

G. THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LOCAL INHABITANTS

37. The representation of the inhabitants of Western Samoa in the Government of Western Samoa, as noted above, should be determined by the people themselves. The Samoan plan as presented to the Mission asks that the three honourable *Fautua*, who are at present "High Advisers" without statutory duties, should be jointly made "Heads of the State."

38. The title of "*Fautua*" is of recent origin. It did not exist in old custom. But the three present incumbents were invested with the dignity of this title in recognition of their position as the highest title-holders, according to the Samoan custom, of the "Royal" family lines. Their eminent status in Samoan society is therefore quite independent of the title of *Fautua*.

39. The title of *Fautua* was created by the German authorities after the suppression of the single king title (*Tupu*) and the title of "Paramount Chief" (*Ali'i Sili*) which they had created temporarily in 1900 to replace it. By establishing two *Fautua* titles, one representing each of the two greatest "Royal" lines, they hoped that the aspirations of these great family groups would be met and their possible rivalries ended. The third *Fautua* was added in 1936 at the request of the Samoans. The leaders themselves and their family groups now accept the situation. But the historic rivalry between the great families probably still exists, although in a latent state. Many witnesses before the Mission, including Samoans, expressed the conviction that if European authority were to disappear, strife between these families would soon come into the open.

40. The question as to whether the institution of *Fautua* should be maintained is for the Samoans themselves to solve. The Mission is of the opinion, however, that the present three *Fautua* are universally recognized as qualified to represent the Samoans. They should therefore, at least for the present, act as representatives of the Samoans in the Government of Western Samoa.

41. No definition was given in the Samoan plan as to the precise authority of the *Fautua* or their relation to the other parts of the Government. The Mission recommends that these Samoan representatives should have the following powers and responsibilities:—

- (a) They should act as the representatives of the local inhabitants in the Council of State, which would be the supreme body of the Government of Western Samoa. The High Commissioner and the *Fautua* would constitute the Council of State, which on all appropriate occasions should represent the Government of Western Samoa.