused funds remaining within Ministries operations. These remaining unused funds is increasing every year. I applaud your implementation of your duties. Thank you for showing compassion to our country in appropriating these funds, though it is not enough yet, you are producing the results.

I will now convey a few recommendations and I will be brief as I know I will get another opportunity in our next sitting. That is when maiden speeches will be delivered. But today I will proceed to make my maiden speech as the official member for Gagaifomauga No.3 since Afioga Laauli Schmidt is now an independent.

I know that some of the members have touched on certain issues so I will just emphasise it again. I thank the Hon Minister of Communication since the projects rolled out in some of the villages of my constituency have started. I hope to meet the Committee next week to confirm what you have stated.

The other thing is the cost of the internet service is a bit too much yet it is slow.

I take this opportunity to reiterate my recommendation to the Hon Minister of Education, I know it is due to the limitation of funds, but it should be a challenge to the Hon Prime Minister and Cabinet. To review the state of teachers at mission schools or church schools. Instead of giving them the funds why not put them all in the Government pay roll. I say this because I have noticed the limited amount of funds for these schools at this particular period.

On the other hand, parents are unable to instigate fundraising due to the lockdown. That is my recommendation for you after all they are all children of Samoa.

I have conveyed my appreciations to the Minister of Revenue for your role in the collection of taxes since the Government depend on it. I would suggest that the new system adopted is fully utilised to ensure every item that comes through our border is detected. It is not only products coming through but any other prohibited items that may come into the country.

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The Hon Minister is also responsible for the Police, you can advise them on the possible importation of drugs which may infiltrate our borders, to ensure the service along this line is propped up to detect this possibility.

I will say to the Ministry of Police that marijuana is not the only drug out there but also hard drugs are in Samoa. But where about in Samoa does it come from as the borders are closed since lockdown. This tells us that it is produced here and I would only suggest another avenue to track down these groups for the sake of our young children growing up for their lives could be endangered.

I want to say to the Hon Minister of Labour, I am glad for this lockdown. It has allowed small shops to thrive with the early closing of the large supermarkets. The bulk of small businesses are run by local entrepreneurs and this is their chance to earn some money. My suggestion on this note to the Minister and Ministry is to ensure the monitoring phase is done well. So that policies are being followed with monitoring and making sure receipts are issued at stores, and whether the scale used in shops are in good order. Since the majority of our people go to these stores for their daily needs.

Now a word to our public enterprises that are the Electric Power Corporation and Samoa Water Authority. My personal belief is that and I know that these services are essential, it is a necessity to have power or electricity. However, I note that the activities of these Public Bodies are provided for in the provisions of the Ministry of Public Enterprises. The meaning of the statement is, they also have a return which has to be received year after year. This is why EPC and the Water Authority are driving at achieving the subscriptions which they are submitting to Government, but it has increased the cost of their service. I am overwhelmed with compassion for our people and I know that you do too, so why not prioritise the service that you are doing and not your returns. Especially for the services of electricity and drinking water.

Since motor vehicles are under police authority again, I often speak about buses and cars. When I was in Savaii recently, the question that came to mind was whether the police are doing their job right, with the registration of motor vehicles to a large extent, buses. Most of them only have a single tail light and you wonder how it passed the registration for it to be allowed on the road to transport the general public. I guess it would take an accident for them to do their job of registering vehicles by the rules. Even with their horns which I did talk about before, some of them are ridiculously loud. If the chairman would look into this matter, I would appreciate it.

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The other thing I almost forgot but was mentioned by a fellow member concerning the Ministry of Education, regarding a pass from the National University of Samoa, but are not recognised even at our USP. This is our University of the South Pacific, there should be mutual relations between the two establishments so subjects can be cross credited from there to the University of the South Pacific.

The other factor I wish to point out are Ministries to publicise their services for the information of the public. As the majority of our people in the rural areas do not get access to it. But if they can successfully disclose their services available for the awareness of the public that would be great for those in rural areas.

My last recommendation is to whomever the Minister responsible for corporations and institutions like the law society and accountants. Now the accountant fees are quite reasonable but for lawyers it is fairly high. Could you look into this and perhaps sort out a way to minimize it for the benefit of our people.

Those are a few recommendations, but I do recognise my constituency, our constituency with Afioga Laauli Schmidt, the respects of *Faletolu faapea foi le Aiga Sa Tupua ma le Aiga Sa Malietoa, ma si ou nuu i o i le Aiga o Mavaega, le Falelima o Saeseese faapea lau Fetalaiga Pao, ia faapea foi le mamalu o le Aiga Sa Levi o lo o nonomanu i totonu o lo tatou itumalo aua le manuia*. I also respectfully acknowledge the Clergy for their continuous prayers of blessings. I salute you for your support. May God bless our forum.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you. I believe you have delivered every proposal you had intended to say for your constituency of Gagaifomauga No.3.

The floor is open for another member, we still have a lot of time left. It would be wonderful to start today and conclude tomorrow, however if all can be said today then that is how it would be.

Another aspect members tend to refer often to their constituencies, however it will come across as insincere. So if you would direct your remarks towards the Budget, after all the elders do understand.

But it is good to change tunes instead of harping on the same old. I call upon the member for Anoamaa East. It is hard because of the dignitaries pertaining to *Aiga, faapea foi le Saofaiga, ae a le Toaono ma tootoo o Lalogafuafua*. I therefore call upon Lufilufi, speak on behalf of the families. The floor is yours, Lufilufi.

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**Afioga ALAIASA MUAGUTUTIA MOEFAAUOUO
MALAGAITUTOGIAI SEPULONA MOANANU (Anoamaa East):**

Thank you Mr Speaker for urging me. We have been quietly observing our proceedings, but anyhow I will try to speed up my thoughts concerning the focus of debate now before us.

I wish to acknowledge the noble support of Samoa from its titular head right down to the last. It is true as often stated that no one can elaborate every detailed fact as it has already been determined. Tonga speaks of war but Samoa deliberates on status.

I also acknowledge the support of the elected servants of God fervently praying for spiritual blessings from heaven for our people. My commendations for your invocation, seeking peace from God.

I recognise the support of His Highness Le Ao o Le Malo and his Good lady, member of the Council of Deputies and his Good lady, the dignitaries of Government, Hon Prime Minister and Cabinet, Mr Speaker and distinguish members of Parliament. I salute you on this journey, I admire your good living and commendations for your perseverance in your duties and calling where we are today. As some have said, the term is almost over. But if we are to reflect on our leadership of the country, it has not all been smooth sailing. We have been encountering difficulties not only locally but all over the world.

But the phrase that I do want to remind Samoa is a statement from the Bible which goes, “Honour God and He will honour you.” If you put God first, God will also put you first. That is my view Samoa since there are times when we do sit idly without knowing the blessings beneath us. Blessings which are in your hands, in the confines of our environment, our country, we have witnessed that Samoa despite how small but we are in awe considering the grace of God.

Looking around at this period in time when this venture was opened recently. We have been in worship the Lord. But when this opened, you will have noticed people going back to their normal ways. Some have been longing to engage in their desires and forgetting about God that has been leading the country.

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Samoa do not forget about God. He is our strength He is the source of blessing in everything we do. We are seeing everything being counted in other countries and I am amazed with the numbers these people talk about which is trillions and billions and what has become of them? They are lost, everything in this day and age has been shook by God. He has shaken this world and only the truth still stands, and which people should realise because what we build with our hands will not last but the creation of God remains forever. Each of us and our families, our children, our environment should focus on the Lord for it is our source of blessing. Looking at the world, the truth is considered false and wrongdoing is accepted to be correct. The ways of the world have become trivial. I am telling you today that it will all come to pass and are useless. If I do not address the budget Samoa, this should suffice. We should respect and put God first and God will place you in a favourable position. Gods blessings states that you are the head not the tail, you are the top part not the bottom part. No matter how wealthy and intelligent nothing will compare with our faith as it is our solid foundation of Samoa. It is enshrined in our Constitution.

When the pandemic started, our Leader the Hon Prime Minister came and said, “Samoa, let us fast.” I knew then that we are under the leadership of someone that puts God first. Most of the times we wait for the clergy to come and tell us to fast. But I remember the battle that Josephette fought when three nations were against him. It was said that the tribe came and the king said unto them to fast. During the war, the tribe of Israel just sang and the war was won. That is why I say that we will win if we prioritise what we should. It is your respect for God which is the priority.

Mr Speaker, I do listen and this is what should be prioritised, therefore I personally believe the Ministry of Agriculture should be prioritised at all times.

MR SPEAKER: I interrupt the member’s speech, which is seriously important but I am of the view that your introduction should not mix with your specific views on the Budget. It is best that you touch on that tomorrow whilst Samoa are tuning in. Your concept is understood that God is our solid foundation. Let that be a message for us today. Therefore, it is best we will continue your remarks tomorrow as we have reached our adjournment hour.

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**Afioga ALAIASA MUAGUTUTIA MOEFAAUOUO
MALAGAITUTOGIAI SEPULONA MOANANU:** I was wrapping up my remarks but if that is your decision I will accept. Thank you for the opportunity. I hope the remaining minutes of our meeting be blessed.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you. Well if you were going to conclude then do so. Very well, our people have clearly heard the deliberations this afternoon. Since we have approached our normal adjournment hour I call upon the distinguish member to conclude our meeting with a prayer.

Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly were adjourned at 12.59 pm until 9.00 am Wednesday, 17th June 2020.