

ANNEXES

ANNEX I—FACTUAL INFORMATION ON WESTERN SAMOA

I. GENERAL BACKGROUND

A. The Physical Setting

1. The land area of Western Samoa is approximately 1,130 square miles. The Territory is made up of two main islands, Upolu, on which the capital town, Apia, is situated, and Savai'i. Upolu, with several outlying islets, has a total area of about 430 square miles, and Savai'i has about 700 square miles. For comparison it may be noted that adjacent American Samoa has an area of approximately 75 square miles, and Tonga, mentioned in the petition, approximately 270 square miles.

2. The islands, situated some 14 degrees south of the equator, have a tropical climate, with heavy precipitation and occasional severe storms. They are of volcanic formation, with rugged and mountainous terrain, rising to an elevation of 3,608 ft. in Upolu and 6,094 ft. in Savai'i. Coral reefs fringe much of the coast-line. Volcanic eruptions have covered sections of the islands with lava flows, especially on Savai'i, where volcanic activity has occurred as recently as 1905 and 1906. Though the islands are heavily forested, soils are generally thin and rocky, and cultivation to date has been limited almost wholly to the coastal area where the people live, and to the adjacent lower slopes.

3. The economic resources of the Territory are confined to agricultural and marine products, together with limited but useful forestry resources. No minerals of commercial value are known to exist. Transport and communication are restricted by the fact that, apart from several bays on north Upolu, the sea approaches are limited to passage by small boat. Vessels from overseas come only to Apia, where there is fairly sheltered anchorage inside the reef.

B. The People

4. The latest official estimates (31 March, 1947) indicated a total population of 71,460. It consisted of 372 full (white) Europeans; 5,134 Europeans of part-Samoan ancestry; 65,695 Samoans; 296 Chinese, of whom all but 6 were labourers; and 63 Melanesian labourers. Of the group classed as Samoan, about 600 are really islanders from other central Pacific Islands living temporarily or permanently in the territory.

5. The general level of living conditions and health of the resident population is reasonably good. There are no problems of post-war reconstruction and rehabilitation, such as are at present serious in many parts of the world. No poverty or destitution exists, because of the ease of getting a livelihood and the maintenance of family and community co-operation under the Samoan social system.

6. The Samoan people are at this time one of the most rapidly increasing population groups in the world. According to the census figures, which appear reasonably accurate, the number of Samoans has increased from 32,601 in 1921 to 52,266 in 1936, and then to 61,867 by 1945, the date of the last census. Their birth-rate, linked to