

reorientation of policy. Already much has been done indirectly especially through the opening-up of large areas of land as a result of new road-construction. Now the Territory is on the verge of a period of greatly increased action by the Government with the direct purpose of stimulating agriculture and improving its methods. One step that is in process of being implemented is highly significant in this regard. Samoan coconut plantations have long suffered severely from the depredations of the rhinoceros beetle. In the first years of New Zealand administration in Western Samoa a strenuous attempt to overcome the pest was made by requiring both European planters and the men of the villages to make a weekly search for beetles. The scheme made demands upon the people which, in the course of time, they increasingly failed to fulfil. Now a sum of £5,000 a year for five years has been allocated by the New Zealand Government for the development of parasitic methods of control. Other schemes are in process of development. It is intended to carry out an aerial survey of the Territory in the near future. Equally important for the Territory is the agreement of the New Zealand Government to participate in the plan of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for a world agricultural census. It is intended that work undertaken in this connection in Western Samoa shall form part of a broader study of the resources and economic potentialities of the Territory. Such investigations will go hand in hand with actual measures to increase production immediately.

In the absence of a Department of Agriculture, direct Government action to improve agricultural methods have necessarily been on a small scale. The New Zealand Reparation Estates have, by example and from the scale on which they operate as employers of labour, shown many Samoans how to perform various agricultural operations, such as the pruning of cocoa-trees. The only Government officers directly concerned with Samoan agricultural production are the Produce Inspector and his staff and the fourteen *pulefa'atoaga* (or Plantation Inspectors). The latter are elected, part-time officials, each in charge of a district. They are under the administrative supervision of the Samoan Affairs Department. Their duties include encouragement of the people in rhinoceros beetle collecting, keeping their gardens clean and healthy, replanting at proper intervals, &c. In practice, little activity has been shown in recent years, but the Samoans are again interesting themselves in the re-establishment of a Department of Agriculture.

The export of bananas has been under Government control since 1928. The bananas are brought from the growers, graded by the Produce Inspector and his staff, and sold to the New Zealand Internal Marketing Division at fixed f.o.b. prices. In the cocoa trade the Government confines its activity to the supervision of grading and the regulation of prices paid by the merchants to the producers. The cocoa has in recent years been sold on the world market by the merchant firms or the New Zealand Reparation Estates in accordance with allocations agreed to by the International Emergency Food Council. Allocations by the Council have ceased since the 31st March.

Copra has been sold since 1942 to the British Ministry of Food under contracts which have provided for the taking of the entire output of the Territory. By special agreement with the Ministry a portion of the crop has been released from time to time for direct sale to other purchasers. During the current year important changes have been made in the system of copra marketing. The time was propitious owing to the fact that the current contract with the Ministry of Food was due to expire on 31st December, 1948, and that it was known that the Ministry was anxious to make a new contract for a long term. A revision of procedure was desired by which an authority in Western Samoa should negotiate the new contract in place of the New Zealand Government, which had acted on behalf of the Territory previously. It was also desired to establish a stabilization fund to provide some measure of protection for merchants and producers against fluctuations in prices. For this purpose the Copra Board Ordinance 1948 was passed. It established a Copra Board composed of the following members: the Secretary to the Administration (Chairman), the Fautua, three representatives of Samoan