

23 FEBRUARY 2021

TUESDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2021

Mr Speaker took the Chair at 9:23am.

Prayer.

MR SPEAKER: I announce the start of the Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly.

Well, I convey my salutations this morning. Even though the weather is dreadful, but the Lord will always provide us with opportunities, not only opportunities but also the strength and good health.

PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

The Clerk read out the Procedure for the Presentation of Papers in accordance with S.O.49(2).

1. S.R.2021/3, Lands and Titles Act 2020 – Notice of Commencement.
2. S.R.2021/4, Community Law Centre Amendment Act 2019 – Notice of Commencement.

**SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL (No.1) 2020/2021
– continued debate on the second reading– Day 25**

MR SPEAKER: Before the adjournment of the Work of the Legislative Assembly yesterday, the Hon Minister for Public Enterprises of the Government.

Well, with respect I call on the Hon Minister to stand and respond to the issues...

Oh, I beseech the Hon Minister as the Speaker almost forgot, I will first call on the Hon Prime Minister.

Susuga Hon TUILAEP AUELUA FATIALOFA LUPESOLIAI LOLOFIETELE NEIOTI AIONO GALUMALEMANA Dr. SAILELE MALIELEGAOI (Prime Minister): Mr Speaker I stand with the utmost respect to express my greetings to the sanctity of the House this new morning.

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I acknowledge the presence of the Hon Speaker as well as the Members of Parliament who have gathered here today in good health. Hence why, I want to also show gratitude to our Heavenly Father for guiding our lives today to continue our work for this is the reason why we have gathered here at the House of Tiafau as Leaders of the country.

Mr Speaker, I stand to make a brief statement which is also useful for the members of this House, especially for the Chief Executive Officers of the Government Ministries in attendance and also for our country. Mr Speaker, if you notice the series of the Minister's speeches in response to some of the issues stated in the speeches of the honorable members, it is our duty to clarify and give responses. There is also belief that it is not a bad thing to explain, as it will enlighten the listeners but lack the understanding. As you can see Mr Speaker, the statements of the members are not limited or narrowed down in terms of the opinions expressed, but they are given the chance to speak freely on the various projects that are being performed by each Minister, due to the depth and complexity of the duties assigned to the Ministers, especially the large amount of work carried out by the Chief Executive Officers as well as their staff, to respond to the duties with which the Ministers were sworn in to perform, it is quite deep.

In the past during these types of Sittings, the information that is presented is never given completely, so that the audience of our country can understand it in its entirety. And even now there are still some imperfections. For example, in the arrangement of the positions of Ministers and the separation of the Chief Executive Officers of the Ministries who have the skills and the knowledge in the implementation of the work, they are the ones the Ministers depend on. Thus why, Mr Speaker, the chance is given for the Ministers to freely speak so that the audience of the country can understand the complexity and depth of the work that is being done in response to the matters affecting the lives of our people, especially the clarification of the plans for the present and our long-term plans, for the implementation of the work and developments that should be done at this time with the complications of the rapid growth of the population of our people and what must be done.

Well, especially when we are constantly being affected by the changes in terms of trade, in terms of wars between countries and the virus epidemic. Mr Speaker, in the view of the fact that the events that are happening abroad can also affect our country. It is not only limited to the continued progress of income from trade, but it also affects the lives of our people, and affects job opportunities, educational opportunities and medical treatment opportunities abroad. This chaos and the depth and the intensity, is the reason why... in retrospect, the clarification of the Minister is too long.

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This is the essence, to make sure it is very clear. How come? This is the only thing that the Government will respond to insulting words and baseless statement made outside this House, since the authority of the Cabinet cannot extend outside this House, unless there is a violation of the Laws by those who make these baseless statements. They are afraid to carry out these behaviours in this House. Why? Because only the truth can be uttered in here. Once a member stands up and makes an inappropriate statement, they will be corrected by me and the Ministers of Cabinet. That is why they conduct these deceptive and derogatory behaviors outside, because the Cabinet and I cannot respond through legal procedures to acquire verifications and then an agreement will be made as laid down in our Standing Orders.

Mr Speaker, that is the reason why I am upstanding, therefore, I would like to apologise, and the Cabinet will proceed to fully explain some issues that they can clarify in depth and the intensity of the work they are dealing with. This is the reason for my upstanding, and not for any other reason, but that is the only purpose, as the Ministers and I attempt to respond to the multitude of baseless accusations made outside this House, and they are using this freedom because the authority of the honorable Speaker and the Standing Orders cannot extend outside the House.

May we have a blessed Assembly this morning with implementation of our work.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you very much. The Hon Prime Minister has clearly stated the reasons why our work is proceeding in this way. Not only with the opportunity that is given to all the honorable members of this Parliament, but also the opportunities that were given to the Cabinet to explain and clarify. Not only pertaining to the matters raised by the honorable members, but also the policies and the long-term plans, not only for the present but also for the future. Well, since it is our calling, which is why we gather here together to have discussions and work to develop the country, but it depends on our decisions in this Parliament.

In other words, the country is listening and wants to understand the procedures of our work and our Assembly, so that it does not...there is a saying that nothing should be leaked outside... just like the village meetings if a matai does not attend, matters discussing in the meeting will not be leaked outside. Yes. That is the reason why if a head of a family is not available, the family will assemble to quickly select a member to ensure the situation with their family is not leaked outside. To ensure the family head is present during the village and constituency meeting. It is the exact same situation with this Assembly.

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The reason for giving my assistance in connection with the statement made by the Prime Minister is because I am displeased with our Assembly. As the members are listening with regards to your tardiness to our Assemblies, excuse my language if I am being too direct. Well, why is it possible for some of us to arrive early but some members are unable to arrive on time to our Assemblies? But what are the consequences if there are not enough members for the quorum to implement the Sitting of Parliament? Well, I have noticed that majority of the late comers are the junior members. This is the feeling, as the oath was made with a sincere heart. Yes. It is not suitable for the Chief Executive Officers of Ministries and Government Organizations to attend our Assembly, but it is postponed due to the incomplete number of members needed. That is what we are trying to.... yes. I am very displeased with this situation. Yes. If there are listening to members who are making their way to our Assembly, I ask that you take consideration. But make sure to arrive earlier to the Sitting, because not attending and arriving late to the Assembly is the same thing. Well, there is no point in our country observing that the bell is rung to indicate that the Assembly will not be conducted due to a shortage in the number of members needed for the quorum. Well, this is one aspect that we should focus on, honesty. However, the feeling is mutual. Well, the man from Nofuolii known as Itaotemai, but there has not been a single day that our quorum number has been incomplete. But I want to remind our Parliament, in case the feelings of some members are affected. But I ask that you come earlier to our Assemblies so that all the members are present when the Minister is conveying clarifications on some of the issues that were raised. Likewise for the members who are used to not attending, I plea that you set aside the Political Party matters that you are conducting but come so that we can conduct our Assembly together which is our responsibility and earn us money.

Well, this is our assistance to the statement of the Hon Prime Minister, but I call on the Hon Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour, and Public Enterprises of the Government, as well as other Ministries under your portfolio. I call upon the Hon Minister.

Afioga Hon LAUTAFI FIO SELAFI PURCELL (Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labor): Thank you Mr Speaker, as our Assembly has reconvened despite the terrible weather. I commend you for your patience. Our Assembly has also joined in prayer with the greatest prayer that you have conducted for us this morning, as it is a prayer that our Savior taught us to use. This has included everything and anything that is prayer related. And then I thought, well, our thanksgiving, and our praises have all been included in the prayer taught by our Savior as we did this morning.

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Congratulations to the Hon Speaker for your patience regarding our Assembly. Days like this, when the weather is severe, the seas become rough, as lightning flashes and thunderclaps are heard, these are the days when Satupaitea wants to speak, as this is inspirational for the speech of Satupaitea. It does not matter if the other members do not attend, since they are afraid that Satupaitea will be making its speech. I ask that you remain patient, as they will come eventually.

Thank you to the Hon Prime Minister for the explanation of the Cabinet responses. We have tried to find ways to make the House understand, especially the country that is listening. Because some of our Sittings, we would just give responses to the matter and then it is done. As I also tried yesterday to explain some issues pertaining to one of the Ministries, since the Ministries are useful for the whole country, but there is still a feeling that some of our people do not have enough understanding. In other words, the services being provided by the Government is still incomplete. But if the people understand well, perhaps services will be provided by all the Government Ministries where we work.

Mr Speaker, after yesterday my speech had addressed the matter regarding the gambling authorities of our Government or the Games Control Authority. This is the group that the Government expects to monitor these gambling games that have been established in our country. These games are not bad, no. Any developing country always tries to satisfy its people first. Not all of the people play rugby, not everyone plays soccer, as there are different stages of life that come with age, and the types of games they prefer. Now the Government has introduced these games permitted for them, as long as there is a division to monitor them, to ensure there are no offensive behaviours. To protect the people who are playing because they enjoy it, so that there is something for them to enjoy after work, and to ensure we receive some funds to operate the developments mentioned. There are fundraisings conducted by parishes, which has also been developed. Therefore, the income of this Ministry from payments for licensing and similar conditions from games, it is used to carry out their work, to implement their services.

The rest of the incomes funds of this Ministry are allocated to the development of our sports, as well as to the Ministries for Charitable Organizations that are in need of funds. This is one sector that received funds from the Ministry, as well as assistance given for the education of children from poor families. This is one of the things that our people should understand, especially those who made it... to university but they do not have sufficient financial resources, the family is also substandard, but the child is very smart, they have good grades so they should attend university, but it is difficult because they have financial problems.

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The Ministry should also provide help in this regard by using their income. It does not mean that... Some of the remaining funds, they are brought into the Government, since they have to pay dividends. If you recall, perhaps it has been 3 weeks since this Organizations donated \$300,000 to the Budget of the Government, but they are still pay-off some of their dividends for this whole year. The situation that this group is in, they will be given different condition where they will no longer pay dividends for the Beneficial Body because the Government did not give money for its operations. But they are using their own funds to operate their work as I have stated.

So the total in the 5 years since I was appointed, the money given to help our players and each sport, is \$907,000. The money given to these Charitable Organizations is \$17,000. The fund that was given to help the children's education was \$76,372. The total amount of assistance given by this Organization is \$1,000,422.00 last year. Well, that is the purpose of that Organization in our Government. Well, there are also plans for the future, to further improve the implementation and protection of sports as well as other games that are held abroad. There is also a plan to set up their Office, as they now have land in Savaii near the town area, for the people of Savaii to use instead of coming all the way to Apia to get a permit and such conditions to clarify. An Office is already established now, but they have already leased land for them to work on in the future.

Well, Mr Speaker, now I want to address one of the Ministries....

Afioga Afoa Amituanai Faleulu Maui (Palauli West): Mr Speaker, I ask for an opportunity please...

MR SPEAKER: I beseech the Minister, as I call on the member for Palauli West, honorable Afoa.

Afioga Afoa Amituanai Faleulu Maui: Thank you Mr Speaker. Since the issue concerning the TV Bingo was raised in my speech which is within the responsibility of the Minister. Therefore, I would like to use this opportunity to understand more about the matter that I raised.

MR SPEAKER: Well, make your statement brief.

Afioga Afoa Amituanai Faleulu Maui: During the Minister's speech, the song that was sung by Palauli West was mentioned, which is still being sung now.

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But it is true, there is only one song. But as you all know, when you enjoy a song, and you have feelings for a person from the song, you will sing it continuously. It is with essence that I wanted to remind the Minister, it is true that this song only has one verse, but the Minister is singing it with two verses. First of all, the statement made is true; the TV Bingo will be beneficial for our people. But the intention with which I am trying to convey is the protection of our children in the future, in case they become gamblers affecting their school life, and then problems will start to emerge for our Parliament because of these types of games.

And another thing, the statement I am trying to make pertains to the various benefits. Yes. It has many benefits, and it is also useful for the protection of our daughters as my friend Salausa had also mentioned.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you. Your opinion has been noted. Well, I call on the Leader of the Government.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoui: Mr Speaker, these games can affect the general policies of the Government, and that is why I am frequently upstanding. When we have discussions on gambling, these monetary games, as there is always a type of game that uses common sense, proper discretion. The reason I mention this is because when these games started, a Legislation was submitted here to be approved for monetary games. Up to this time, no such Legislation has been made, but there are many gambling games that are being played now. That is why the discretion is deeply used for these things. The bingo is a gambling game. So if you talk about gambling, then the bingo should also be stopped.

2. Gambling, is a game where money is put in and it comes back doubled. Saving money in the banks is also considered gambling. So tell me if there are any Denominations and pastors who save money in banks, because there are times when they make withdraw, but the amount has decreased instead of increasing. And it will eventually lead to the bank going bankrupt. Then what? And then what will we reach for? We will have nothing to rely on. Even the game of billiards, it is also a game that uses money. There are even card games, such as poker. Whenever they play with stakes on the line, it is known as a gambling.

Mr Speaker, when we talk about gambling, it is quite broad. So you cannot discuss one matter and not consider the other. This also applies to golf, the golf tournaments. How many church ministers are playing golf and gambling on the golf course by making bets?

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Mr Speaker, it is the same when you search for a wife, that is a gamble as well. After your family's affairs are finished, you will then pursue her, woo her, but then the woman comes and she is problematic, then that gamble is a loss. In this life, it is a life full of such games, sometimes you go broke from playing, and there are times when you will win as well.

On that note, this matter will end here. I advise the member, no matter how many times you bring up the bingo; the response has already been given, and there is no other answer, this is the final answer conveyed by the Minister. But I beseech you, let us continue this, it does not matter if it was something broader, but I cannot count how many times the answer has been provided.

Afioga Afoa Amituanai Faleulu Mauli: Mr Speaker...

MR SPEAKER: Well, thank you very much. I call on the Hon Minister... I beseech the honourable member, there will be no debates, and it has already been clarified and made clear multiple times. But I implore the member, please be forbearing with the Government's response to satisfy your desires. Yes.

Afioga Afoa Amituanai Faleulu Mauli: Mr Speaker, there is just one more small issue I want to address pertaining to this matter and then I will never again mention anything more related to bingo.

MR SPEAKER: Well...could you just be sympathetic and accept the response of the Government on everything. This is the problem, since you are only playing one game, but you should try to play other various games as well. Try to play billiard, or poker or even chess. Yes.

Afioga Afoa Amituanai Faleulu Mauli: Mr Speaker, I am trying to address a different matter. Give me one minute to finish my statement and then I will no longer bring up this matter.

MR SPEAKER: Well, I implore you, a bingo is still a bingo, a bald is also a bald), excuse the language.
I call on the Hon Minister to continue your speech.

Afioga Hon LAUTAFI FIO SELAFI PURCELL: Then I come to the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour. This is one of the Ministries that is large and complicated with many responsibilities, but I will make an effort to explain it using languages that our country can understand, especially the honourable members.

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In the year 2019, we were able to enter one of the global Organizations for the first time, and now we are official members. This part of the Organization is known as WIPO or the world organization, which monitors and protects intellectual property. Our Government has tried multiple times, and now we have joined. And it is a good effort especially with trade relations and the development of industries in a country. These are intellectual properties, the things people think about, and then they will construct and implement it. These things should be protected. Now we have become official members, and there are 4 sectors in this Organization that we have joined. To protect the trade practices, trademarks, regarding the marks used to protect the goods that are produced in Samoa. Well, it starts from the rear, or the efforts by a person starting from their families, but then these efforts will be elevated and broadened to be sold overseas. Our country has been in many situations like this, and most of these things like this have disappeared. Whereby the goods have been taken by other people to make more money. But the work is recognized as the efforts of the person through their mind and intellect. This is what we call intellectual properties. It also includes songs, which can be protected under this Law. It is the same with our patterned clothes (elei), as we also have other items created in Samoa, which must be protected.

In addition, these Acts will offer this protection. The Act is called the Hague agreement, the Lisbon, the Patent, the Madrid protocol, as these things are all included in the protection of our intellectual property. Like I said, it was not easy for us to join, but now we have joined. This means that it is now easy for our people to register these goods, and they will be protected by this major Organization of the world. There are more than a hundred countries who are members. When you register and make a request for protection, then it is protected by all those countries. The products cannot be sold by others, they will not be able to use our labels, or whatever circumstances that may arise. This is all for the improvements of trade and to further protect our people with the activities that they are carrying out. In order to acquire wealth for our country.

Another part of the Ministry's work is regarding the Seasonal Work. For your information....

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: The issue raised is very important as these are the intellectual assets of our people. It also includes the goods that are produced in Samoa, so that it cannot be stolen by other countries. The most important example is the product of coconut juice/oil and taro leaves (luau).

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Many countries have made efforts to preserve the coconut oil using cans, so that when the time comes to use. It is still fresh as if it had just been extracted. We have conducted research for a long time at our laboratory in Alafua, which was conducted by a scientist named Betrana. This is where we also produced our own chilli sauce bottle. But many countries have tried for a long time to make canned coconut juice, to keep it fresh. It will seem fresh upon opening, no matter how many months have passed, when you open the can, it will look like it had just been extracted from the coconut. Then Betrana, our scientist, discovered the research. And then they were canned, and it earned money for our company that manufactured these products, which was located at Taufusi. A lot of coconuts and coconut juice cans went to Australia and New Zealand, which used the name pe'epe'e. What has happened is that many of the coconut juice from the Philippines, Asia, and Thailand are no longer requested. While the canned pe'epe'e of Samoa is on high demand, but with the label pe'epe'e. Our company was shocked to find out that other overseas companies were also using the name pe'epe'e. This word is a Samoan word, but the cans from Philippines, Thailand and Asia are using the label pe'epe'e. But the word pe'epe'e is a Samoan word used to label this canned coconut juice.

This was the only tin that can keep the pe'epe'e fresh, because of the formula used by this scientist, but there was a problem, the formula was published, but it was not....it was not permitted to be used legally. This is what the Hon Minister was trying to address. If the foreign countries steal our trademarks, what will happen to us? Then our pe'epe'e factory will be closed down. Therefore, that is the reason we are carrying out these Laws, to protect our products. It is an intellectual property, which has become an asset of Samoa. Fortunately, the other countries would not have been able to produce pe'epe'e. But now they are using the formula that we produce and also used the Samoan word pe'epe'e. And now all the stores in New Zealand are filled with their pe'epe'e, as well as Australia and other countries, but our pe'epe'e is no longer accepted. And now efforts of these countries have reached a different level. Now we are re-attempting to produce it again, but it is hard due to our carelessness at that time. I am talking about 1970 and 1975; we were very careless, because we did not patent or copyright claim this asset or this intellectual property, as the property of Samoa.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you very much, and I believe that it has been made clear for the observation of the country, as this was caused by our carelessness on that period. But thankfully we now have the opportunity to make Laws to protect the intellectual properties of our country.

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I commend and express gratitude to the Hon Prime Minister and the Cabinet. I call upon the Hon Minister.

Afioga Hon LAUTAFI FIO SELAFI PURCELL: Well, thank you. Thank you to the Hon Prime Minister for the elaboration of these issues. This is exactly what I was trying to explain, now that there are Acts to protect our assets from theft by the big countries that have wealth, this is a fact.

Then I move to another major responsibility of this Ministry, the seasonal work. Perhaps it is no secret to our country on the benefits of this program of our Government. Some of the members also spoke about the development of their constituencies, ever since our children were blessed with the opportunity to go to these jobs. For the information of our country, there are 5 types of work available under these seasonal work programs. They are all under the portfolio of the Seasonal Works. There are 3 from New Zealand and 2 from Australia. New Zealand has work of harvesting apples, RSE, as well as the recent inclusion of the butchers. These butchers have a longer contract. And it also includes the carpenters, whose abilities have given them the opportunity to work in New Zealand.

And the work of the carpenters started during the time of the reconstruction of Christchurch. The Hon Prime Minister also spoke about it this other time. So now our people are able to apply for these 3 kinds of work. This includes the apple harvesters, which is the general term given to the harvesters, the butchers, which have more than 300 workers, and the carpenters. In relation to carpenters, as mentioned before, they are sent to work in New Zealand, and the objective is that they will return to Samoa and use the knowledge they acquired for Samoa. Because during their working time there, they are paid just like the New Zealand citizens. And they are trained to achieve the high standard of skills needed for the work, or the quality of work. So that when they return, they are able to bring the skills they acquired and to teach it to our children, in order to improve the level of quality of the houses we build, and such circumstances. The group that is sent to Australia, they are also in a similar situation just like the seasonal workers, but they are called a different name. And they are also working in the farms and other types of work.

There is also the Pacific Labour Scheme, whereas people different from the seasonal workers, are sent to work for 3 years. They will work at hotels and such work for a long period of time. But they are also working under the conditions of the Australian Government. There is no decrease in their salaries, no, the employees are getting paid the same amount, and the terms of conditions are the same, just like an Australian citizen.

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This is all in the efforts of ensuring that our people will gain more skills so that they can return with it. So these are the 5 fields, with the inclusion of the work in Australia, which we are trying to carry out, like the Pacific Labour Scheme. But it is good work that we are trying to accomplish, when it is carried out fully. Even when we were about to commence this plan, but then there was a virus outbreak. Which has somewhat cursed this Pacific Labour Scheme, but the regular group is still working in agriculture. Mr Speaker, last year, 3,400 of our people participated in this work. 3,400 is a big number, with our people leaving and returning, and these are the kinds of numbers that we are dealing with. The year before, there were 3,300, and the year before that, it was 2,500, which means that these opportunities are still increasing for our children. This is also the work carried out by our Government, and the relationship with Australia and New Zealand, in order to continue receiving such opportunities. This is relationship between the Leader of our Government and the Leaders of Australia and New Zealand, as well as the connections between the Ministers and Officials that conduct discussions all the time. The goal is to acquire more opportunities for us. The funds we are looking at have been received from the financial years 2019/2020 for these projects. Your honour we have received over \$200 million or \$210,662,180 in the previous fiscal year.

The year before that, it was more the \$190 million. Before that, it was more than \$140 million, so these money are earnings of the country. The money is gone straight to villages and community, the families of these workers. This is an impeccable blessing, with my position as a Minister, this is an incredible blessing obtained by Samoa. This all depends on honesty with all sides that works within this scheme. Starting from Chiefs and District Member, for they present certain individuals and claiming that they are good people. So, whatever trips there are for these Seasonal Employment, provide honest individuals, our decision is them, so that they would do the right thing. Or that when they go to New Zealand, we have our agents there. They are the ones to communicate with them, with assurance that our people are beyond worthy as to why we have provided them. The employers of where our people are working for are also giving us their trust. What happened is that Samoa is beyond reliable. They have primarily trusted Samoa, rather than other countries. Mr Speaker, we are not the only one affiliated given the development of this scheme. There is Tonga, Fiji, there is Vanuatu, Papua and even Solomon Island. Therefore, we are competing on these numbers.

With the pandemic virus arising Mr Speaker, it has greatly affected the progress of the scheme. Due to complications with travelling, it has complicated the operational processes like the way it was done before, with incoming and outward travellers.

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However, with the good bonding of Samoa, New Zealand and Australia which is why extended time was done. It added another 6 months to the expiration date of visas that they had used, and given this relationship, it has utilized this extending time with the rise of the pandemic.

With the rise of the pandemic Mr Speaker, it has greatly affected the progress of the scheme. Due to complications with travelling, it has complicated the operational processes like the way it was done before, with incoming and outward travellers. However, with the good bonding of Samoa, New Zealand and Australia which is why extended time was done. It added another 6 months to the expiration date of visas that they had used, and given this relationship, it has utilized this extending time with the rise of the pandemic. We had tried to bring back our people, but it was very difficult as they had to go through the quarantine process. In the meantime, with attempts to revive this scheme however, it has become very complicated for New Zealand too. Why is it difficult for New Zealand? Well, many New Zealanders have also been affected with the rise of the Covid-19, way too many. Now New Zealand is looking at ways to try and employ their people. This limited opportunities of employments for the Pacific. New Zealand has given the number of 2,000 at the moment. While we are still implying for a higher number. These are the developments Samoa is blessed with, if you determine from the number I had mentioned, the six regions, then divide the 2,000 upon those that will be employed. It has gotten near to 1,000 employees required by the employers, specifically from Samoa. Now that it is almost half of that number has been obtained by Samoa. But split the other 1,000 for the others. That is evident, how well performed the Samoans with this scheme.

What is good about the workers, is that they are reliable. Right now, there is no exceptions for indolent people to go, pardon the language. People that just go about and require supervisions, on what to do and how to do it but are not eager to learn the job. People who just go are people from stable families. You could tell a man is good, even when they get there, they still are generous. But those particular men.... who can assist with how things are done, and when they return to Samoa, they will not be eligible to go back. What we are trying to achieve here, that virtuous people are eligible to go. It does not exclude the opportunity given to new applicants, so that others are able to retrieve benefits as well. At the time, the concern of New Zealand, is to import people that will not consume time on trainings. Because there are too many, excuse the language, there are too many apples, too many pears and the urgent need of people to pick. New Zealand is trying on their part, to first provide to their people. None could complain, as they also have countless unemployed people.

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That is the condition right now, the Government are also working on bringing back our people that had ended their contract. But the complexity, they travel to New Zealand and pay the 2 weeks, when returned there is another 2 weeks of quarantine. With that, the Government is working on an alternative for an affordable and convenient way to return back our children. Who were abroad, their visas have expired, and have added and added months of service now there is a requirement for their return.

Your honour those are some...

MR SPEAKER: I beg pardon your Hon Minister, your statements are very important, now that the members has intervened. I will give the opportunity to the Hon Olo, Member for the East Salega.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai (Salega East): Thank you Mr Speaker, I would like to welcome your Hon Prime Minister and Parliament to this beautiful morning. As well as the support of Samoa. I would also like to thank the Hon Minister. These are 2 subject that requires clarification from the Minister. First thing, I have observed the discussion of the Hon Minister, because I have seen it, the Minister was picking apples on a beautiful photo with these guys. With that, I can confirm the matters stated by the Hon Minister. But these other 2 Mr Speaker. That is one subject with the listening of the people, of someone that was infected, as it was stated by the Hon Minister. It seemed like the individual knew as well, that he was ill, that is my analysis. It seemed like it was triggered here with the preparation of papers and things like that.

With Medical Checks, just a suggestion for the matter. Because it causes disputes as such within families, as well as the Government. Secondly Mr Speaker, are these employees ensured? And who is responsible for these people's insurances, is it the Government or the company that they are working for? Just so that our people are sheltered, as for the development Mr Speaker, I acknowledge the Hon Minister. Thank you for the important development. With respect.

MR SPEAKER: Well done thank you, I will give the opportunity to Palauli le Falefa. We shall resume and have the Ministers reply later on. Your Hon Faumuina Tiatia Liuga.

Afioga Hon Faumuina Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga (Palauli le Falefa): Mr Speaker, thank you for the opportunity. As this was the subject, I had raised that was informed by the Minister, my associate Minister. I take my hat off Lautafi for the work you have implemented.

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This is one development of the Government that is greatly helping the individuals, who have not reached University levels of their educations. As the intensity of their minds cannot handle to keep on, thank you very much for the program. This is one very important program, with the Governments intentions for the upbringing generations, and development of families. There are just 2 suggestions I would like to propose Lautafi.

Firstly, I had raised the subject on pension, voluntary contributions. And I am certain that the Government are working on it under your supervision, with the individuals to start paying their pensions, as a backup in time when their additional period of employment may get affected. The reason as to why I had raised the topic on pension, the people paid out are not those that work here in Samoa. Because they are entitled on different benefit, and even separate benefit for the workers, that pays taxes. This also includes, the farmers, the fishermen's and also the people that sells their handicrafts at the market and many others.

My second thought, the importance of funds we had gained. I believe it has been, either twice or three times I had raised this topic on discussion in International Conferences, on exchange spread. The big difference on exchange rates when selling \$ and the rate given or sold back to you by the bank, the exact same \$. I often talk about this on conferences, that...

MR SPEAKER: Because you are speaking on clarification, that is not an interruption but of recommendations. Point of clarifications and point of order are the requirements.

Afioga Hon Faumuina Tiatia Faaolatane Liuga: It is a suggestion. I am just finishing up my advice. If you take a look at the exchange spread, with that it should emphasize the importance of the \$. Not only it is imperative to the Recognized Seasonal Employer, but it is also useful for our people from overseas that sends over money.

MR SPEAKER: We shall move along, it will be noted down by the Minister, whatever is included in discussion of the Members, it will be clarified. So with whatever there is that is not included with their speech, do not waste your time on it. Only if you think it is suitable to elaborate clarifications, then you are to proceed to reply on clarifying so. Interruptions will be in process. I call upon the Member for Falealili.

Tofa Aumua Isaia Lameko (Falealili West): Thank you Mr Speaker for the opportunity. Just a little bit to ensure my understanding. Our program RSE, if you think about it, it has been 14 years since established by the Government.

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I would also like to acknowledge the Government, kicking off in the year 2007, up until this year with the program RSE. Point of clarification, is the division of the 2,000 that was given, because it was stated by your Hon Minister there are 6 villages that were given these opportunities to split unto the people. However, there are a few villages that seems like, that are oppose to the Government regarding our program the Recognize Seasonal Employer. Whether how much is the fragment percentages that should be followed by villages, and that is the percentage. I believe, our Ministry here is in charge of what it is called the Export of Workers within the Ministry of Commerce Industry and Labor. How much is the percentage given here. My recommendation and suggestion, it would be appropriate, if so, some villages are opposing the program of the Government, it would be convenient that it would be handed down to the Ministry for partitioning. With respect.

MR SPEAKER: Well done. I call upon the Member for Anoamaa East your Hon Lufilufi.

Afioga Alaiasa Muagututi’a Moefaauouo Malagaitutogiai Sepulona Moananu (Anoamaa East): Thank you for the opportunity Mr Speaker. I thank God with his love for this beautiful morning as we have encountered “magafetausoifua e pei o le upu ile Tamaitai o le Alataua.”

With what I had previously announce about our scheme here, a heart-felt gratitude was conveyed to this particular individual. But during the time I had not yet received these statistics that was announced by the Hon Minister, \$210 million and 3,300 workforces. With this, we are looking at about \$60,000+ average per person on benefits if so, these are the correct numbers. As to why we simply convey our heartfelt gratitude. If that is \$40,000 New Zealand dollars. That means there will be an improvement on the... My only concern to the Minister and the Ministry, the only thing I see, is of poor managing of income of the people. It only takes 2 to 3 weeks then wanders around with nothing. Should we implement something... the Ministry should raise a minor workshop like so, financial management is moderately small, but should people learn to manage and control these money for betterments of families. Because right when you return back from overseas then people often clutch.... If you recall our typical people, from that attachment, they get drunk continuously as to what causes accidents. It also caused an accident inside... with that, it lost lives.

I will take this opportunity Mr Speaker, to showcase my sincerity to your Hon with your speech in the morning equivalent with the Hon Members of the House. I wanted to take a stand and...

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I am precise, it takes one fly pardon me, to destroy a fragrant oil and cases like that. But thank you it is now fixed, and these guys are starting to come in early to our Proceedings as they were used to getting in late.

I wish you the best Mr Speaker and great acknowledgement to the Hon Minister, now that we are able to get the numbers that we were not able to get at the time we had our speeches. Blessed Proceedings.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you. I acknowledge the noble Hon Member in address. Firstly I give the opportunity for a statement of the Hon Member for Faleata West.

Tofa Lealailepule Rimoni Aiafi (Faleata West): Thank you Mr Speaker. Even so if there had been many thoughts that has been portrayed, it is prominent. It is preeminent for the records of the entire Pacific and each country with the opportunities that is given to them with the development implemented. These resources are very important, if you look at it, it has been an impeccable year from 2019, 2020 with the increase on remittances for developing families and communities, it is significant. I would also emphasize an advice and recommendation to the Government for this important subject, especially because we occupy the most individuals acquired.

I made a speech at Faleata's prize giving as done at the end of the year, I had encouraged the children, look here, the countries outside are not here to take lawyers and such in particular, they are here to take individuals that can build houses, the electricians and plumbers. You should consider appraising.

With that, the advice for the Hon Minister for supplement trades here, we are heading there to upgrade and there is great demand for special skills to be taken abroad so to help with our families, so that it will not merely be just farmers, but with special skills. What I had mentioned in my speech Mr Speaker, are the great count of returning workers, so with whatever program that is initiated by our Ministry, which requires people's extensive skills as they bring back this intelligence and again prepare for another trip. Rather than returning... even with farmers, it is true though they have great knowledge with the process of these things in particular, nevertheless would they return and continue to use these special skills. Thank you.

MR SPEAKER: Well done. I beg pardon. So, I call upon the Chairman of the Finance Committee your Hon Aliimalemanu.

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Afioga Aliimalemanu Alofa Tuuau (Alataua West): Thank you for the opportunity. We had indicated in our speech the state of the seasonal working scheme, however we have gotten to the subject of pension however I will just briefly imply a notion, though we have reached exactly the subject of pension on voluntary contributions. The state at the time, is that there is a discussion on pension, with rumors escalating on pensions articulating throughout incase taken serious by the country, with claims that there should be a raise, given the National Provident Fund with the immense finance.

However, what I am standing here to clarify, is the pension that is paid out for the elderly that I have missed out on the consultations of funds in the Appropriation Act of the Government as it was given \$27 million, as to financially process payouts of pensions for the elderly with travelling through vessel. These are funds of the National Provident Fund in case it might get mixed up with assumptions saying this exactly it, no. Right now we are able to find out from the speech here if there had been investments of individuals that are going about on seasonal work, those funds will be given to National Provident Fund, those funds are particularly for the contributors of the National Provident Fund, as it was emphasized by one of the Members how enthralling the situations of funds of the National Provident Fund. Those money are entirely for the contributors of the National Provident Fund. Point of clarification, in case we might get mistaken assuming these are the funds for the pensions of the elderly. With respect Mr Speaker.

MR SPEAKER: Well done. That was an intriguing clarification your honorable Chairman. Well, I presume there is one more interruption, I beg pardon your Hon Minister, and will let you present.... I call upon the elderly Member for Falealili your Hon Fuimaono.

Afioga Fuimaono Teo Samuelu Teo (Falealili East): I assume it is of the importance of the subject as to why it requires the thought of the Hon Members. But with this case, the point of clarification, as of the requirements of the selection of our people. Now that the Hon Minister has stated, most of these individuals, had gone off for more than 7-8 times. It is absolutely true; I have witnessed that as well. There are no questions asked on the economy and the development that has developed from the establishment of this program. I, myself testify, from our District with various fine development implemented. However, there are areas that requires attentions, because there are programs that allows individuals to pursue to prepare themselves.

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It takes almost about a year on conducting similar workload yet are not going towards where they should be getting paid, as they still are conducting these workloads but ends up, they are not on the list of people to travel. Yet they struggle with going early mornings to pursue workload of the conductors that manages this program.

On another note, revision be obliged so that there are equal opportunities on Districts, so that there are equality distributions of opportunities. Even 10 per District or 20, just of broaden prosperity, because the truth is, I reckon if not 1 or just 3 villages that are fortunate of this subject. Well, with most villages, they are at the peak of initiating this great development. That may seem to be fractions of what needed to clarify, but how I see it, it would be nice if it is given back to the Ministry or the Government to distribute share for this area. Yes. We should also be not fully confident with communities at back, because these individuals from aback that manages these subjects are the foremost to oppose on programs done by the Government.

And so, as follows are my visions and I will not interfere with your speech Mr Speaker, from the previous time, fore fronting on being behind schedule are always the new Members. If you look at the Opposition Side here, it is always us that are quick to arrive in the morning on every Proceedings. But it is always.... Because there is a separate Opposite Side we are in, separate Government side as well as the Objection side. But the Opposition side there are elderly Members that do not attend Proceeding and comes in late. With respect.

MR SPEAKER: I beg pardon your Hon Prime Minister I will hand the opportunity to the member here... the Objection Member, what exactly is the statements of Falealili?

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: Mr Speaker, I humbly apologize to the Hon Member, there is none called an Objection side here, just Members that Opposes the Government. And if we did come in late, well we are older than the recent speaker.

Afioga Fuimaono Teo Samuelu Teo: Mr Speaker, that is precisely why I had said, these are Objecting Members, because even with the Proceeding of the Legislative Assembly of Samoa in the early hours yet they object it, they tend to proceed to their programs but discards the Proceeding as to why they were invited. It is true that it is late, but the Guidelines are not in place of where it is laid.

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MR SPEAKER: Well. Please be patient now as you getting to act offensive, yet you have just arrived at the Proceeding.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: Stop interfering with the FAST programs. That is how I know that you are worried, let the FAST carryout their campaigns, yet you are doing your campaigns here at the Proceedings.

MR SPEAKER: Okay, you win. I call upon the Hon Prime Minister.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker it is important for things to happen so that we fully understand it. This Proceeding is not a campaign, this is the morning session of the Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly that has been regulated, for the people that are honest to their vows done unto the Bible. But for those that discards the Proceedings and tends to go about, well they are the exact people that is regarded to according to the speech of the Member for Falealili East.

Mr Speaker, we have come to the most important part with the declaration of the Hon Minister, especially for the agreement done between the Government as well as the Government of New Zealand, not forgetting the Government of Australia. The importance of this, is the discussion of these help, it took a lot of time on discussion until time it was implement.

In relation to the progress of programs implemented, there are a few changes over time. The significant matters mentioned by the Minister in capturing the farmers in New Zealand and the Government of Samoa. There are huge reasons. Not only with the strong working of our people who are there, but there are also other reasons.

Yesterday at about 4:00, we had a talk with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of New Zealand who had contacted me in relation to the Covid and the kind of assistance that New Zealand could bring. There were also talks on matter concerning the changes arising from the collaboration of Pacific Leaders. Lastly the matter regarding our RSE workers in New Zealand. These sort of opportunities, whenever there is discussion on it, there is in depth talks about it, and with that, we gave our gratitude to them. This is one fundamental aspect. Many countries are good at saying please but do not know how to say thank you. They have no idea how to say thank you. Samoa is very good at saying please, but saying thank you is louder, it would bring happiness to those people who are also giving aid, because they are being recognized by the Government of Samoa for their assistance.

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Such is reason that whenever you hear the Hon Minister reading out, most of the figures are big numbers, and when it comes to other Governments, well that is it, they could not get more people. But behind all this, there are more stronger things that stems from here.

Firstly, Zero Tolerance Policy. This was always the policy, and the State does not recognize someone who is problematic. Whenever there is a problem, the decision is made right away. That is the first thing. Right from the start, there are those that go there and escape, but dishonest behavior has a strong enforcement for protection over here and the fast decision made upon it based on Zero Tolerance Policy. But with these kinds of policies that is trusted by the State, and the many issues arising for the Government to use the sword. Such is reason why some are affected with these policies which were received and were publicized the capture of one person that was punished by the village saying that their people will no longer be taken for a certain period of time. The intention of the State is for village chiefs to bear their assistance, as there is a lot of benefits received by villages, and another Church.

That is also why I remember the walk of the village council of chiefs of their constituency because there is...since the start I think it was in 2016 to 2017 and the punishment upon the behavior of some of the children and the assistance of village chiefs to give and encourage the spirit of righteousness and honesty upon the village kids.

That is exactly why the authority of village council is very important. The village council is also protecting the use of advance technology that is defaming other village chiefs based on a decision they made, with a headline going viral, penalized children of those living overseas. So the authority of the village does not extend here, but upon the chief who owns these children.

Mr Speaker, without the village council, oh what a pity. The Government of Samoa would have been in a lot of mess within villages on the various foresight or farsightedness by the village Leaders, even with the wicked person that is in America and Australia who are making criticized and foul statements about the village. So what must be done? Then they would turn to the families here, and that is one of the goals of the village councils here, to avoid wickedness. So not only with village councils but also those that have gone and worked overseas, the contribution of village councils is very important to endure the spirit of honesty for those who are going overseas for work.

There are also other solid methods used by the State, which is employing news agents in New Zealand to travel and inspect all these areas, which uses public funds, but they are things that must be done. This is the chance to travel and give talks, on any rising issues from them and activate the public agents and the Minister has also been advised to be present.

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That is how it is because when it comes to my turn to go to Australia and New Zealand, these are issues that should be covered in these consultations. Whether there are any issues? Then they all voice their issues, and it is alcohol which is main cause that is affecting this kind of work.

Notwithstanding, but ongoing inspections by the Minister and the Ministry in making rounds and give consultations. Not only that, but there are also times when they have a faaafe, then the farmers are called for consultations and address the issues they are facing between them and New Zealand, for the Government to properly prepare for, not only with the Minister but also myself and our talks on the significant rise with this level, then we can have solutions for all these issues.

All these things, I have thought it can be done as such, there are several processes undertaken not only with politics, as for the public servants. So there is no such things like this with other Governments.

For that reason, if they agree, the reason is due to the many processes done on the various levels so as to bring the Government of New Zealand into an agreement with regards to the cooperation of decisions made from Samoa, so as to protect policies, protect the workers and the situation with doing what they were not supposed to do which causes the rise in other issues.

Mr Speaker, all the submissions given, I can say that they are thoughts that are thought provoking in relation to the statement of the member. There is also the chief called, leave it to us, all your viewpoints, leave it to us, especially looking at the new members. The reason for this is because of the viewpoint that they lack education. Such is the idea as time is limited. So the idea is, there must be more new people to continue rather than retaining the majority who had gone first. The reason for this is based on the request submitted by farmers, to increase the number of people who had gone first to avoid the idea of having anymore trainings, and the disposal of many apples.

As such, leave it with us. So even with the appointment to be in line with all constituencies and to meet with the Minister, it has prolonged with the workers, to have a look into this matter, including the look into another Special Committee of the Government to counsel at this exact matter so as to feed the Government and the Ministry with the information to further raise the standard of our work for improvement. As such, all your submissions given, leave it to us, whilst the work will still continue. If the work will not progress forward, then that means that our meeting will finish in May.

MR SPEAKER: Well done. At least the Government has stated to leave it to them. As for the Opposition side, it will be laid over.

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

MR SPEAKER: Very well, because we have arrived at our recess time, I beg the pardon of the Hon Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure, until we return back from our break then you can speak on what you want to say. I announce the suspension of our Proceedings for normal recess.

Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly set aside for normal recess at 10:49am and resumed at 11:38am.

Debate on Government Response resumed on the second reading of the Supplementary Appropriation Bill (No.1) 2020/2021.

MR SPEAKER: I announce the resumption of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly. I trust there is new strength gained upon the honorable Leader of the Government and Cabinet in order to continue our Sitting.

During recess the Hon Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure was upstanding. I call upon the Hon Papalii to continue whether there was something you wanted to say.

Susuga Hon Papaliitele Niko Lee Hang: Thank you Mr Speaker. I have sought a chance during the speech of the Chairperson of Finance Committee who had evidently clarified again the matter about our pensioners. The presentation was explicitly given and the allocated funding to finance it from Government's Main Budget, because money received is quite significant in millions every year...As for the publications you are receiving on statements they make, that as soon as they come in, the pension will be raised. Perhaps they are mistaken with Parliament pension. That pension is being funded by NPF. And NPF would plan accordingly given that we are still making investment to the NPF pension, which covers all the members of Parliament. So perhaps there is a mistake in the Political Party with regards to this notice. The NPF does not do this with regards to the increased NPF funds available. The only pension implemented by NPF is the pension for the members of the House.

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But all depends now as NPF gives priority to their contributors/members and the interim dividend disbursement made to their members every year. But for the sake of clarification on these matters. Perhaps this Party is lacking insight and the notice they made, these are not NPF funds. Although it is correct that NPF has increasing funds, but they are distributed amongst their members. As for the pension money it is funded by the NPF.

So perhaps it is the lack of awareness, there is an annual Budget which highlights Government contribution, the senior citizens' pensions. However there are statements going around, that NPF has more funds to fund the excess they want on top of the pension for the senior citizens.

Just this small bit to highlight and to gain clarification on, for the sake of the senior citizens listening in to our statements. With due respect.

MR SPEAKER: Thank you.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: Mr Speaker, please, it seems that we are leaving the matter we are discussing and have gone ahead with...but I beg tolerance your Hon Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure, until the general elections is over then I will clarify again this matter to you. With respect.

MR SPEAKER: I call upon the member for Vaimauga East.

Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauilili Tuivasa (Vaimauga East): Mr Speaker, perhaps the House has been invigorated from our recess, especially the Heads of Government Ministries and Public Bodies. Because the Leader of the Government has now come to policies. I wish not to interrupt the statement of the Minister. However the most important thing for me is, I have talked about seasonal workers in the previous years and have visited the Hastings and Napier including our local community residing there. The message I had received through a request and a...with regards to statements from our people in relation to tax deductions of our seasonal workers. They did come and had a talk with me because it had taken 2 to 3 years since my employment with the Tax Department in New Zealand. The system used in New Zealand is that after one year then a tax return has to be done, and a total of that tax return will come back to you. As for the request given, our workers are not entitled. After their contracts they return home on their own when there is the...Keep in mind that New Zealand is not like us whereby this tax is final, and whatever is deducted is nonrefundable. As for New Zealand, after the tax deduction, they can go ahead and file or refund their tax the very next year...

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So the plea I am putting forth as stated by the Leader of the country in accordance with policies, is for our people to be able to file their tax return as this money belong to them and as such, tax must be refundable.

Secondly, the submitted request, as majority of the members speaking, have not experienced it and have seen the places our locals have stayed, but I have witnessed it. The pleasure for me, some of the agent companies regarding seasonal workers. They do arrange hotels for our people to stay. However, the essence for this member...

MR SPEAKER: Given that you will give your general remarks.

Afioga Sulamanaia Fetaiai Tauiliili Tuivasa: No, another thing is the NPF, there is the NPF deduction of children however it is not included. So, what I mean to say is, they said, there is the NPF deduction, but it should be shown here, because it takes 6 months, and after those 6 months, then this money can be received. Such is the advice; policies are important for the sake of leaders. I have talked to the old man Mapusua, but that is the assistance. Policies that we want, is for the public to be able to receive their money that was deducted in New Zealand.

MR SPEAKER: They all say to leave it to us, the Government will look into it. I call upon the Prime Minister.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Your honour, that is reason for my advice, to leave it to us. Because if we go into the details, then we will receive more lies of other people in here. The reason for stating these things is because you have received the total number of people we can bring, it is 3,400. As for the continuous increase, because there are many, but it is not. I think New Zealand has a limit of 11,000 people they can bring from the Pacific. However, what is FAST publicising, as soon as they come in 20,000. Where will they get 20,000? These are all insolent lies, and again having Olo talk about NPF, a time will come for the clarification. How can he clarify an issue without looking at it, the 11 million he is looking at, yet does not understand it. Olo does not know anything about money. And when they go outside, they create lies after lies, unrefined lies. What other lies have you not done?

Although the important thing, a person that rudely lies on the Bible inside the House, and again go outside, they will lie again ten times more. Olo, leave aside your rude lies.

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MR SPEAKER: I only wish to remind the Hon Prime Minister, because there are two kinds of lie. Lying between you and God and lying to your brother. I call upon Olo if I am correct.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: No, you too are wrong. To lie with rudeness is different from lying without blinking eyes, that is the exact lie the Prime Minister is doing.

MR SPEAKER: I call upon the Hon Minister.

Susuga Hon Papaliitele Niko Lee Hang: Well done thank you. Because Olo has mentioned me in his statement, saying that. I do not understand. Hon Olo, I was the Minister of Finance for 5 years, so I do understand well the Budget Statement and finance reductions. Even our pensions. How can you come here and clarify when you are not an accountant. Speak of your own profession. If you an IT engineer, then do assist Afamasaga.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: Mr Speaker, in relation to financial matters, if your addition is good and your division and subtraction, that is enough.

Susuga Hon Papaliitele Niko Lee Hang: That is never enough. Addition and subtraction, and what about major projects? If you do not understand, including the budget, how then can you understand this matter, you do not know it?

MR SPEAKER: Well done thanks. I call upon the Hon Minister speaking, perhaps there are few more issues he wants to address as majority have already been covered by the Prime Minister and the Minister.

Afioga Hon LAUTAFI FIO SELAFI PURCELL: Thank you, we have come back from our meal break, with the new energy gained. But these guys are too loud, when I want an opportunity. The response by the Prime Minister to leave it with them, I will give the same, to leave it with us too. There are two responses like that. And you are all aware it is something good. The reason for praising this scheme is because of the many good thoughts gained to further capture this development. There is only one comment regarding a matter raised by the member. I thank the boys who gone ahead, the member for Vaimauga, who had visited the place where the workers are sleeping and working.

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It was no easy job the people are undertaking every morning. I had gone there and climbed the apple tree; I had seen and felt the pain and difficulty they are going through. I had climbed the ladder twice, and five times for Pulotu, my CEO, and ran out of energy that day. But do note that these kids, it is unaware whether these revenue earnings have been received for the one hundred times, but it is money well deserved for these kids.

So when families here obtain these money, use it well, use it wisely, do not overspend it, and do not think because money is plentiful.

There was a matter raised by the member, about a man who had travelled overseas, but was very sick. No one knew about it here, why? Because the medical check-ups they had undertaken was the main thing required from New Zealand and Australia. So just the x-ray, on whether the person has the TB and things like that. So there was only the x-ray and simple things because...it will not determine the sickness of this guy, from these assessments. So given these arising issues, the State has now changed the policies. There is the requirement for a full medical checkup. No one is permitted to travel without medical clearance report to verify that the check is all good. There were also people from the previous week that were caught and could not go, they had some very serious condition. Such as the illness of this guy.

Thus, upon arrival, they get sick. Unable to reach the garden for work, not able to go. He or she got sick here when the aircraft landed. The last findings confirmed that he was well aware of his serious condition. It was all covered under the Australian insurance, but the issue was, the coverage can only reach specific levels. These serious kinds of illnesses have already seen the high costs of treatments and assessments we carried out, they are very costly. Therefore, the severe condition was able to be covered under this insure.

As for all travelling children, they all need to do insurance so as to fully be covered by the employer, in case there is a problem upon their arrival including their working time. It is different from a person who arrives there and suddenly gets sick, hence that is a different level of insurance.

So, to clarify this area, no there were no policies implemented for full medical check-up. But how many years has it been, the scheme is now being around for 14 years now. When there is the serious situation, we have now, and now it has changed again. So, there is the requirement for a medical check that has recently been removed from Samoa. And New Zealand and Australia does not accept it, for people to not have medical checks which was needed in the first place. The normal process for things like this, we are dealing with people, and people change people are affected in different ways, for our policies to change accordingly in order to address this problem.

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Mr Speaker, then I come to this important matter by the Ministry. Like I said it is wide and complex but will try very hard and give clarification. Some of the works, which includes the inspection of good prices, and so forth. Such is the reason the Commission was set up, the Samoa Competition and Consumer Commission, to oversee this area.

The situation with the effectiveness of competition, competition between the producers. Because competition is encouraged, and therefore the price of goods will drop. Who then will get the benefit? The consumer will.

That is the situation for this incorporation and why this commission was established. To observe and monitor whether the people are complying with the Law, because we did have Laws that were approved. It all went well, and the people we are facing, there are ways and attempts to gain a profit. Up until the Covid19, the State has intended, to avoid this doing, especially with food items until the Covid19 is over. Now that we are again reviving the Price Control Board to continue this doing today. And therefore, to avoid anyone from raising anymore goods up to a very pricey level, thus affecting our country at this time of the virus. So, after the pandemic, then the works will be reviewed again by the Commission.

The work of the Commission and the Ministry is to observe and monitor whether compliance is implemented especially in stores and things like that, they must follow the Law. The same with receipt books, the consumer must receive a receipt, or to enforce that doing.

We also have the Ministry of Finance, and their existing system. The idea is for everyone to comply with the Law. Furthermore, all must pay and submit all requirements to ensure that there is transparency in the purchasing of goods by the country. Similarly with our agricultural products, there must be consistency with all good prices, to ensure there is no one getting money out of sweat, pardon the listening consumers. That is one significant area for this Ministry. There are over 800 breads inspected every year or even greater, for here and Savaii. So, this should avoid us, as an inspection is conducted on a fortnightly basis, lest other people think the goods are pricey. The Ministry will never be aware if they do not contact and inform us, which store is pricey. The price of goods is not pinned up, because that is one other thing, the buyer must look for the price list. So that whenever there is a variance, then ask, why rice is expensive, when the cost is given here. The consumer must understand these things. There are also phone lines available for buyers to give a free call, from whatever phonenumber, 21425, that is the number. Anyone who calls for free, there is always a respondent, to clarify a matter, to catch the culprits, and the attempt to get free goods from buyers who are unaware.

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There are also attempts to raise the standards for selling food, the codex. So, this is very important, because these standards your honourable Mr Speaker, is affecting the entire world, they are international standards, under the program called Codex. There is also a Committee for Codex, who oversees people who are complying with these standards. Because it can affect our food, and our goods for export.

Especially our exportation of ava, cocoa of nonu, and the goods of people who are adherence to the Law set out, we must achieve the requirements and we must know our exports. The aim is to produce more exported goods supply for people to recognize. The quality of goods received in Samoa are very good and there is no need to change it lest the price goes higher for our exports. That is one of the duties of this Ministry to assist the Private Sector every year.

MR SPEAKER: I beg the pardon of the Hon Minister; I call upon Hon Olo the member for Salega East.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: Thank you for the chance. Just 2 queries for clarification. The question to the Hon Minister, and the Ministry, whether there is a policy in place on increased prices when there is shortage in the country. I think it was last week when there was the shortage of chicken and the rise in the wholesale price. But I believe there was the minimum price given. It is starting to be a normal thing, looking at the shortage of goods and the skyrocketing prices, which is affecting the country. Therefore, honourable Speaker, the Hon Minister, whether there is a chance for the Ministry to have a look into imported goods? We have witnessed the situation with the sack of rice, sugar sack which comes with dirt pardon the listening members of the House. Whether possible to look into the suppliers that can bring quality goods, which can also be useful, whether number 1, number 2, number 4, number 5, the goods that includes dirt pardon my lips and fire. It seems that those are the goods that are collected by store owners and are sold within the country. With due respect.

MR SPEAKER: I call upon the member for Falealii.

Afioga Fuimaono Teo Samuelu Teo: I only wish to clarify our Standing Order, regarding the members interruption hence just to clarify and correct something. Before the member speaks upon these things, but here comes the question and wasting the time of the Hon Minister. With my utmost respect.

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Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: Your honour, I will now explain to the member, as he is...I spoke of the economy of the country, covering everything else within our Budget. But since the member is new, as such, I am trying to clarify to him these things with respect.

Afioga Fuimaono Teo Samuelu Teo: Mr Speaker, because the word is new. If you also consider how long the member has been here, he does not understand the Standing Order. But us the new members, we have a little understanding of it. With all due respect.

MR SPEAKER: The decision by the Speaker, he is correct on the other side whilst the other is correct on the other side. I will allow the Prime Minister to help me with the answer.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: In the case of things that needs to be straighten out. We should go straight to the issue that is mostly required. This is such a silly trick. He said he spoke about the entire budget, but he did not mention it, this issue was not stated. These given thoughts are very absurd. A Meeting was also held to clarify these Standing Orders. None of them, even Fiame. She was here for only an hour, and all of them. All these four, they really do not understand the Orders of this House. Yet they are hiding behind the phrase, because this is the whole budget. You have to go straight to the issue you spoke about. That is the situation, I also played those tricks. All these tricks you are coming from, I did those as well, that is how I know it, but I did not make it through at the time. The thing is as well if I feel that I habitually do these frauds, take it easy as people are sitting here, your trick is the son of my tricks.

MR SPEAKER: Very well thanks. Because this is the word I wanted to hear from the Prime Minister. The tricks he utters here is smaller than the tricks I do. Yes.

Tofa Olo Fiti Afoa Vaai: But I am happy now your honourable, as the tricks he gives are smaller than mine, therefore I am satisfied, because his tricks are older than mine.

MR SPEAKER: Well, do not disrespect the old man. You have also observed the Speaker, I greatly respect you all. But now that I am advising you, do not be cheeky to the old man. The Minister may take the floor.

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Afioga Hon LAUTAFI FIO SELAFI PURCELL: Do not bother anymore, we are chasing the time. The issue that has been raised, put it in the pocket as the Prime Minister said, leave it to us.

Mr Speaker, these aids which are given to the Private Sector, every year, \$250,000 is spent on these Businesses. They achieve the required conditions for them to receive this aid every year. Other businesses even receive \$10,000, it is estimated according to how big the business is and is adhered to policies, which are laid out by the Ministry. Our Foreign Investments partner as well, is one of the responsibilities of our Ministry. It strives to grow an environment that is good for attracting foreign businesses, to come and invest their funds here.

Our Ministry is also trying to continue attractions, and demonstrate notices for them, to see. Who wants to come to Samoa, to invest their money through their businesses, whichever kinds of business. There is also a thorough process to perceive the kind of people that should be brought in, and those who should not. I am drawn to these issues, because if these people come, that means, not only the economy of the country will grow, but a lot of job opportunities for our unemployed people will be created, and those who want to work will be available as well, that is what I desire. And to develop our nation, in whatever effort that is going to be brought into the country, whether it is labor, shop, hotel, or whatever kinds that are brought.

I had watched an ad in the cell phone the other day, about the country of Dubai, which we assumed as a country of oil, Dubai is the oil. However, the truth about Dubai right now, it is not the oil that they are relying on, not the oil, it is 1%, or below 1%. The GDP which Dubai received from the oil, it was usually, 50% upwards, the GDP that they received from the oil. But what is happening, because of these investments. The investments have caused the whole change in the trading landscape of this country. More than 60% of people who are in Dubai are not Arabs, they are from other nations, who invest in here. Thenceforth this country of Dubai has become the most stable country in terms of its economy. A large amount of money is used to operate its economy.

It is not bad for people to come in. That is also the reason why our Government is trying to make sure that people are employed to develop our own country. Other issues which are valued by this Ministry, is to research, and working together with the International Labor Organization, to look into the future of employment, and prepare us there. Not just the Private Sector but the Government as well, sooner or later there will be tasks that we must prepare for. Starting from education, we should consider changing the focus, those are the matters that have been discussed in forums which I always attend. It will influence a lot of employments for us in the future.

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That is one task for the vision, the Ministry also investigates what preparations must be done, starting from our National University, our Apprenticeship Scheme, and other areas to educate our people to prepare them for employments that may emerge. The APTC, and the urgency to enroll into the TVET or Technical Vocational Training.

The purpose is to increase employment, the skills and ability of the labor force must be raised. To find work easily, regarding the standards of jobs which will be made available. There is no doubt that within the next 50 years, the entire landscape of our work, will be changed. There will be a greater number of new employments which will utilize the availability of advance knowledge and technology. But we must prepare as we go forward.

Mr Speaker, that is a small summary from this Ministry of Labor. Some aspects are incomplete, but that is the conclusion. The Prime Minister mentioned in his speech, some of the negotiations, for trading, as the Prime Minister already stated. Which is one of the departments that is working together with this Ministry, to enable a more stabled standard like the PACER PLUS, and other agreements signed, Europe, Britain, to make the trading process more efficient, in which Samoa is involved. The evidence which I am able to provide, as noted by the Prime Minister, he said, the importance of statutory payments, which is firstly taken away from our budget. It is first removed, and the Order was made to make it remain untouched, in case it might remove, by other policies within our Government. The importance of that, ever since I attended to these conferences overseas, it accounts for the countries who have already paid their contributions into these Organizations. There has not been a time that I participated to these meetings and said, Samoa has not paid her contribution into these huge Organizations in which Samoa is part of. I am very proud of the Leader, of course not, some of the nations are involved, but they are rich countries. They are wealthier. But Samoa usually pays her share first. Which is why I always say, that is how valuable Samoa is and her voice within negotiations of agreements, as well as meetings with other members. The dignity of our nation, it rides on the possibility that we are able to achieve and continue to do so, the things that we have already agreed to proceed. The payment of our share for instance, and everything else your Hon. And that concludes, from that Department, but just like I counted I have 9 Corporations. I will quickly go to this other area, perhaps it might...

The Ministry of Public Enterprise was set up on the 25th of April 2014. That day is always remembered, because that was the day I was appointed by the Prime Minister as the Minister for this Work.

The target of this Ministry at the time was to try and assemble all of our Private Sectors. There are 27 Private Sectors right now, divided into 3 Sections.

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The Public Trading Bodies or Organizations that were set up in order to earn income, to invest Government funds so as to receive profits like foreign companies, which are out of the Government. There are 8 Public Beneficiaries, and 3 Mutual Societies.

The first attempt was when this Ministry was under the Ministry of Finance. Over there it was only a small unit, and then this Ministry was established, to explore the means in which tasks used to operate, and the process of Government funds. Because public funds are used by these Ministries. Currently it has been 6 years, since it became one of the Ministries which greatly assists into the strive of our Government.

In addition, when it was established, indeed from 2016/2017 \$2 million was received, \$2million and a half in 2017/2018 \$3 million and a half, 2018/2019 \$15 million was collected, 2019/2020 \$6 and a half million, 2020/2021 \$9 million was collected from these Government Organizations. A total of \$36 million and a half was guaranteed, given the overall supervision of this Ministry, which is called the Ministry that looks after all Public Enterprises. That was the attempt to try and align all these Private Sectors. There is only one purpose which is to carefully monitor public assets and to generate revenues in order to support our Government Budget.

Another attempt which has improved a lot ever since this Ministry was set up, if you look at our current reports, these Annual Reports. All Reports by these Public Bodies are no longer delayed, these reports are all complete now. I suppose the Finance Committee already knew, not a single Ministry or Public Body, is late with their reports anymore. The 2019/2020 is finished and they are all here. Which is one of the biggest roles of this Ministry, to ensure that all reports are submitted on time. The reporting that comes from every Ministry, they must arrive on time. This has made easier the works of Parliament, as we are discussing the report from yesterday. But in former times, the report from 3 years ago is usually discussed. There is no change as the Prime Minister stated.

Then I come to our airplane your honor I presume that it is still questioned. I really wanted to bring our aircraft yesterday. But it is carefully planned right now considering the bad situation of the market and the traveling of people, it is best that we patiently wait until it is safe and sure, then we will bring it. But the plane itself is the attempt by the Government, who gives all its strength to it. This is the only effort with the right time to bring it. It must be brought when it is the right time to use it. But as you are all aware the whole world is affected. It is not just... whether one small country is influenced by these things, the whole wide world.

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That is the intention, in order to bring our visitors. But the willingness of the Government, is to immediately bring them. I have a feeling that, it will not be long, I do not want to tell you the time, in case that time comes. Therefore, the Covid virus has controlled all our decision making. Certainly, that is the reality of this world, that we now live in.

I now come to the other Ministry called the... as already mentioned Mr Speaker the SBEC which is now called the Samoa Business Hub. This is one of the Corporations, it is small but stings. Perhaps those are the words that I can describe it regarding its current situation, it was initially named as small business. Now, large scale ventures have joined. Their testament conveys, if we continue to go as micro and small, then the people's mindset would still remain small. But the situation right now, after micro and small, then we come to medium to inspire other people to join.

Now that there is a new process with lots of changes. This Organization was set up by the Government, to firstly ease the people from making money in order for them to establish their own respective businesses and to sustain it, set up a business and sustain it. Also teach them common experience, the know-how to do business, and how to pursue it. For business skills and knowledge, that is the standard right now, of this Corporation to execute their schemes to facilitate these 2 things. For people to easily get money to start their business and under their policies, there are different kinds of loans, the normal loan from up to \$10,000 for our people who hardly receives this kind of amount although they must have an asset to guarantee it.

Another thing is, there is a loan amount starting from \$20,000 to \$100,000 but that category is different, there are different requirements the people must follow in order to receive these amounts of money. New policies are also in place, there are people known as cohorts who hold monthly meetings and the attracting in of other people to clarify the acquired skills, since they have become involved in the programs of this Corporation.

The number of people involved here is more than 600, the staff working in this Organization. They also hold trainings to improve the skills, not only for those under this program, but trainings are also provided for people under the RSE scheme.

Other Government needs was to implement this body. So the Corporation is quite useful given their contribution to the Government and its development. I then come to the Housing Corporation. This is another Body which similar explanation can be given to. The emergence of this Corporation was outstanding right after the cyclone.

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Mr Speaker, after cyclones Ofa and Val, this Corporation was set up by the Government with a total allocation of \$10 million handed to them in order to carry out their works such as giving people the chance to build affordable houses of their own. The idea was for people to be able to build new houses, and to repair old, damaged houses.

Such was the real intention of the Government, this Corporation is now 30 years old. From the \$10 million granted by the Government in 1990, and by 2010 this \$10million was already paid off by the Corporation. During its 30th anniversary today, the amount of money already circulated with this Organization is \$65 million. That being said, this funding is made available for those needing help. The total number of borrowers currently loaning from the Housing Corporation funds is 4,000.

Good works are continuing, and a lot of people have come to my Office to offer congratulations because they have finally managed to live in brick houses for the first time. They have finally lived in houses they can afford because of the loans they are paying, with low interest rates which the Corporation is currently undertaking. There are also Government buildings that were once under the Ministry of about 72 buildings, they are now transferred under the Corporation. They are all renovated now, perhaps the monitoring and maintaining of these 72 Government buildings were not good at that time, now that they are brought under here, completely renovated at a costly price. But the value of these lands has increased and are occupied by people according to the price on the market. The Government has indeed earned income.

Mr Speaker during the time of the virus, the Ministry had also provided assistance to people who have loans, they were deferred, the repayments of these loans were deferred, for 2 months. Indeed, 2 months, was the opportunity given to not pay the loan, but prioritize our consideration of the pandemic virus. There is further plan, and there is already a list for Savaii, sooner or later they will initiate their service in the island of Savaii particularly from their own new Office after it is settled, but there is an Office right now at the market. People also visit there, the people in Savaii. That is one of the responsibilities of one of the Ministries under my care up until today.

I now come to the Samoa Land Corporation, or the sector which looks after the lands of the Government that was given to them, with the understanding of our people, these are not the only lands of the Government under the care of the Samoa Land Corporation. There is another bigger section, which is under our Land Board. There are 24,000 total land acres that was assigned under the SLC. Now that roads and other things that are already done, which results in the total of 20,000 of these lands. Most of the areas here in Upolu have already been measured and continues to do so for others.

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The majority of these lands are in Savaii, but the measurement has not reached there yet. For instance, the area of Ologogo, Lata, like Falelima where huge Government lands are, have not been measured. But there is a plan sooner or later, that measurement will get there, then our people will understand, the matter regarding lands.

I also had a talk with the Hon Prime Minister, before the acquisition of these lands, perhaps those topics are already understood, as these areas are referred to as the urban villages, and public plans was the reason for the existence of these urban residential areas today, and exclusive conditions that had existed. So the Corporation is earning revenues from these land lease. People, companies and a few Government Ministries are also leasing them.

Government plans are also clear for a new market construction in this area, the Sogi market of course. Some of its major plans are proposed along this part of the country as well as its growing developments. All these Government plans are considered for the future. Perhaps construction will start by the end of this year, possibly the major Government building will also be set up in which it will further stand out this part of the country to a more serial and appealing area as soon as all the roads are done.

I now arrive at the last corporation your honor, this area looks after our sports facilities. The Samoa Sports Facilities has just...perhaps this Agency will only appear whenever we have sports in the country. Every time Samoa hosts a game, there was never a time that the games were cancelled, because our fields were always in good condition. This Corporation operates until such a time our Government requires stadiums, aquatic centers, the Apia Park, which are well managed. Therefore I convey great appreciation to this Corporation. We have hosted so many games, but our Government assets are all well managed, so as to fulfill the expectations of our Government.

Mr Speaker, that concludes my Ministry, despite the fact that they have not been thoroughly discussed...perhaps this is enough for the time being. Mr Speaker, I now return to this House. I sincerely apologize, because I had aims to conclude the tasks prepared by the Corporations. I am trying to find it there are too many papers everywhere...Mr Speaker, my returning to...is to give a part of my speech on...the spirit of appreciation your honor.

The Hon Prime Minister is whom I want to get to first. Hon Prime Minister, I am taking this time to say our contribution from Satupaitea. I convey congratulations to your honor for leading our Government. I was under your leadership during that year. I could not find the words to explain how happy my constituency was, with your leadership style. A leader who is courageous, a leader who is fearless, who makes decisions which should be done. Who does not satisfy only 10, 20, or even 100 people.

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He makes decisions for the betterment of 250,000 people of Samoa. One who does not make inconsistent decisions but makes the right call. Who is bold to make the right decisions.

I am much obliged for your vision your honor; these are the issues that I usually hear the Prime Minister addresses. It was never proceed then paused, because this issue pertains to the vision of the Hon Prime Minister for the wellbeing of Samoa, climate change. The change in the climate, perhaps it does not concern others in this country, it is possibly not seriously taken. But it is still raised by the Prime Minister through his leadership remarks, because this is the enemy, this is the challenge, that the world is facing Mr Speaker, it is impossible for anyone to avoid, impossible.

If we do not work together our nation and other countries of the world will not be able to contain nor decline this rival which has emerged. I express gratitude to the Hon Prime Minister for continuing to make aware of this issue. I had attended an international conference during the right timing for this very issue to have occurred and whilst having the chance, I spoke about this matter. I usually said this, whilst we speak and discuss this in here, other islands of the Pacific are sinking at the same time. That is what I usually say, it hits right at the brains of those who resist those words, while we are being noisy and talking in here, the Pacific islands are sinking.

These are the matters that the Prime Minister usually address, there are islands that are no more. There are islands that no longer exists, perhaps in the next 100 years they will vanish. So, who is to blame? Questioning the leaders, what did they do?

Under the leadership of the Hon Prime Minister, we did what we should do, to be reminded of measures to take to minimize our impact. It is true that we produce a lot of toxic gases, however we are all living in this world. We are affected, we are constantly affected. We do the work that we should do for our country. Well our Government already have policies in place.

The Laws were initiated Hon Prime Minister, that is where Leaders were needed to look at what needs to be done. These are the 3 Bills that have been passed, which I will not talk about for too long. The only weakness for me, I was saddened, because the people that should have supported these Bills, did not support them. They should have known better but decided to go the other way, or look the other way for whatever reason.

These 3 Bills, I want to thank Mr Speaker, also I want to take this opportunity to thank the Committee who went out to do consultations, thank you for your bravery. It is not easy to see the people of the country oppose, but in my own belief, it is the opportunity, to do the things that our ancestors dreamed of 60 years ago.

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The motion was raised by the member of Palauli, elder Toluono Lama, I came across him when I was in school. He was one of the brave leaders of Samoa at that time, from Palauli, where my Associate Minister resides. The motion was made, to include in the Constitution the customs and traditions of Samoa, but there are reasons why it was not done.

Now that we have the opportunity, Mr Speaker there are 4 member of this village who were in this council. They were in here, please find out in your records, of the Constitution, that included these 4 elders. The drafting of the Constitution was in my constituency. There was a time when this motion was moved. Now you are looking here, wondering where was the member of Satupaitea at the time he should have taken the floor to do what they wish to do. Asiata Lagolago I know these people, Asiata Lagolago. He is one of the heros of our constituency in the beginning, Asiata Tulelei, is another Asiata senior there was, representative of Satupaitea. Faanana Fenika, the son of Lilomaiava, from Satufia. Gasu Taatua, this old man is my cousin, from Pitonuu. Two Asiata, one Aiga Samoeleoi, one son of Lilomaiava who were part of making the Constitution. Now you are looking, when will a representative of Satupaitea stand up to implement this in the next Government, put the Law of Samoa's customs and tradition in the Constitution. Well it has happened, it has been accomplished.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Hon Prime Minister for the many challenges faced, these elders are sleeping happily, Satupaitea have contributed in this Government by fulfilling the dreams of our ancestors, things they could not do, because of some legitimate reasons. Their group has now accomplished it. They played their part which is, for Samoa to be independent. But what are we to do? Should we just go along with the decisions made by the elders? No, let us do other things, to further develop Samoa like this thing and that.

I want to congratulate, the Hon Prime Minister as I mentioned earlier I will continue to salute him in the emergence of Covid, that time was not easy for Samoa. We need a Leader who is brave and makes his decisions, based on Gods divine whisperings. Mr Speaker, these things such as diseases is nothing new, it is not. At the time Moses went to take away the children of Israel, it was quite difficult to please the Pharoah. He was quite stubborn, therefore God called upon them the plague. One of the plagues was diseases, one was the plague, but still Pharoah was stubborn. When the children of Isarael left Egypt, they were driven in the dessert. They caught diseases causing outbreak in the camp, then Moses went up the mountain.

I rarely speak of the Bible. I hardly preach the Bible, but what I want to say is, the first missionaries came to Satupaitea.

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This is where the people were initially enlightened and gained understanding of the Bible. Whether I read the Bible or not, I still understand the Bible. I was also good in practising rituals for the Catholic Church when I was in school. So this does not mean I do not preach the Bible meaning that I lack knowledge of the Bible. It is aware, this is the truth.

God said to Moses, Moses what happened below? Please Dear God, your people have been afflicted with the disease. So what are you doing about it? I am here to ask for a solution. God then told Moses, go and tell Aaron to form a basin. That was a water basin back then, to make a big basin, and leave it at the door where the children of Israel enter to go to sleep. Tell Aaron, to wash hands with all the children, before going inside incase they might be affected with the disease and die. This is clarified in Exodus 13. Further clarification is provided in the book of Leviticus, once the disease is found, remove the people for 7 days. Do you hear what God is saying? 7 days. If the disease does not go away after 7 days, then add another 7 days. After that added 7 days remove these people and put them where the village is camping.

Afioga Afoa Amituanai Faleulu Maui: Mr Speaker...

MR SPEAKER: We do not have long to go; interruptions are not allowed.

Afioga Afoa Amituanai Faleulu Maui: Mr Speaker it is a point of clarification on the statement by the Minister please.

MR SPEAKER: Is it something about the Bible, because you did not speak about the Bible.

Afioga Afoa Amituanai Faleulu Maui: Your son is not bad in Theology. The only thing I wanted to clarify to the Minister, is the disease he was discussing about the Israelites, it is a disease created by God. But the disease that is spreading now, is a disease from Lucifer. That is the difference as discussed by the Minister.

MR SPEAKER: Very well. It looks like you got one thing right. I call upon the Minister to confirm if this is true.

Afioga Hon LAUTAFI FIO SELAFI PURCELL: Disease is a disease. There is no difference in diseases. No matter what type of disease. The Bible does not say that we now have Covid.

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No, there was a different disease back then, but these are scriptures of God as seen in the Bible which we read now. The holy whispering of God which is believed by the Hon Prime Minister and the Government. We do not have the knowledge to know what to do. At the time the disease surfaced it was noted that more than a thousand people died, this is the death disease. I was very worried...

Afioga Afoa Amituanai Faleulu Maui: Mr Speaker...

Afioga Hon LAUTAFI FIO SELAFI PURCELL: Please stop interrupting, sit down.

MR SPEAKER: I appease the member, as the Hon Minister does not have much time left.

Afioga Afoa Amituanai Faleulu Maui: Mr Speaker a point of order...

MR SPEAKER: Alright I will give you another opportunity. Pardon me Hon Minister.

Afioga Hon LAUTAFI FIO SELAFI PURCELL: I will just finish it tomorrow.

Afioga Afoa Amituanai Faleulu Maui: Mr Speaker, the Minister says it is the disease of death. I am saying that this is not a disease of death we are witnessing now.

Susuga Hon Tuilaepa Auelua Fatialofa Lupesoliai Lolofietele Neioti Aiono Galumalemana Dr. Sailele Malielegaoi: Mr Speaker, before Adam and Eve committed the sin, there were no diseases. But when Adam and Eve committed the sin, all these diseases came about, as part of their sin, there was also death. That is the situation for the member to know, there were no diseases in the beginning before the first man sinned, no death, no disease. But as soon as the person sinned, all the diseases and pain and all bad things, this is why we are like this, it is our sin which has resulted to all these things happening. That is a statement.

MR SPEAKER: Very well thank you. I call upon the Hon Minister to conclude his statement.

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Afioga Hon LAUTAFI FIO SELAFI PURCELL: Thank you Mr Speaker. I appease the member of Palauli, no it is a jest between us, it does mean to say that Satupaitea is ordering the member. The statement is made in a jokingly manner regarding you taking the floor. Hence the Hon Prime Minister has spoken. This is what I was talking about because the country often hears the Prime Minister mention these divine whispers from the Holy Spirit.

This is why I am trying to use the Bible, this is the first time I am speaking about the Bible since I became a member, to prove that this kind of statement is accurate. The Bible states the instructions of God on what to do when diseases arise, when they arise, isolate. They should be isolated for 14 days. If not, add more days to make it 21. To protect the country. What is happening with the divine whispers of God given? There is no disease in Samoa, only people who come from abroad are affected, but Samoa is safe, we are safe. We can hold our heads high and say Covid never came to Samoa. It was never in Samoa. Why? It is through Gods divine whispers that has made us prepare and be ready, to what is now happening.

Therefore I thank the Hon Prime Minister. Well, at this hour, I would like to express the gratitude of my constituency, thank you for choosing the member of Satupaitea to be part of your team for the past 5 years, also for the 2 to 3 years of the previous Parliamentary term. Your honor is highly respected in our constituency. Now the question is, who am I that you thought of choosing? Thank you for the honor, thank you for the respect, you have placed Satupaitea on a high pedestal. My only prayer, Honorable is that Satupaitea was able to satisfy your desire with an effort and a service that I was able to perform in the Cabinet, also an effort contributed, an effort conveyed to the best of my ability on the knowledge bestowed upon me by God. A wish of Satupaitea I pray that our God bless you with many more years, your working life, your life as a leader so that you can always lead Samoa. May God fulfill and enrich your knowledge so that you will be able to lead Samoa in its journey in future.

Now a word to my fellow Ministers. Well, we have been working together for the past 5 years, thank you for your hard work, we rowed the boat together for a future for Samoa under the leadership of the Prime Minister. Well, let us hope that the election process will see us all back again to carry on our work that we have been doing.

Hon Associate Ministers, well, the same thoughts to you. I thank you all for your cooperation with Ministers, it has made the work easier in the past 5 years.

A special word to my Associate Minister Afioga Tuifaasisina Misa Risati. Our friendship with Tuifaasisina, I met him when we were in Primary School. Later on we attended Chanel College, but now our journey has reached here.

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We were chosen by God to carry this duty together. Thank you Tuifaasisina, you and your wife for the strong support given to me in doing your duties as Associate Minister, you never stopped or hid in the shadow of the tree. Most other times even if it is not appropriate with you, you still worked hard for the benefit of the Ministry, especially our Parliamentary relations. In the occurrence of problems in your constituency you did not falter in doing your duties. Thank you for your contribution to the development of our hospital. Most of the time you are not available, but you always try to make time with a little help from our brother of Palauli le Falefa. Well, this is the development our people will benefit from, of our 3 constituencies. That is my word of thanks.

Well, to the dignity of respectable members of the House, I pray blessings upon you all in the upcoming elections of the country, I thank you all for the support to Chairpersons of Committees, for your hard work as Leaders of Committees as well as members who worked together to make the work of this Parliament successful.

Well, to Chief Executive Officers of all Government Ministries, I thank you all for your hard work. Thank you for serving Government. All the Ministries under your supervision, I commend the staff for their efforts, the Government cannot do anything on their own, unless they have your support, your willingness to serve. Given some of our Ministries, it is the same. Work well done. Mr Speaker when the disease came about, I was so proud to see a lot of Ministries working to protect Samoa. Everyone knows this, it was all Ministries, and there was not a single Ministry that did not want to be infected. No. Once Government plans was implemented it was done. That is something I am proud of, working together, from the CEO to the driver, everyone works to extinguish this enemy or these challenges that are heading towards us.

To the nine Chief Executives of my Sector, I want to thank you for the past 5 years and 8 years for some. I have just started our work, me as Minister and you as the Heads of Ministries appointed by the Prime Minister for me to work with. I would like to thank you for accepting an advice, a suggestion, or an instruction during your position as the Minister to lead our Ministry.

There was not a time, since I became the Minister, that there has been a problem between me and you all. You have been working and listening to what I have to say. May God bless you all. I pray the Lord continue to bless you all in your work and the positions you were assigned to by God. It is not easy, but well done.

Mr Speaker, I would also like to extend my congratulations to the representatives of our Government who are overseas. In the many trips.

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I have been to overseas, our ambassadors who represent the name of Samoa overseas, in Belgium, America, China, Australia, New Zealand and Japan never disappoint. Well I have not been to other areas, but when I was a member of our Government, as a representative at the ACP where Tofa Faumuina is currently working, it was there where I knew the high level of service provided by our people there, especially our envoys in Belgium, Europe, I usually go there, especially the staff. These are the things our Leaders talk about, the recognition of Samoa. Why? Because when our staff go there, they have already been well prepared. They are not incompetent. Even when I leave as the leader of the meeting, the preparations of officials is never disappointing. I want to thank our representatives overseas especially the Ministry of Foreign Affairs whom we usually go on these trips. I am very happy with their services, whether the meeting finishes at dawn, they never disappoint as they have my speech already prepared for the next day. It makes me proud. This is why when the leader of the Samoan delegation stands up, everyone listens. Because they know the representatives of Samoa are not unreliable, they never disappoint. It is the preparation carried out by these officials, which exalts a speech by the leader of the delegation.

Mr Speaker the spirit is to convey a word of thanks. I apologize. I would like to thank the ADRA Organization who are working to raise the status of the rural communities under the leadership of one lady, Afioga Sua Julie Wall work and her staff. I asked for their assistance for a hall of our secondary school. We did not have to wait for long, because now the hall is standing in the constituency. Now they are continuing with their other programs, this Organization has the best management and the way they do their work, there is transparency and accountability. This what our Government values, which is evident in this organization. Thank you very much. As well as our usual partners for the work they have done for this constituency. Such as Japan, China, New Zealand and Australia. Developments have been implemented through their assistance.

I humbly greet our district hospital in Satupaitea. I applaud the men and women doctors and nurses who are working now and listening. Now I have the opportunity, I know the majority of you are sons and daughters of the 3 districts, Palauli le Falefa, Satupaitea and Palauli East. Their names will be changed after this Parliamentary term. Now you have the opportunity to serve our province as doctors. Now opportunity is made available in our hospital, let us work and serve our constituency.

Mr Speaker, I want to thank my wife for the great support over the past 5 years as I carried out my duties.

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Motion to Change Sitting Hours

Thank you for your service and your prayers. Tai, the situation our family encountered was not easy, but God's calling is different. I would stay here and carry out my duties as a member, while you went to Europe to implement your diplomatic duties. Well, the best thing is, now you are back, back to serve Samoa and iron my clothes for church on Sunday. For my children living in New Zealand, thank you for your support.

My brothers and sisters residing overseas, the same goes to you all, thank you for the support, thank you for your generous hand in me on carrying out my duties. I pray God fill the void. To all my relatives, friends and acquaintances living all over Samoa and abroad, thank you. I pray God bless your lives, and may we meet again in future, but thank you for your prayers and support.

Mr Speaker, I convey a special thanks to my mother. I know that she is watching TV. Thank you, Mama. From time I was a member, your prayers have been consistent, also your advice and silent prayers you have instilled courage in my heart, and you are the pillar I depended on when there were problems in the village and my position as a member. Thank you for your prayers every day. Thank you also to my mother in Australia, Foti, you were both there for me when I was sworn in. Unfortunately, you both are old and to the point where you can no longer travel here. But my prayer is that God continue to bless your lives so that we can always be together. Foti is 97 years old, and Mama is 87 years old. You have lived a long life, and have known all, and you long prayed for the good of me. Thank you very much.

Mr Speaker, now I come again, apologies Mr Speaker I will try and finish. Just a request if I can finish it tomorrow, I only have my constituency left to thank then I am done. This is a humble request. If I could continue tomorrow as I do not have long to go.

MR SPEAKER: Well, we have arrived at our adjournment time, in case we might over work ourselves and then blame it on the time, considering that Parliament has long been in progress. Therefore I believe it is best...

I call upon the Hon Prime Minister...

MOTION TO CHANGE SITTING HOURS

Susuga Hon TUILAEP AUELUA FATIALOFA LUPESOLIAI LOLOFIETELE NEIOTI AIONO GALUMALEMANA Dr. SAILELE MALIELEGAOI: Mr Speaker, since this is the last Budget of our Term, and I have noticed the eagerness of the Ministers to respond to each issue raised by the members, I move a motion, *To change our Assembly Hours for Sittings of the Legislative Assembly as follows:-*

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Motion to Change Sitting Hours

Our Assembly Proceedings are adjourned at 1:00 pm, then we will continue again at 6:00pm until 10:00pm in order to try and complete the work of Cabinet but this will start tomorrow. The motion now moved will be officiated tomorrow.

But if by Friday we still have not finished, it will continue as well on Friday and also Saturday. We have not yet done a Sitting for a whole of Saturday and the night. If you want to send your love to your spouses and parents then you can do that after the sitting, so that we can get on with our work quickly.

Mr Speaker that is a motion.

Approved by the Minister of Women, Community and Social Development and the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Labour.

Motion approved.

MR SPEAKER: Well, we will follow this. You can conclude your speech tomorrow. Is it finished?

Afioga Hon LAUTAFI FIO SELAFI PURCELL: No it is nearly finished.

MR SPEAKER: Well, I believe it will take more than half an hour. But we will leave it until tomorrow. Since a decision has been made.

Before we adjourn, I call upon the member of Faasaleleaga No.4 to conclude our Sitting with a prayer.

Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly adjourned at 1:10pm until 9:00am Wednesday, 24 February 2021.