

had become British subjects. Although this circumstance limits the value of their testimony, they are nevertheless in a position to appreciate better than the majority of the other Samoans how much knowledge and work are required for the smooth running of the governmental machinery.

23. Some of the members of the Mission received the impression that the almost total absence of public expression of dissent was due to traditional Samoan practice and, possibly, as some witnesses before the Mission claimed, to political pressure by higher level leaders. It is part of Samoan customary practice that all collective decisions reached in political gatherings are crystallized by leaders of high rank after full discussion of all the viewpoints involved, and are then presented as a unanimous opinion. Any one who disagrees with such decisions bows to this dominant viewpoint and at the time of the presentation of the group opinion voices no expression of dissent. This, however, will not prevent such a person from expressing dissent or acting in opposition at a later day. As an example, the three leaders chosen to represent the district of Falealili signed the petition in the *Fono* which initiated it. Yet, when the Mission visited that district in July, these representatives took an active part with the other local leaders in expressing the district's collective opinion that self-government should be granted only after a preliminary period of educational preparation.

24. The members of the Mission, therefore, although differing in opinion as to the numerical importance of the opposition, agree that it is *politically* negligible. Furthermore, this opposition is concerned only with the timing of self-government; the objective of self-government is unanimously accepted.

25. During the Mission's visit to the different districts it was received in all of them, except in Falealili, by Samoans wearing the old uniform of the *Mau* movement, a *lavalava* (waistcloth) of blue with a white stripe. The wearing of this uniform was renewed shortly before the arrival of the Mission as the symbol of the movement for self-government. In all meetings the orators and chiefs expressed to the Mission their request for self-government. Probably many of them could not have described exactly what they wanted, but there was undoubtedly a unanimous desire for a change of government, immediately or in the near future, but by all means a change in order to give to the Samoans the direction of their own affairs.

26. The Samoan leaders caught and gave expression to this emotional tension in such a way that one can say that in Western Samoa there is in existence *now* a clearly well-defined public consensus in favour of self-government. The idea of self-government has been launched and is making its dynamic way.