

64. The existing organization of executive Departments should be carefully re-examined in terms of the needs and conditions of the proposed new Government.

65. It is believed that the name of the present Department of Native Affairs should be changed in keeping with the spirit of the new Government.

66. To fix responsibility on larger groups and give greater representation in executive matters, the number of Boards or Commissions supplementing the important Departments should be increased. A Board of Health, for example, could include representatives of the Public Works and Education Departments, and also one of the senior Samoan medical practitioners to give recognition to that important service. A Board of Education could include, among others, representatives of the missions. It is essential that Samoan members should be included in all such bodies, even though they may not yet have full competence. The progressive initiation of the local leaders in public affairs is in itself an objective of first importance.

K. VILLAGE AND DISTRICT GOVERNMENT

67. The development and constitutional recognition of an adequate system of popular local government and of appropriate relationships between the local government and the central authority is essential to progress in self-government.

68. At present the Samoan people meet in village, sub-district, district, and great-family councils, consisting of their appropriate title-holders chiefs and orators. Through these bodies, especially the village councils, the work of local regulation and control is carried on in effective ways under customary sanctions according to Samoan usage. Along with traditional Samoan affairs, they handle such matters of concern to Government as local hygiene, school attendance, curfew regulations, and the planting of gardens. In this way Samoans are effectively maintaining public order and controlling the life of their districts and villages. This fact alone proves that Samoans are capable of handling their own regional and local affairs.

69. The remarkable fact is that this whole field of activity is carried on largely outside the constitutional structure of the present Administration. Samoan local administration has only the tacit tolerance of the central Government, which for the most part closes its eyes and ignores it. The Mission believes that it is a fortunate circumstance, and highly desirable that this vigorous Samoan-style political life is being carried on without overmuch interference and direction from the central authority. It feels, however, that in developing a new Government which the people will feel to be their own it will be essential to give constitutional recognition to this district and village organization as basic elements in the general government structure.