

Samoa, and to be accepted in preference to that of the individuals who have attached themselves to your movement. All remarks which follow bearing upon Native affairs must be considered in this light.

(2) There is no justification whatever for the appointment of Native members to a Legislative Council having a majority of European members. I am supported in this view by one of the greatest living authorities on British colonial administration, Sir Frederick Lugard, himself a member of the Permanent Mandates Commission, who, addressing the Royal Colonial Institute in London as late as February of this year, said,—

“It is by the training of Village and District Councils, not by placing a few denationalized Natives on the Legislative Council of the colony, that a backward people can be taught to think for themselves and that England’s great task in the tropics can be accomplished.”

The present Fono is a body having statutory recognition, and the Natives themselves have expressed themselves as entirely satisfied with it. They view your proposal with disfavour, and it is indeed difficult to imagine any direction in which good to the Native race could result by superseding the present Fono, which has individual representation of each of the thirty-three political districts of Samoa, by a system in which the Fono would be subjected to the actions of some Native representatives acting as a minority in another body. I have already told you in my written general reply that this request of your committee suggests itself as a proposal to facilitate interference in Native matters by European representatives having interests entirely apart from those of the Samoan people, and what the inevitable result of the adoption of the proposal would be.

(3) You ask that the elected members representing the European community should be equal in number to the nominated official members. In making this demand you ignore both the underlying principle of the mandate and the accepted principle of government of Native territories such as that of Western Samoa. The necessity for maintaining an official majority in the Legislative Council cannot be better expressed than in the words of that very distinguished and experienced British Empire statesman, the late Lord Milner, as follows :—

“The only justification for keeping an official majority in any colony is that we are convinced that we are better judges, for the time being, of the interests of the Native population than they are themselves. Unless we thought that, we should not be justified in keeping our official majority. If that is the case, then I think that the argument that the unofficial vote was against you is not an argument which possesses any force. The responsibility rests with us. It is not as if we departed from the principle of trusteeship; on the contrary, on the principle of trusteeship we keep the authority in the hands which we think for the time being most competent to use it, and we must not be fearful about making use of that reserve power.”

I have previously told you that the Europeans resident in Western Samoa have already a larger participation in their own Government, as to both franchise and representation, than exists in any other “B” or “C” mandated territory, and the New Zealand Government do not see in the manner in which the present agitation is conducted any ground for further advancement in the political status of the Territory. We do, however, propose to consider the introduction of legislation this session to restrict the exercise of the franchise to British nationals. The Europeans of Samoa (or, at least, the six primarily concerned in your movement) are mainly resident in Apia, and many of the subjects on which you now express dissatisfaction would have come within the province of a municipality for Apia, which you demanded so insistently for many years preceding 1923, when authority for the establishment of a municipality was made available to you by Act and then declined. I am sure that the present agitation has no more real support of the population of Samoa than your demand for the right to form a municipality until that right was conceded.

(4) I have dealt under heading (2) with the suggestion for the abolition of the Fono of Faipules in favour of a minority of Native representation in the Legislative Council. That would be a very backward step, which has not the support of the New Zealand Government or of the Samoan people.

It is significant that you have not always advocated the abolition of the Fono of Faipules. I would remind you that in 1921, when you and your European associates exercised very great influence with certain of the leading Faipules, even to the extent of persuading them against their own interests (as they now realize and admit) to present the petition to His Majesty the King asking that the mandate should be taken away from New Zealand, you wrote a letter, under date 21st November, 1921, to a prominent resident of Apia, from which I quote as follows :—

“Despite repeated announcements that the New Zealand Government is here for the benefit of the indigenous population, the Natives do not see any progress in that regard. They claim that whereas the predecessors of the present Administration made no such declaration, they recognized certain privileges and aspirations of the Natives and were slowly but surely establishing them. They claim that (1) the time was ripe for the recognition of the Native representatives, or Faipules, but the New Zealand made Constitution did not provide for same.”

The New Zealand Government and Parliament have given statutory recognition to the Fono of Faipules, and now your committee condemn us for doing so.

(5) The statement purporting to be made by the Samoan committee that “there are too many laws altogether” is completely lacking in specific instances. Certain measures are referred to by the committee under the heading of “Native Affairs,” and I will deal with them under that heading.

FINANCE.

Your committee’s report is based almost entirely upon comparisons with neighbouring territories. This method of criticism is distasteful, in that answer to it cannot be given without reference to those activities of other territories which are not so advanced as in Samoa, or to direction in which the expenditure of other Administrations exceeds that in our Territory. Any reply of the New Zealand Government or Samoan Administration must of necessity be in the nature of a critical review of the methods of neighbouring friendly Administrations. Moreover, there are usually such differences in the manner in which the financial statements of various Administrations are set out that it would