

been created, and after that time has expired I will take what action on behalf of the Government of New Zealand I think necessary for good government and for the administration of such. I am not going to have wool pulled over my eyes. I am not afraid of responsibility, and I am giving the Citizens' Committee the first, the last, and a reasonable chance to undo the intrigue that has gone on among the Natives in Samoa; and after that reasonable time has expired I shall act according to the instructions and with the will and the backing of the Government of New Zealand. That is all I have to say to the Citizens' Committee. I might add that out of respect to you, and in accordance with my statement delivered this morning, I will put in writing my replies to the questions which the Citizens' Committee have asked me. I will make a parliamentary paper of it and lay it before the Parliament of New Zealand, to whose hands the government of Samoa has been entrusted, to see for themselves and know every detail of what has transpired here—what you have said and what I have said in reply to the requests you have made. I thank you.

Mr. Nelson: Will the deputation not be received in New Zealand?

Hon. Minister: I will consider any request put through the proper channel, and will reserve to myself the right to take what action I think fit on any request made to me by the committee as events develop.

DETAILED REPLY OF MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS TO REPRESENTATIONS OF CITIZENS' COMMITTEE.

The Chairman, Citizens' Committee, Apia, Western Samoa.

DEAR SIR,—

Wellington, N.Z., 12th July, 1927.

As indicated to you and the members of your committee when they interviewed me at Apia on the 11th June, I will now reply in detail to the various statements concerning the Administration of Western Samoa contained in the file of reports prepared by your committee and handed to His Excellency the Administrator for transmission to me on the 7th December last.

As intimated in the letter I addressed to you from Sydney on the 28th June, my consideration of these representations has been deferred until the conclusion of my visit to the Territory. I propose to include this correspondence in the report of my visit to Western Samoa to be laid before Parliament this session.

But, before dealing with the several reports under their respective headings, I must indicate that your committee's views cannot be accepted as representative of those held by a majority of Europeans or Native Samoans in the Territory.

The repudiation of your views and tactics by a large majority of the Europeans of Samoa in a message specially sent by them to the New Zealand Government; the fact that the Fautuas and Faipules at the Fono House, Mulinu'u, and the Faipules, chiefs, and orators at Fagamalo presented me with addresses expressing confidence in and loyalty to the New Zealand Government and the Samoan Administration, together with the manifestations of confidence and loyalty to His Excellency the Administrator on his recent malaga around Upolu, are clear evidence that your committee and their representations lack the confidence and support of the people of Samoa itself.

Further, I must repeat my condemnation of the means by which you have endeavoured to secure a display of sympathy with your agitation on the part of sections of the Native race. The formation of the "Mau" society or league, the purple badge of which was worn by many Samoans during my visit, without, in most cases, I am reliably informed, any semblance of an idea what it meant; the exhortations which certain districts of Samoa have received to refrain from payment of taxes and to resist the authority of the Government; and the general incitement to dissatisfaction amongst the Native people organized by your committee are not only resented by the leaders and the majority of the Samoan people themselves, but show a deplorable departure from the principle recognized in all British territories where Native interests preponderate, that matters of Native affairs rest entirely between the Administration and the Native people themselves. As I have already pointed out to you, this principle is strikingly shown in the Constitution granted in 1925 to the Mandated Territory of South-west Africa.

I will now deal with your reports seriatim.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The requests appear to be for—

- (1) The selection of Faipules by the people of their Districts.
- (2) Samoans to be members of the Legislative Council.
- (3) An increase in the elected members representing the European community to a number equal to that of the official members.
- (4) The ultimate abolition of the Fono of Faipules.
- (5) The repeal of certain laws.

(1) The inference that Faipules are not selected by the people of their districts is quite incorrect. Although the Samoan Amendment Act of 1923 gives His Excellency the Administrator the power to appoint a Faipule, every such appointment must have regard to "existing Samoan usage and custom." In actual effect, upon every vacancy for the appointment of a Faipule the Administrator has invited the people of the district concerned to discuss and nominate an appointee in their own Native manner, and the fact that there has never yet been a decision submitted in which a district has been unable to decide upon its Faipule conclusively proves that every appointment of a Faipule made by the Administrator has been of a chosen representative of the people's wishes. You must also know that at the moment the people of one district in Savai'i have had the Administrator's request to nominate a new Faipule to fill the existing vacancy under consideration for over twelve months and have not yet reached agreement. I must therefore regard the considered opinions of the Fono of Faipules as truly representative of Native opinions in Western