

informed that the last Native who inquired into finance—namely, Lauati—had been deported. On the 8th December, 1926, the Fono of Faipules met, and I think it was on the next day that the Native members of the committee were arraigned before the Fono and warned to sever their connection with it.

*The Chairman :* Where did the Fono meet ?

*Mr. Baxter :* At Mulinu'u. I believe that some protest was made respecting the matter, but as all the correspondence is with Mr. Nelson I am unable to say definitely whether that happened or not. However, preparations were then made to send a delegation to New Zealand, and it was decided that all the Native members of the committee should be on the delegation. Passports were applied for to the Inspector of Police, but they were refused on the ground that they would not be allowed to land in New Zealand, and the Inspector was waiting to see whether the Minister would be prepared to see them or not. The correspondence referring to that appears at pages 15 and 16 of the petition proceedings—that is, the Joint Committee (see Appendix 1). The committee therefore decided to send Mr. Meredith to Auckland in order to seek counsel's advice, and to see what he could do towards bringing matters before the New Zealand Government and before the New Zealand public. Mr. Meredith sought interviews with the Minister of External Affairs and the Prime Minister. He had an interview with the Prime Minister, but, as he was satisfied that nothing would come out of it, he published a pamphlet over his name, and this will be produced by Mr. Meredith when he gives his evidence. The annoyance on the part of the Samoans was due at this time to the fact that the Government had taken up the wrong attitude, and that it would not listen to anything which was not approved of or advised by the Fono of Faipules.

*Judge MacCormick :* Is that on record in any way ?

*Mr. Baxter :* Yes, sir.

*Judge MacCormick :* There will be evidence about that ?

*Mr. Baxter :* Yes. All the information is, of course, with Mr. Nelson, and consequently I am not in a position to mention the matter further than what I have said at the present time. As a number of complaints affected the Faipules directly, it was felt that there would be no chance of their being put forward through the Faipules. By this time the feeling had got very high, and there was a considerable amount of talk and rumour in existence. As Faumuina and AINU'u had been prevented from going to Savai'i, and as statements had appeared regarding the committee, the Natives of their own volition decided they would send delegates to Lepea, a village on the outskirts of Apia and which is the centre of the Native movement. The object of sending the delegates was for the purpose of ascertaining what was really happening, and also to keep the people in their districts posted as to what the committee was doing and what the Government was doing, and generally to inform them as to the state of affairs in existence. As time went on the number of delegates grew, and when after the Minister's visit in June of this year the European members of the committee were cut off from the Natives by the Minister's letter these delegates took charge of the Native situation themselves, and there and then arose a system of committees, sub-committees, and village committees controlling the whole situation, apart from and cut off from the Citizens Committee. After the second meeting here the feeling of bitterness continued to increase, and it became evident that the people seemed to be unable to leave politics out of the social life or any other form of life. It seemed to be the one subject, and it was breaking the community up and putting the Natives into two camps. Even those who did not desire to take an interest in politics were looked upon as mere rail-sitters. This feeling was brought about largely through the fact that the members of the Mau had no manner of expressing themselves. Statements were made, which were published in the columns of the newspapers, which in many instances were misrepresented, and there was a desire to express themselves and to correct errors, but there was no source through which these errors could be corrected. There was a feeling then that they could not and would not be heard. This feeling was relieved somewhat by the *Samoa Guardian* newspaper, when it came into operation, because it expressed their viewpoint, and so long as the people are getting their viewpoint expressed they become very much easier.

*Judge MacCormick :* When did the *Samoa Guardian* start ? Was it in operation long before the Minister's visit ?

*Mr. Baxter :* I think, about a month, sir. I think there were about two weekly issues published when the Minister arrived. I wish to mention at this stage that this newspaper, although it was started through the European members of the Citizens Committee, is purely a business concern, having on its directorate and on its shareholders list people who are not connected with politics in any way. I am informed that the date of the first issue of the *Samoa Guardian* was the 28th May of this year. The Minister, of course, arrived on the 2nd June. When the Minister was due to arrive preparations were, of course, made for the purpose of interviewing him. As there had been no means of expressing the feelings and of showing that there was really a large body supporting the contentions of the committee, it was decided that members of the Mau should wear a purple badge. There is no significance with respect to the colour, but it was intended to show the extent and support of the committee.

*The Chairman :* The colour was purely accidental ?

*Mr. Baxter :* Yes. However, large numbers of Natives came in, and some came for the usual Birthday celebrations ; but a large number came to hear the decision of the Minister after the interview the Citizens Committee had with him. For the purpose of entertaining these Natives and to keep them quiet, Native quarters were arranged at Lepea. I mention this merely because there seems to be some idea in the minds of some people, as was mentioned by the Minister, that the sports were a counter-attraction to the sports at the park which were held on the 3rd June. The evidence will show that that was not the intention. I wish also to mention another matter : it may be of no importance, but it was mentioned by the Minister, and it is that His Excellency the Administrator gave a ball on the 3rd June, and a number of people were not asked to that ball. I believe the reason