

D. ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT

27. Whether Samoa will choose, once she is given self-government, to develop a twentieth-century western economy with increased production and higher money incomes or whether instead Samoans will prefer their traditional ways of life with little or no money incomes, must be for the Samoans to decide. That is part of self-government. To-day the vast majority can satisfy with minimum effort and largely from local resources their basic requirements for food, clothing, housing, and other essentials. Whatever their choice, however, certain basic problems must be faced.

28. From a financial point of view the Territory is at present highly vulnerable, since its prosperity must depend on outside marketing and price conditions to dispose of its few commercial products. Every effort should be made through research and development to extend the export products beyond their present limited range. Even minor developments will help to buffer the economy of the Territory against sudden changes in marketing conditions. Small local industries should be developed along such lines as prove practicable. The New Zealand Government is aware of the problem and is counting on the research work and other co-operative activities of the new South Pacific Commission to aid significantly in broadening the economic base. Mention has already been made of the desirability of measures such as the establishment of a Stabilization Fund to cushion the shock of fluctuating prices for local products in the world market (see paragraph 96, Chapter, II).

29. The present Government activities in agricultural fields are much more circumscribed than in the earlier years of the New Zealand regime when a Department of Agriculture existed. A Produce Inspector supervises agricultural exports, and Samoan part-time officials called "Plantation Inspectors," but with no training whatever, are supposed to supervise district conditions. Experimental activities carried on by the Reparation Estates are significant for the wider agricultural life of the Territory. The economic progress of the country would appear, however, to call for a much more positive organization and policy.

30. Both Europeans and Samoans have asked that a Department of Agriculture be revived, and since 1945 a plan to this effect has been under discussion. One of the "six points" presented by the European Citizens' Committee was "that a Department of Agriculture be set up with a Director of Agriculture and assisted by a small Board to act as advisers and formed from local planters."

31. Samoa still possesses many untapped or insufficiently utilized resources, and with proper development the income of the country could be materially increased. The careful formulation of a long-term economic programme will require concentrated study by competent