

By a stroke of the pen, or the emanation of a brain-wave, yet another very grave injustice was perpetrated on the long-suffering Samoan Native. An order was given that all Samoans living in and around Apia, other than those who were born in the district, must return forthwith to their own villages. This was followed by imprisonments and other harsh acts, which practically no other but the docile Samoan would have tolerated.

The undertaking by New Zealand of the mandate over Samoa placed upon her a solemn obligation to conduct the affairs of the Territory in a manner conducive to the best interests of the inhabitants as a whole, and more especially of the indigenous population. Settlers and residents (and especially the British) who have made their homes in these islands must find it their sacred duty to at least protest against these injustices to the Samoan Natives, whose welfare and advancement are identical with their own best interests as well as to their ideas of democratic government.

[TRANSLATION.]

SAMOAN NATIVE AFFAIRS.—SAMOAN REPORT.

The Samoan sub-committee who have been entrusted with the report on the administration of Native affairs keenly feel the sense of the great responsibility placed upon them. They, with all due deference and respect, hand in to the general committee the following report to be embodied in their representations to the New Zealand Government.

In framing this report we have taken only into consideration those points which we feel confident are expressive of the feelings of the Samoan people as a whole, and we have left out all matters which we consider are of a personal nature, while on such as may possibly contain an element of doubt we have refrained from stressing the point.

The Samoan people recognize the advantages of stable government, and they fully appreciate the terms of the mandate under which they are to learn to participate in the government of their own country. They have also been told the benefits of British administration.

The various phases of government which we have experienced for many years, and our own natural development, have enabled us to compare the good and bad points of each as they appear to us, and as they appeal to our intelligence and according to our customs and mode of living.

1. From time immemorial we have selected our own Faipule or representatives in the Government. At no time in our history have our Faipule interfered or been allowed to interfere with our hereditary family names or our civic privileges by banishing chiefs from one village to another.

2. Neither the Faipule nor any other body of Samoans have ever barred our entrance into or resident in Apia or anywhere else in Samoa except in time of war.

3. Despite the many attempts in the past to abolish the fine mats, not one has prevailed, thus proving that the Samoans are not prepared to forgo an old custom which means so much to their prestige and pride of race, and associated with so much of what they still hold dear.

4. Samoans have been very averse to paying taxes. They have, however, submitted to the necessary taxation for the general conduct of the Government. They have never agreed, and never will agree, to taxation for a special institution or department, not even for the Medical Department. While the campaign against yaws and hookworm is appreciated, the Samoans feel that if the Administration does not consider it due to the Samoans out of the general revenue to get these treatments, they are quite prepared to pay for them as received.

5. The new land law which the Administrator is endeavouring to bring into effect is fraught with much danger, and is undoubtedly causing much trouble. Protests are heard on every side, and it is well worth the while of the authors of it to seriously consider the pros and cons of the measure before putting it into operation.

In respect to the above points, we can safely say that Samoan Governments in times gone by have foundered on very much less. The Samoans bitterly resent them to-day. If they lead the way to real stable government, then we pray that they be enforced in stages. The Samoan people are not ripe for these sudden changes. If, however, they are not essential to good government we ask that they be removed. We consider them very harsh and oppressive. If an open vote were taken on them, it is doubtful if one Samoan would vote in their favour. They do not tend to advance the development of the Native mind towards self-government. On the contrary, they retard its progress in those lines.

What we do want is a little more recognition of our sense of what is due to us as a people. We require sympathy and encouragement in our aspirations. High-minded action will not produce the best in us.

The Faipule, to whom most of the points we complain of are attributed, would never think of doing these things without the influence and authority of a higher power. They, as Samoans, must feel with us in all our aspirations, and we are satisfied, had the very same Faipule held their seats from the people instead of from the Government, they would not for an instant have considered imposing these hardships on us.

We view with great sorrow the manner in which the two High Chiefs representing our kings of the past are being set aside. The office which they hold is called the "Fautua," which means that of adviser to the Governor or Government. We are of the firm opinion that they should be consulted in all matters, and thus Samoa will get the benefits of their views, as well as perpetuate a status for the most honoured families of Samoa in the councils of Government.

It is very difficult for us to understand why the statement has been made that the Samoans do not wish to be represented in the Legislative Council. No intelligent Samoan can be but aware of the fact that the Legislative Council deals with all important matters affecting the Territory and the Samoans should be represented. They should be represented by members of their own choosing in the same way as the European members.