

before the Parliament of New Zealand for the information of honourable members and the public of the Dominion. I will undertake to do this, although your statements are so inaccurate and misleading as to be totally undeserving of so much consideration.

I will not deal in this reply with the report on labour and agriculture because yesterday the representatives of the Planters' Association, for whom you purported to speak, met me, and, in answer to my direct inquiry, they assured me they did not associate themselves with your committee either in respect to the reports you have submitted nor in respect to the recent and persisting attempt to disaffect the Native people. In a word, these planters entirely repudiated your committee.

You have associated with you to-day certain members of the Native race. I have made it clear that I will not listen to any European members of the committee on Native affairs. Neither am I prepared to receive your Samoan associates as accredited representatives of the Samoan people, nor will I hear anything from them in that capacity. I must regard them as individual members of the Samoan community, and as such I am ready to listen to any opinion that they may care to express and to give their individual views my full consideration.

A signed copy of this speech was handed to the Hon. Mr. Nelson.

A short summary of the Minister's reply was then read by the Native interpreter in the Samoan language.

*Mr. Nelson:* When the report was prepared by the Committee it was understood that the procedure would be that it would be given before your reply, therefore I submit it as it was prepared, as follows:—

"Hon. Mr. Nosworthy,—The citizens whom you have consented to meet to-day have all been elected by the people of Western Samoa for the purpose of making certain representations to the New Zealand Government, through the Minister of External Affairs, in respect to the administration of this Territory by New Zealand. Those representations are contained in the file which is now before you. A complete copy of that file was handed to the Administrator early last December by your request, and he was to place before the Fono of Faipules such matters as he deemed were Native affairs. A summary of the reports now contained in the file was related by me to you personally in the presence of the Prime Minister of New Zealand, the Right Honourable Mr. Coates, and the Minister for the Cook Islands, Sir Maui Pomare, on or about the 1st September last year, over nine months ago. The Prime Minister did not then hesitate to express his sympathy with the people of Samoa, and stated that the conditions which I related would not be tolerated in New Zealand and will not be allowed in Samoa by his Government."

*Hon. Minister:* That is, if they were true.

*Mr. Nelson:* They are true.

*Hon. Minister:* I am here to protect the Prime Minister of New Zealand, as well as my colleagues in the Cabinet, and only want to see that they will get a fair spin; and they will get it from me.

*Mr. Nelson:* "Sir Maui Pomare and you agreed with the Prime Minister."

*Hon. Minister:* I dispute that. I agreed that I was coming to Samoa when I could look into affairs for myself; as Minister of External Affairs it was my duty to come when I could.

*Mr. Nelson:* "It was there and then arranged that you would visit Samoa on the following month (October) to investigate."

*Hon. Minister:* As Minister of External Affairs, it is for me to come and go as I think fit. The Prime Minister suggested that I should come to Samoa and I told him I would come. I said I thought I would come before next session of Parliament.

*Mr. Nelson:* Then you admit that the Prime Minister did mention there in that room that you should come.

*Hon. Minister:* It was a suggestion. I do not remember all that took place there.

*Mr. Nelson:* I do.

*Hon. Minister:* I do not. However, it is only a detail. I have not been told when to come and when to go.

*Mr. Nelson* (continuing his written speech): "The Prime Minister remarked that he was shortly to leave for the Imperial Conference in London, and the New Zealand Government could ill afford to have the External Minister absent as well, but he felt the situation at Samoa needed urgent attention, and I left the Prime Minister's room with the assurance that the Minister of External Affairs would not fail to visit Samoa in October. Other remarks were made to me then which perhaps would not be politic to repeat just now. I, however, assured the Prime Minister that I was prepared to repeat before the Administrator, at any time, every word I then expressed.

"On my return to Samoa late in September, I consulted the other elected members of the Legislative Council and some of the leading citizens, and it was felt that if the Minister were to arrive in October no time was to be lost to prepare the necessary reports on the points which I had raised. As there was no objection raised in Wellington at my reference to Native affairs, there was no question of the Samoans being barred from the meetings. The first public meeting was held on the 15th October, and it was found that the points raised by me in Wellington practically embodied all that were at issue. There was not one dissenting voice from the hundreds who were present, among whom were representative planters, merchants, tradesmen, Government officials, and many leading Samoan chiefs. A committee of fifteen were then elected, and several meetings were held by them before the two planter members resigned, followed some time after by the resignation of Mr. Baxter, for business reasons. The two first named did not agree with the inclusion of Native affairs, and were the ones to which