

5. Politically this population of foreign nationality would be a small minority. Even if they were to be given voting power proportionate to their numerical strength this would afford them practically no political power in the life of the country. Their economic role, however, is likely to continue as at present to be indispensable, and their rights must be safeguarded. Hasty legislative measures taken against them might seriously imperil the economic and social life of the country. Furthermore, the principle of equality before the law would not give them adequate protection. Equality is not a guarantee unless it applies to identical situations. Very few Samoans, for example, are engaged in foreign trade. No Samoan follows the profession of banker. Such fiscal or economic measures as a Samoan legislature might possibly wish to take effecting external trade or banking operations would have direct effects upon hardly any Samoan. In spite of their seeming uniformity, measures such as these might, in fact, have a clearly discriminatory character.

6. A desire on the part of the Samoan leaders to keep outsiders from coming to Samoa so as to protect their people and resources from encroachment was a frequent theme during the interviews between the Mission and the Samoan leaders, and appears in the Samoan plan for the new Government (Annex VII). The Samoans seem to envisage the interdiction of immigration of all persons of foreign nationality except missionaries, public officials, and employees of private firms, and then only if their positions cannot be filled by local residents. Permission to stay in the Territory under the proposed Samoan plan would apparently be given only for a limited period, and even the exceptions here made might have only a transitory character. It is certainly desirable to control new immigration carefully, but precautions should be taken in order to avoid excesses or abuses arising out of a momentary ill-feeling regarding certain classes of prospective immigrants. The immigration control exercised by the New Zealand authorities appears to have taken adequate care of the problem.

7. Protection of the population of foreign nationality would be facilitated if it were found desirable to establish a city or town area of Apia, where the great majority of Europeans are living (see paragraphs 50 and 72-75 of the present chapter). Its by-laws or regulations could deal appropriately with their interests.

C. READINESS OF THE PEOPLE FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT

8. The Samoans have a national identity and are acutely conscious of their distinctive characteristics. They possess a language of their own and an indigenous culture fitted to the conditions of life in their isolated islands. They also have a traditional political organization which, though undergoing substantial changes, is still largely intact.