

In the latter year the New Zealand Government sent a "Good-will Mission" to Samoa. It reached agreement with the leaders of the Mau, who thereupon re-entered political life. During the three years which followed, various preliminary steps were taken towards making the Samoan Administration more effectively representative. The participation of New Zealand in war in 1939 then restricted further advancement.

The present phase in Samoan political development dates from two events: the visit of the Prime Minister of New Zealand to Samoa in December, 1944; and the approval of the Trusteeship Agreement by the General Assembly of the United Nations in December, 1946. On the former occasion the Prime Minister met the Legislative Council and the Fono of Faipule and declared his sympathy and support for Samoan aspirations for political advancement. On the latter, New Zealand formally committed itself to promote development towards self-government.

In accordance with New Zealand policy, the representatives of the Samoan people were consulted as to the terms of the draft Trusteeship Agreement. They declared that they recognized that the agreement marked a considerable advance on the terms of the former mandate, and they expressed their appreciation of the sympathetic attitude of the New Zealand Government; but they concluded that their long-term aim of self-government would not be furthered by their acceptance of it. They asked that, instead, Samoa be granted self-government, with New Zealand remaining as advisor and protector. New Zealand's obligations to the United Nations did not permit of the withdrawal of the Territory from the scope of the trusteeship system, even had the Government been willing to agree to such a proposal. It was therefore agreed with the Samoan representatives that the Trusteeship Agreement should be proceeded with, but that a petition containing their opinions should be forwarded to the Secretary-General of the United Nations through the New Zealand Government. This was done in January, 1947; the terms of the petition had already been informally communicated to the Sub-committee on Trusteeship by the New Zealand delegate in November, 1946. The petition was duly considered by the Trusteeship Council on 24th April, 1947, and, on the invitation of the New Zealand delegate, it was resolved to inquire into the matter on the spot. In July a Mission, led by the President of the Trusteeship Council (Mr. Francis B. Sayre), arrived in Samoa. It was accompanied by a representative of the Prime Minister and the Secretary of Island Territories, who, like the Administrator and local officials, made themselves available for constant consultation.

On 27th August, 1947—just before the Mission left Apia—the New Zealand Government's proposals for political development in Samoa were outlined in a statement in Parliament by the Deputy Prime Minister. The Mission published its report in October, 1947, and it was considered by the Trusteeship Council in the following month. The recommendations of the Mission were found to be closely in line with New Zealand policy. The first stage in the implementation of the new proposals was taken with the passing of the Samoa Amendment Act, 1947, by the New Zealand Parliament on 25th November, 1947. The Act came into force on 10th March, 1948.

The Act provided for the constitution of a Council of State, composed of the High Commissioner (as the Administrator would henceforth be called) and the Fautua. This was to be an advisory body with which the High Commissioner would discuss all proposed legislation and questions involving Samoan custom. It also provided for the replacement of the Legislative Council by a Legislative Assembly composed of the members of the Council of State, eleven Samoan members elected by the Fono of Faipule, five representatives of the community of European status elected under adult suffrage, and six official members. The new Assembly was given complete control of finance and wide legislative powers. During the year under review both the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly have begun to perform an increasingly full part in the government of the Territory.