

*The Chairman.*] They were presented to us as a true statement?—Yes, but we never expected them to go so far, really.

*The Chairman :* *Fa'a-Samoa*, I suppose.

*Mr. Baxter.*] You said you approved of the reports. For what purpose did you approve of these reports?—I thought that if we met the Minister these reports could be brought up. One thing would lead to another and be discussed, and other matters which came out could be put in.

You referred to the District Councils, the Samoan District Councils as at present constituted. Are those District Councils representative of the district opinion or not?—I doubt it.

You said that if an English qualification were required of the Samoans who sat on the Legislative Council, the class from which the people could be elected would be limited. Can you say of your own knowledge if it would be very greatly limited?—I do not think it would be very greatly limited.

*Judge MacCormick.*] Who is Mr. Chisholm? I see his name here. Is he a member of your committee?—No, sir.

He raised the question, I understand, of the accuracy of these reports at one of your public meetings, and suggested delay in putting them forward?—Probably that was so. I cannot remember.

*Mr. Meredith.*] There is one more question I would like to ask this witness if I have permission. I understand you signed a previous petition: that was in 1910, to the German authorities?—Yes.

That was practically on the same lines as this?—I would like to know what that was.

Do you remember it?—No; that was a long time ago.

That was, I might perhaps put it, an attack on the German Administration?—Yes, on the matter of retrospective taxes. One year they did not collect taxes, and the second year the taxes had been nearly doubled.

Turn to page 45 of the paper A.—4B. There we read, “If we had self-government here we would ere this have segregated the lepers, which are a real public danger.” That has, I think, been done without having your own government, has it not?—Yes.

“More schools and teachers are required”: I think you will agree that extensive work has been done in educating the people by this Administration?—Probably too extensive.

Have you any complaint on the grounds of insufficient education such as you had in 1910?—The conditions were different then.

On page 46 we read, “It is not our intention to take much cognizance of Native affairs; but we believe that we express the opinion of the majority by saying, if certain diverse wishes of the Natives, which we also feel are just, were considered, then the whole subject of ruling them with even a firmer hand would be easy of accomplishment, and then they would willingly pay a larger share towards the upkeep and prosperity of our local Treasury.” Do you suggest that the intention was to get more taxes from the Natives?—The Native taxes in those days were only 4s. a year; now they are 40s.

“The colonists desire to create a proper waterworks for Apia, to improve its harbour and make it safe, to connect with the world’s cables, and to encourage an opposition steamship line; but under the present system none of these things can be considered. Such great works might be nearer to fulfilment if the colony were self-governing, and especially if the colony might obtain permission to raise a needed loan.” The bulk of those improvements have now been effected?—Yes, I must admit that.

Effected without alteration to self-government?—Yes.

On that occasion were you associated with any of the present petitioners?—Mr. Nelson.

Mr. Nelson is also a joint petitioner with you on this occasion?—Yes.

Are any of the others at present in Samoa?—They all died.

There are only two now alive?—Yes.

*The Chairman.*] Were you ever a nominated member of the Legislative Council?—No.

You joined the Council as an elected member in the year 1924?—That is so.

Do you remember a trip that Mr. Nelson made from Samoa to Sydney, I think, returning in September, 1926?—Yes.

Was there any trouble in the Legislative Council before Mr. Nelson’s trip to Sydney?—I was away at the time.

You do not know, then, whether there was any trouble in the Legislative Council up to September, 1926?—No.

Do you happen to know if up to September, 1926, Mr. Nelson and the Administrator were on very friendly terms?—As far as I know.

You do not know one way or the other?—I remember when Mr. Nelson returned a ball was given him, and the Administrator made a speech.

A very complimentary speech?—Yes.

So these developments must have been quite recent. You say Mr. Nelson returned in September, 1926, and your first public meeting was held on the 15th October, 1926?—Yes.

Can you account at all for that sudden change in the relations between the elected members of the Council and the Administrator?—Your Honour, I was in New Zealand just previous to Mr. Nelson’s return, for about two months. I was interviewed by several of the newspapers, and because of my statements to interviewers I was received on my return in a very hostile manner by the officials.

You returned before Mr. Nelson?—Yes.

We cannot get much further, apparently, than the fact that up to Mr. Nelson’s return he was on good terms with the Administrator, as far as can be judged?—I think they differed in opinion.

Do you always vote with Mr. Nelson? Can you give me an instance on which you voted in a different way from Mr. Nelson?—There was one instance, some time ago. I do not know what it was.