

It is well known that members of the European committee deliberately disturbed the Natives on this occasion by spreading information in their minds concerning the New Zealand loan of £100,000 made in 1921. Stories were spread around the islands by the Natives that Samoa was indebted to New Zealand for a very large sum of money, which they would never be able to repay, and therefore their lands would be confiscated by the New Zealand Government.

The European committee apparently took no steps to stop the circulation of this and other false information, which necessitated my issuing a circular showing how the money had been expended, and that the greater portion of it was interest-earning. Wherever I had an opportunity of explaining the matter to Natives they expressed entire satisfaction and gratitude to New Zealand for this loan.

The petition is incorrect in stating that details of this debt have not been published in Samoa. The Faipules were in December last supplied with details, which they have satisfactorily explained to their people.

*Paragraph 18.*—I am satisfied that the criticism regarding Toelupe's speech in New Zealand did not originate with any Samoan Native. The late Secretary of Native Affairs informed me, prior to the present unrest, that a European resident who afterwards took a prominent part in the committee had openly criticized to him this compliment paid by the Natives to New Zealand, and that he intended to make trouble about it.

*Paragraph 19.*—In October last year I was astonished to receive information that a public political meeting had been arranged for by Mr. Nelson, to be held in the Market Hall in Apia, at which Natives from different districts were being requested to attend and participate with the Europeans. I was requested by several chiefs to prevent the Natives from attending, but I did not do so, as I had no desire to prevent free speech, and considered that the Samoans were unlikely to agree to Native matters being dealt with by Europeans. It was apparent that the great majority of the Natives present at the meeting understood but very little of the proceedings, a report of which is attached.

After the first meeting the Natives were spreading stories that Mr. Nelson had returned from overseas with great power and influence; that he had seen the political leader of New Zealand; that he was displeased with many things in Samoa and had arranged for the Minister to come to this Territory, and that the Minister would stay with him at his home and not at Government House.

When it was known that the Minister was not coming until May, Mr. Nelson informed his supporters that he would send a delegation to New Zealand, which naturally excited the fortunate individuals selected to make this trip and to work hard for support to their movement.

The ridiculous and false statements circulated around the islands by Natives, purporting to emanate from the European committee, caused me to realize the danger of their propaganda, which was calculated to cause Native unrest, and at the second meeting I communicated with the chairman, expressing my disapproval.

The petition states that the Administrator "did not produce satisfactory reasons to call the meeting off." I merely refer to my annual report, in which a copy of that warning is published.

As to the resolutions that were passed, I am quite sure that every resolution was initiated by Mr. Nelson and his European colleagues, and not by the Native members of the committee, who were merely tools of the European committee, and expected to derive some benefit for themselves by following the committee's advice.

The statement that the Minister "would not receive the Samoan delegates unless their views coincided with those of the Fono of Faipule and Administrator" is untrue.

I took no exception to the Europeans going to New Zealand, because they truly represented the European community; but the Samoans nominated for this delegation were by no means accredited representatives of the Native race, for, in spite of the fact that they may have been formally appointed by those Natives who attended the meeting at Apia, they were really the nominees and mouthpieces of the European committee, and, judging from this petition alone, they would have misrepresented the matters they were intended to place before the Government.

A parallel situation would be created if the traders in an out-district of this Territory were to hold a combined meeting with local Natives, and decide to send a delegation of Samoans to the New Zealand Government without first submitting their matters to the Administrator, who could never hope to hold the respect of the Natives or administer their affairs satisfactorily under such circumstances. The statement that "the reports prepared by the committee are supported by a very large majority of Samoans and Europeans" is incorrect. In spite of the fact that Mr. Nelson has used his traders in out-districts to propagandize on his behalf, and employed his copra-launches to give Natives who supported the agitation free rides to Apia, it is only since, and chiefly as a result of, the demonstration of Natives organized by Mr. Nelson during the Hon. the Minister's visit in June last that the Native unrest has spread to any great extent.

*Re* the statement that "many chiefs and orators of Samoa have been banished for taking part in this movement," please see attached list, referred to under paragraph 15.

*Paragraph 21* states that "all those who have signed this petition are the properly appointed representatives of the villages and districts they represent." This statement is answered by the following analysis of the records of the signatories:—

*Summary of Notes in re Petitioners.*

*Status of Petitioners.*—Chiefs, 79; orators, 61; petitioners unauthoritatively using title of deceased persons, 4; non-chiefs, 1; non-Samoans, 2: total petitioners, 147. Total *Matais* in Samoa (census return), 2,985.