

I. INTRODUCTORY

WESTERN SAMOA is comprised of two large islands, Upolu and Savai'i, and the small islands of Manono, Apolima, Fanuatapu, Namu'a, Nu'utele, Nu'ulua, and Nu'usaf'e'e. The Territory lies between the 13th and 15th degrees of south latitude and the 171st and 173rd degrees of west longitude.

Upolu and Savai'i are 45 miles and 46 miles long respectively, and are separated by Apolima Strait, 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles wide, in which are Manono and Apolima islets; the remainder of the islets are within or near the fringing reef surrounding Upolu and are not inhabited.

The islands of the group have a total area of 1,133 square miles and are mountainous in character, rising to elevations of 6,094 ft. in Savai'i and 3,608 ft. in Upolu. The large majority of the Samoans live in coastal villages, there being only 11 inland villages out of the total of 192 in the whole Territory.

The climate is mild and equable, the average temperatures during the last forty-four years showing a mean daily maximum of 84.75 degrees Fahrenheit, and a mean daily minimum of 73.82 degrees Fahrenheit, while the average annual rainfall for a period of fifty-five years is 111.63 in.

The Samoan population, as at 31st March, 1947, was 65,695, and the non-Samoan population 5,765: total, 71,460.

II. STATUS OF THE TERRITORY

The Territory was previously administered pursuant to a mandate conferred upon His Britannic Majesty, to be exercised on his behalf by the Government of the Dominion of New Zealand, and confirmed by the Council of the League of Nations on the 17th December, 1920.

Following the establishment by the Charter of the United Nations of an international trusteeship system, New Zealand, in January, 1946, communicated to the General Assembly of the United Nations its acceptance of the system in its application to Western Samoa.

A draft trusteeship agreement was submitted by the New Zealand Government to the Secretary-General of the United Nations in October, 1946, for consideration. Its terms were also explained by the Administrator to the Legislative Council and the *Fautua* of Western Samoa. In the opinion of the *Fautua* and the Samoan members of the Council the matter was of such importance that an opportunity should be given for discussion by as widely representative a body as possible. Accordingly, a *Fono* of all Samoa, including the *Faipule* and delegates from all political districts in the country, met and discussed the terms of the agreement with the Administrator and a representative of the New Zealand Government between the 13th and 20th November.

Following these discussions, a petition was presented by the Samoan leaders praying for self-government under New Zealand protection. The Assembly of the United Nations in New York was immediately notified, and the contents of the petition were communicated to the Sub-committee on Trusteeship by the New Zealand delegate on 23rd November, 1946.

The draft agreement* with minor amendments, was adopted by the General Assembly on 13th December, which at the same time finally established a Trusteeship Council. This Council is the competent body to consider the Samoan petition. Latest advice is that the petition was to come before the first session of the Council, which met on 26th March, 1947.†

* Printed as parliamentary paper A.-2c, 1947.

† The Trusteeship Council gave preliminary consideration to the petition at the session commencing 26th March, 1947, and at the request and invitation of the New Zealand delegate appointed a Commission to proceed to Samoa and examine the position. The Commission is due to arrive in Samoa about 4th July.