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King George Tupou II

and the Government of

Tonga

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To my father Sione Talo-'o-Lakepa Fulivai
and my mother Salote 'Anau

With humble gratitude

ABSTRACT

On his succession to the throne Tupou II was spoilt, young and ill prepared for kingship. He had to mature, train to be a monarch and reign as one, all at the same time. The enormity of the strain and the pressures which these imposed on him, dramatically disrupted the normal course of his personal development. These, together with his limited capacity for coping with problems, were responsible for the problems and mistakes which riddled the earlier part of his reign. Thus he became vulnerable to the flattery of self-seeking advisors and susceptible to errors of judgement.

To Tupou's misfortune his succession coincided with the most aggressive period of European imperialism in the Pacific. The Anglo-Tongan Agreements forced on him in 1900 and 1905 weakened his position in Tonga. Because he was the monarch it was he who answered personally to the British authorities whenever there was a misunderstanding or dispute between their respective governments. Because he was the most ardent and consistent campaigner against Britain's intrusion into Tongan affairs he therefore became the most frequent target of the British. This was especially intense during the premiership of Mateialona. In fact no other monarch in modern Tonga had suffered as much external pressure as Tupou II.

It is to his credit therefore that he did not then accept Britain's domineering influence, an action which might have resulted in the loss of Tonga's independence.

Once these pressures were relaxed, as they were after Mateialona's resignation, and by which time Tupou II had mastered the skills for kingship, his performance distinctly improved.

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A NOTE ON KINSHIP PRINCIPLES AND TERMINOLOGY¹

In the nuclear family the kinship terminologies are as follows. The husband and wife call each other his or her *mali*. All the children call their father *tamai* and their mother *fa'e*. The father calls his son *foha* and his daughter *'ofefine*. The mother calls both of them her *tama*. An elder brother calls his younger brother *tehina* and the latter calls his older brother *ta'okete*. Each may also refer to the other as *tokoua*, or sibling of the same sex, and both call their sister *tuofefine*. An elder sister calls her younger sister *tehina* and the latter calls her older sister *ta'okete*. Each may also refer to the other as *tokoua*, and both call their brother *tuonga'ane*.

All other kin are classified according to how they are related to the members of the nuclear family and the number of generations they are from their common ancestor. A man's brother is classified as a *mali* to his wife and *tamai* to his children. A woman's sister is classified as a *mali* to her husband and *fa'e* to her children. A man's and a woman's brothers and sister's sons are classified as *fanga tokoua*, and, depending on their age relationship, as *fanga ta'okete* or *phototehina* to their sons, and all are classified as *fanga tuonga'ane* to their daughters.

A man's and a woman's

¹ This section is based on personal experience. For further information see S. Latukefu, 'Church and State in Tonga: The Influence of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionaries on the Political Development of Tonga, 1826-1875', Ph.D. thesis, Australian National University, 1967; J. Martin, *An Account of the Natives of the Tonga Islands in the South Pacific Ocean with an original grammar and vocabulary of their language compiled and arranged from extensive communications of Mr. William Mariner, several years resident in those islands*, 2 vols., London, 1817; E.W. Gifford, *Tongan Society*, Honolulu, B.P. Bishop Museum, Bulletin 61, 1929.

brothers' and sisters' daughters are classified as *fanga tokoua* to their daughters, and, depending on their age relationships, as *fanga ta'okete* or *fototehina* to their daughters, and all are classified as *fanga tuofafine* to their sons. These classificatory brothers will be classificatory fathers to each other's children, and classificatory husbands to each other's wives. Classificatory sisters are classificatory mothers to each other's children and classificatory wives to each other's husbands.

A man's real or classificatory sister is his children's *mehikitanga* and they are her *fanga fakafotu*. A woman's real or classificatory brother is her children's *fa'e tangata* or male mother, and they are his *fanga 'ilamutu*.

The real or classificatory husband of a man's real or classificatory sister, as well as the real or classificatory brother of his wife are his *fanga matapule*. The real or classificatory sister of a woman's real or classificatory husband, as well as the real or classificatory wife of a woman's real or classificatory brother, are her *fanga matapule*. A man's and a woman's real and classificatory parents, as well as their real or classificatory great grandparents, are their children's *fanga kui*, and all the *fanga kui* call their real or classificatory grandchildren or great grandchildren their *fanga makapuna*.

When two kinsmen wish to work out their kinship relationship they normally start from their common origin, and if they are the same generation away from this person then they are classificatory brothers to each other. The younger of them will be the *tehina* of the older. If, however, the younger is from an elder line of descent from their common ancestor, the older classificatory brother may call him his *ta'okete*. When individuals cannot trace a part or even the whole of their actual genealogical connections then they normally use

their age relationship to determine what kinship terminology they use towards each other. Thus if one kinsman is considerably younger than another they will usually call each other *kui* and *mokopuna*. Usually, however, when genealogical connections are so remote or are only believed but not known, people call each other *kainga* or relative.

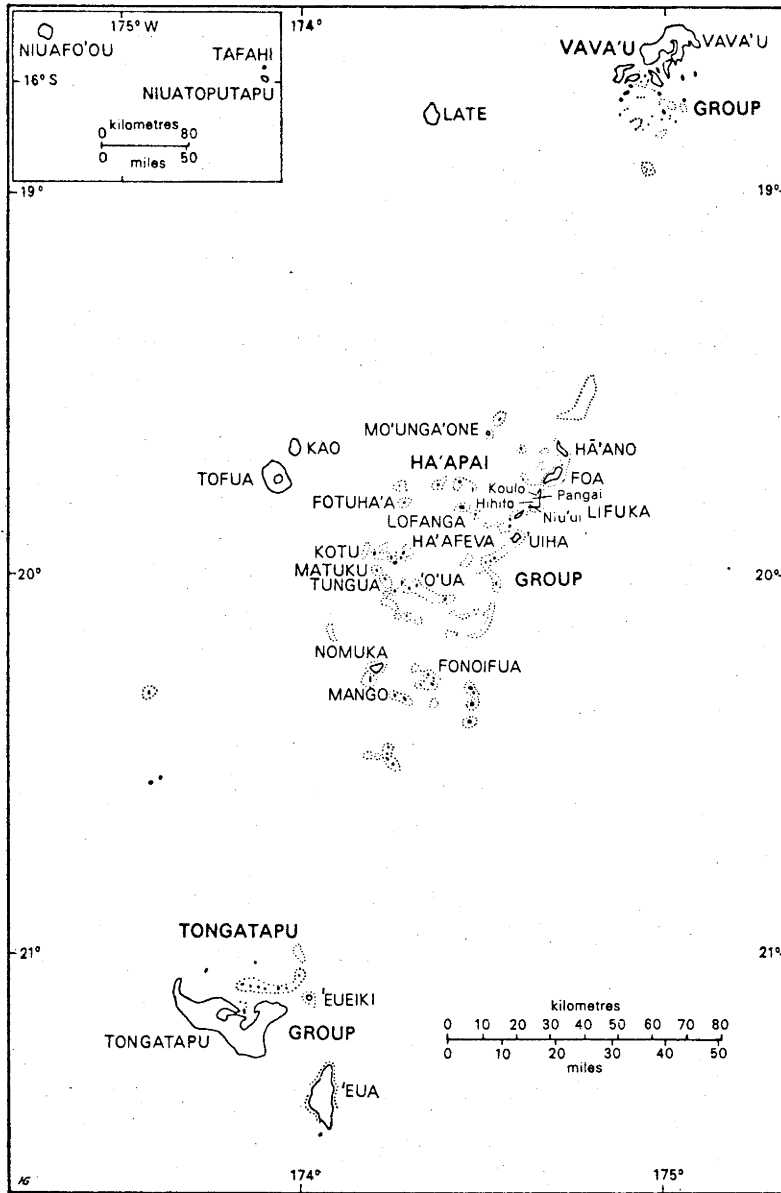
IX
GLOSSARY

(See also Note on Kinship Terminology)

' <i>api</i>	a household or the land it occupies
' <i>eiki</i>	a chief
<i>fahu</i>	a man's sister's daughter or son
<i>fakakuata</i>	quarterly meeting
<i>fakataha</i>	meeting
<i>fono</i>	assemblage of the people to be addressed by the chiefs
<i>ha'a</i> class	a loose grouping of genealogically related chiefs and their people
<i>hou'eiki</i>	chiefs.
<i>kainga</i>	a socio-political unit headed by a matapule or usually, a noble
<i>kautaha</i>	trading company
<i>kava</i>	drink made from the root of <i>Piper methysticum</i>
<i>matapule</i>	attendant to a titled chief (could hold an estate)
<i>moheofa</i>	principal wife of the Tu'i Tonga
<i>ngaahi</i>	several, much, as in <i>ngaahi veifua</i> (preparation of food in recognition of the mother giving birth to a child), <i>ngaahi pae</i> (ritual preparation of the newly born child's bed), <i>ngaahi namoa</i> (preparation of coconut milk for the child), <i>ngaahi ha'unga</i> (ritual presentation of food to those who have crossed the sea)
<i>papalangi</i>	Europeans
<i>tapu</i>	taboo
<i>tu'a</i>	inferior, commoner
<i>tu'i</i>	ruler or king
<i>tutupakanava</i>	vigil (for the dead or on festive occasions) at which lights are lit

Note:

1. *Koe Kasete* and *Tonga Government Gazette* are the Tongan and English versions of the official gazette. Whichever is cited at any point is the version consulted.
2. Currencies have been converted for ease of comparison to their equivalents at the time in pounds sterling.



Map of Tonga

(from S. Latukefu, *Church and State in Tonga*,
Canberra, 1974)

CHAPTER 1
THE SOCIO-POLITICAL SYSTEM AND THE
RISE OF TAUFA'AHAU

For the non-Tongan reader particularly, a description of the Tongan kinship relationships, customs, social and political organization, forming as they do the context for Tongan political behaviour, is essential to understanding the subject of this work.¹ This is especially so since the political system in operation in 1893 was not indigenous; its existence in Tonga was by then only eighteen years old, and the personnel who had to operate it were only partly in command of the principles and skills of Western government. Only those aspects of Tongan culture that are directly relevant to this thesis, however, will be described.

The structure and working of Tongan society are complex and are based on principles of kinship and rank. The husband is superior to his wife. The father is superior to his children. The mother, although respected, has a free and even indulgent relationship with her children. The older children are superior to the younger ones of the same sex. The sister is superior to her brother, and is called his *fahu*. The eldest sister, especially if she is also the eldest child in the family, is a greater *fahu* than any other sister over all their brothers.

The relationship between grandchildren and their grandparents is free and relaxed. The rank relationship

¹ See also Latukefu, *op.cit.*; Martin, *op.cit.*; E.E.V. Collocott, Collection of Tongan manuscripts, 1845-1929, Mitchell Library, Sydney.

with kin outside the nuclear family is derived from that within it. A classificatory husband is superior to his classificatory wife, and a classificatory father is superior to his classificatory children. The children of an older brother are superior to those of a younger one, and the children of an older sister are superior to those of a younger one. As a sister is superior to her brother, her children rank higher than do those of an older brother to their younger brother's children. A classificatory sister is superior to a classificatory brother. As a logical extension of the sister's superiority over her brother, she is also superior to his children as well as those of her classificatory brothers. For this reason, a *mehikitanga* is always the *fahu* of her *fanga fakafotu*, and a sister is always a greater *fahu* than a brother over their kinship inferiors. As a logical extension of the wife's inferiority to her husband, and of the children's free relationship with their mother, her brother and his children, as well as her classificatory brother and his children, are inferior to her children. Owing to a combination of the husband-wife and sister-brother relationship, a husband is superior to the real and classificatory brothers of his wife, and inferior to the real or classificatory husband of his sister. For the same reasons, a woman is superior to the wives of her real and classificatory brothers, and inferior to the husbands of her husband's real and classificatory sisters. The general superiority of a man's kin over his children, as manifest in these relationships, does not fully apply to the children of titled and landed chiefs. These children have a free relationship with the people in their father's estate, except for those who are his very close kinship superiors.

Again deriving from the system of rank within the nuclear family, all the members of any kinship position can be graded into their order of importance. Thus the eldest son of a man's father's

eldest sister is his most highly ranked classificatory brother. He is also the most highly ranked classificatory husband of his wife and classificatory father of his children. The eldest son of a man's father's eldest brother is his principal classificatory brother, the principal classificatory husband of his wife and the principal classificatory father of his children. A man's least important classificatory brother, and therefore the least important classificatory husband to his wife and classificatory father to his children, is the youngest son of his mother's mother's youngest brother. The daughter of a man's father's eldest sister is his most highly ranked classificatory sister, the most highly ranked *matapule* of his wife and the most highly ranked *mehikitanga* of his children. A man's sister is the second most important *matapule* of his wife and *mehikitanga* of his children. The daughter of a man's mother's mother's youngest brother is his least important classificatory sister and the least important of his classificatory sisters to his wife. Although she is a *mehikitanga* to his children, she is a relatively unimportant one.

The eldest daughter of a woman's father's eldest sister is her most highly ranked classificatory sister, the most highly ranked classificatory wife of her husband, and the most highly ranked mother of her children. A woman's eldest sister is the principal classificatory wife of her husband and the principal classificatory mother of her children. A woman's younger sister is an inferior classificatory wife to her husband and an inferior classificatory mother to her children. The most inferior classificatory wife to her husband and classificatory mother to her children, however, is the youngest daughter of her mother's mother's youngest brother. The eldest son of a woman's mother's father's eldest sister is her most highly ranked classificatory brother. Except for the youngest

son of her mother's mother's youngest brother, who is her most inferior classificatory brother, all her other classificatory brothers are generally of the same degree of inferior relationship to her. The most inferior of her brothers to her husband and to her children is her youngest one.

The superior-inferior relationship in the kinship system means that the former has authority over the person, property and services of the latter. It also carries with it the idea that the superior is *tapu* to the inferior. This means that the person and property of the superior is almost sacred to the inferior, and can only be handled or used by the latter with the permission of the former and with the greatest sense of deference. Thus, unless specifically instructed to do so, it is *tapu* for a wife to cut her husband's hair, a child his or her father's hair, a brother his sister's hair, a younger brother his older brother's hair, and a younger sister her older sister's hair. In the nuclear family, the most serious *ngaahi tapu*, in their order of importance, are those between the husband and his wife. The most stringent kinship *tapu*, however, is that between the most highly ranked *mehikitanga* and her most inferior *fakafotu*.

A special area of the superior-inferior kinship relationship is that between the *fahu* and his or her kinship inferiors. All the other positions of kinship superiority carry, not just the powers of their rank, but also responsibility for their inferiors. Thus a husband must look after his wife, a father his children, an older brother his younger brother, and an older sister her younger sister. In theory, however, a *fahu* is entirely a position of privilege. Thus a sister may command her *tuonga'ane*, *fa'etangata* and *fanga fakafotu* to marry her choice of a spouse, give up their

best pigs or mats, or make her *'umu*. In theory, when a *fahu* makes such commands she is giving her kinship inferiors the privilege of serving her, and that is in itself their compensation. If she compensates them in any other way, as is normally the case and most probably the reason why the *fahu* system still exists, she is then considered to have been extra generous.

As is reflected in the kinship terminology, kinship connections automatically establish ties which all other social connections must work to establish. Thus, normally, kinsfolk automatically have a sense of belonging to each other, and of having mutual rights and responsibilities towards each other, which non-kin have to cultivate. The rank relationship within a kinship group, however, makes for greater solidarity between some of its members and greater tension between others. Thus an individual almost always has a more intimate and affectionate relationship with his mother's kinsfolk, and a less intimate and more tense relationship with those of his father. He is most intimate with his mother's sister and her children, and with his mother's parents. There is usually tension between agnatic brothers and or sisters and very little between uterine ones. There is also usually tension between a *fahu* and his or her kinship inferiors.

The basic social unit is the household or *'api* consisting of father, mother, their children and various relatives. The households of brothers as well as those of their father's brother's sons unite to form a group which has no distinct name, and which is headed by an *'ulumotu'a*, who is the eldest son of the eldest of the brothers from whom the heads of the households are descended. This group is primarily responsible for looking after the daily requirements of its members. On the basis of descent from a distant ancestor a number of these groups unite to form a *kainga*,

which is headed by a titled and landed chief. It is the residential unit that forms a village and its chief is the effective political figure in Tongan society. Consequently his *fahu* is of greater importance than that of other men in his *kainga*. On the basis of descent from a more remote ancestor, a number of these *ngaahi kainga* unite to form a lineage or *ha'a*. The head of a *ha'a* and the holder of its principal title is a direct descendant of the eldest male line of descent from the common ancestor. He is socially very highly ranked, and politically very powerful, and his *fahu* is of exceptionally high rank.²

According to tradition, the most highly ranked *ngaahi ha'a*³ were those that originated directly from the six sons of the sky god Tangaloa 'Eitumatupu'a and earth women. His **oldest son** 'Aho'eitu

² Unless otherwise acknowledged this Chapter up to this point is based on personal experience.

³ Information on the pre-European history of *ngaahi ha'a* was derived from *Koe Boobooi*, vol. 2, nos.1-6, Nuku'alofa, 1875; E.E.V. Collocott, *Koe Ta'u Teau, Koe fai ma'ae Kau Helohelo*, London, n.d., and *op.cit.*; Malupo, 'Elia Ngaahi Talatupu'a faka-Tonga, unpublished Ms. included with Collocott collection, Mitchell Library, Sydney; J. Havea, 'Notes on history and customs of Tonga,' unpublished Ms. included with Collocott collection, Mitchell Library, Sydney; A.H. Wood, *A History and Geography of Tonga*, Nuku'alofa, 1932; Gifford, *op.cit.* Recent examples of occasions on which the *ngaahi ha'a* have based ceremonial procedure on oral tradition are the passing away of Her Majesty, the late Queen Salote Tupou III and the installation of her son as Tupou IV.

the earliest dynasty in Tonga. His title, *Tu'i Tonga* or King of Tonga, was therefore the first royal title. The

lineage he gave rise to, the *Sina'e Tu'i Tonga*, therefore became superior to all others except that which originated from his sister. From Tangaloa's younger son, probably but not certainly named Talafale, descended the next highest ranked lineage, *Ha'a Talafale*, whose titled head was the *Tu'ipelehake*. Probably because of

their semi-divine origin, he and the *Tu'i Tonga* were considered to be God's representatives on earth. The various *ngaahi Tu'i Tonga* sent their kinsmen to be chiefs and subordinate rulers of the various parts of the land, and they in return owed the *Tu'i Tonga* allegiance, service and customary contributions.

The eldest, and usually uterine, sister of the *Tu'i Tonga* held the non-political and *fahu* position of *Tu'i Tonga Fefine* or female *Tu'i Tonga*. Her rank was so high that she normally married outside Tonga and usually to Fijian chiefs. The *Tu'i Tonga* Nanasipau'u, for example, married the Fijian chief *Tu'ilakepa Latunipulu*.⁴ The sons of the *ngaahi Tu'i Tonga Fefine* by these marriages gave rise to what in theory was the most highly ranked lineage of all, *Ha'a Fale Fisi*. The most highly ranked person and *fahu* position in the land, however, was the *Tu'i Tonga Fefine's* daughter, who was the *Tamaha*. Such was her superiority that even the representative of God, the *Tu'i Tonga*, demonstrated his social and kinship inferiority to her by performing a ceremonial act called the *moe moe* in her presence.⁵

⁴ Wood, *op.cit.*, p.68.

⁵ For an explanation of *moe moe*, see B. Thomson, *The Diversions of a Prime Minister*, Edinburgh, 1894, p.293n.

Out of the kinship system of rank have emerged the social classes of Tonga. The highest class consisted of the three Royal Houses in their kinship order of rank. In the second half of the nineteenth century, and as a result of the mastery of the then Tu'i Kanokupolu Tupou I over the whole of Tonga, the two senior Houses began to decline in importance.⁶ By the end of the century they had almost completely joined the other titled chiefs and the senior members of their *ngaahi kainga* in the second class, commonly known as the *hou'eiki*. All the low ranked kinsfolk of these upper classes formed the third and the largest class, that of the commoners. Below them were slaves, who were prisoners of war. In 1862, however, after they had been liberated by Tupou I, the slaves too had joined the ranks of the commoners.

Like the kinship groups the social classes also had superior-inferior relationships to each other. Thus the Royal Houses were superior to all and the *hou'eiki* superior to the commoners. The rank relationship between classes often subdued but did not completely suppress those between kinsfolk. In the very few marriages where the wives are of considerably higher birth than their husbands, for example, the distance between their social ranks is great enough for the principle of the upper classes' superiority to the lower to dominate that of the husband's superiority to his wife.

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See Latukefu, *op.cit.*, Chapters 2 and 5.

The theoretical superiority of the Tu'i Tonga, however, did not protect him from dangers such as assassination by ambitious chiefs. Some time in the middle of the fifteenth century the Tu'i Tonga Takalaua, like some of his predecessors before him, was assassinated.⁷ His eldest son, Kau'ulufonua Fekai, after deciding to retain only the rank and privileges of his position, delegated the tasks of government to his younger brother, Mo'ungamotu'a, and appointed him to the second royal title *Tu'i Ha'a Takalaua*.⁸ From this king arose the second royal lineage, *Ha'a Takalaua*. As the working ruler and younger brother of the Tu'i Tonga, the Tu'i Ha'a Takalaua was also made the chief primarily responsible for providing service and supplies for the Tu'i Tonga. Some time in the beginning of the seventeenth century, however, the sixth Tu'i Ha'a Takalaua, Mo'ungatonga, decided that he too would give up the responsibilities of kingship and retain only its rank and privileges. He therefore delegated

7 Oral tradition records the assassination; E.E.V. Collocott, in an unpublished manuscript in the Collocott collection, 'Taufa'ahau, a King and his Kingdom. A short history of Tonga in the nineteenth century', pp.10-15, and others have, from previously compiled genealogies and a few recorded dates, arrived at these conclusions. Captain James Cook, for example, met, in 1777, a chief named Pau. The genealogy of the Tu'i Tonga shows him to have been the 36th holder of that title. Similarly missionaries recorded the deaths, in 1799 of the last Tu'i Ha'a Takalaua and in 1845 of Tu'i Kanokupolu.

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On the question of the dynasties, see note 3 of this chapter.

all his responsibilities to his son, Ngata, and appointed him to the third and most junior royal title, *Tu'i Kanokupolu*. From Ngata arose the third royal lineage, *Ha'a Tu'i Kanokupolu*, as well as the other principal lineages of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, *Ha'a Ngata Motu'a*, *Ha'a Havea* and *Ha'a Ngata Tupu*.

From the reign of the fourth *Tu'i Kanokupolu Mataeleha'amea*, some time in the beginning of the eighteenth century, the chief sister of the *Tu'i Kanokupolu*, who was usually his eldest sister or occasionally his agnatic sister with the most highly ranked mother, had always become the principal wife or *moheofo* of the *Tu'i Tonga*.⁹ The result was that thereafter the *ngaahi Tu'i Tonga* were the sons of the sisters of *ngaahi Tu'i Kanokupolu*, and therefore the direct *fahu* of the political rulers of the land. In this way, the social and kinship superiority which the *Tu'i Tonga* had derived from his semi-divinity and semi-religious role had by the nineteenth century been immensely reinforced. The *Tu'i Kanokupolu* had also gained additional rank and prestige from these marriages, because his *fahu* was now none other than the highest title in the land. The title of the *Tu'i Ha'a Takalaua*, however, probably because of the loss of its political power, became of secondary importance to the *Tu'i Tonga* as a royal title; moreover the rank-reinforcing kinship relationship that the *Tu'i Kanokupolu* and *Tu'i Tonga* had been quick to establish with each other, lapsed some time towards the end of the eighteenth century after the death of its sixteenth holder, *Mulikiha'amea*. *Ha'a Takalaua*, however, did not lose its rank or its collective strength and influence, and the heirs of the *Tu'i Ha'a Takalaua* continued to be powerful.

⁹ Gifford, *op.cit.*, p.60 gives a list of the *ngaahi moheofo*.

through the influence of his paternal grandfather's aged brother, the then Tu'i Kanokupolu Aleamotu'a, who had already been converted to Christianity by the Wesleyan missionaries, Taufa'ahau had been almost completely converted too. After proving to his satisfaction that the Tongan gods were powerless, he destroyed all their representatives and dwelling places at Ha'apai, and in 1830, he and his wife Lupe Pau'u were baptized by the Reverend John Thomas and given the Christian names Siaosi (George) and Salote (Charlotte). From then on Taufa'ahau became the champion of the Wesleyan faith.

Owing to his persuasion and to his defeat of the chiefs who had risen against the *Tu'i Vava'u*, Finau 'Ulukalala IV, Taufa'ahau succeeded in converting that scion of heathenism to Christianity and in establishing his military superiority over Vava'u. Consequently, when Finau died in 1833, the chiefs of Vava'u elected Taufa'ahau to succeed him as the Tu'i Vava'u. With almost two thirds of the whole Tongan archipelago as well as the largest and most successful army under his control, Taufa'ahau was by far the most powerful chief in the land. In 1837 and 1840, when the heathen *Ha'a Havea* chiefs of Tongatapu rose against the ineffective Aleamotu'a, he immediately sent to Taufa'ahau for help. The result was that Taufa'ahau and his northern warriors defeated and humbled the Tongatapu rebels so convincingly that Christianity was finally firmly established in that island. So, too, was Taufa'ahau's military superiority. Not surprisingly therefore, when Aleamotu'a died in 1845, Taufa'ahau became the Tu'i Kanokupolu. He then adopted Siaosi Tupou as his name; thereafter he was called King George by the Europeans, and Tupou by the Tongans. As the first Tu'i Kanokupolu of that name, he has come to be most commonly known as Tupou I.

Before becoming the Tu'i Kanokupolu, Tupou I, with the guidance of the missionaries, had begun to use Western political institutions alongside the traditional ones. In 1839 he established a central government for Vava'u¹² consisting of himself as King, a governor as his chief representative, a chief judge and two judges. Its principal function was to see that the newly formulated Vava'u Code was observed. The head chiefs of the *ngaahi kainga* still governed their own people but their rights and jurisdiction over them were reduced. They were, for example, forbidden to give away or enslave any person, or to forcefully take their people's property. After his succession Tupou I was determined that his rule should be effective throughout Tonga and that the chiefs should not obstruct it. Owing probably to the strength of his Christian conviction, to continued guidance from the missionaries, and to his own admiration for the skills and knowledge that had made the Europeans superior to the Tongans in many ways, Tupou appears to have felt that political Westernization was in fact the key to establishing good, stable, and humane government. And when the European powers, holding that the Pacific islands had no stable and civilized governments which could properly look after the interests of the Europeans and their own people, began to annex them, Tupou I was convinced that only the possession of a Westernized system of government could save his country's precious independence.

¹² Vava'u Code, 16 May 1838.

In 1859, he established the foundation for a national parliament by starting the system of holding meetings or *ngaahi fakataha* with all his chiefs.¹³ Although still dominated by the King (for example, he overruled his chiefs' objections in 1862 and went ahead and liberated the slaves), these meetings began to carry out legislative and often judicial functions. By 1874, they were held at quarterly intervals (*Fakakuata*), and administrations similar to that of Vava'u had also been set up at Pangai and Nuku'alofa.¹⁴ In the same year, owing mainly to the efforts of the Wesleyan missionary and great friend to His Majesty, the Reverend Shirley Baker, Tupou I and his chiefs were supplied with the basic requirement for a civilized government, a constitution. At the *Great Fakataha* held in Nuku'alofa in 1875, Tupou I promulgated the Constitution of Tonga.¹⁵

The Government this set up was a constitutional monarchy. The King, Tupou I, was above all except the law, but his signature was necessary before bills could become law. He had the prerogative of nominating ministers to head government departments, and governors to be his chief representatives and the chief administrators in the outlying island groups. Guided by a new law of succession, he also had the prerogative of appointing the landed and titled chiefs, who were from then on known as nobles. In 1880 Tupou I increased the number of nobles from twenty to thirty.¹⁶

¹³ Collocott, 'Taufa'ahau, a King and his Kingdom', *op.cit.*, p.108.

¹⁴ *Koe Boobooi*, vol 2, nos 1 and 2, March and April 1875.

¹⁵ *Koe Fakalahi ki he Boobooi*, vol 2, no 6, September 1875.

¹⁶ *Tonga Government Gazette*, vol 2, no. 6, 10 November 1880.

Immediately below the King was a Privy Council. This was composed of the chief minister or Premier, all the other ministers and the governors, and only His Majesty or his personal representative could preside over it. Subject to the final approval of Parliament, it had the power to authorize interim budgets and make legislation when the House was not in session. It also functioned as the High Court and as the ultimate authority over the Civil Service. Directly supervising the Civil Service was a Cabinet comprising all the members of the Privy Council except the King, and headed by the Premier. The Legislative Assembly was composed of the Cabinet, the twenty nobles, and twenty representatives of the people who were elected by adult male franchise. It had the power to authorize the budget until its next session and to enact laws. It also had the power to impeach Ministers and civil servants. The judiciary comprised a Supreme Court and circuit court to which justices were appointed by the King. There were also police courts, the justices for which were appointed by Parliament. The Constitution declared Tupou's eldest son, Tevita 'Unga, to be his heir to the throne, and established the principle of primogeniture as the determinator of succession to all noble titles and to all land. Also passed at the same Fakataha was a more comprehensive code of laws.

The new political system incorporated elements of traditional political life, such as the retention of political domination of the Tu'i Kanokupolu and the aristocracy. It also, without a doubt, laid the foundation for a degree of administrative efficiency and political stability which had never been achieved under the traditional system. However, since it was the product of alien cultures, it was essentially foreign in nature, and it was therefore

destined, as is still evident today, not to operate in Tonga as fully as it did in its home societies. Although Tupou I was the Tu'i Kanokupolu, the provision for his heirs to succeed him had no support from a tradition which considered the title, the right to succeed to it, as well as the right to elect people to it, to belong to the principal chiefs of Ha'a Tu'i Kanokupolu. There was bound to be opposition from at least some of these chiefs to Tupou I's retention of the title for his descendants. In traditional political theory, the Tu'i Kanokupolu was the law and he had the right to dictate to the people on political matters. Now his rights and his powers were limited and defined by a code of law. Under these circumstances, it was highly unlikely that any Tongan King would ever rule only as laid down by the Constitution, for his wider powers and obligations originating from his own culture were integral parts of his ideas of kingship. The chiefs understood the political superiority and the direct authority of the Tu'i Kanokupolu, but not that of a written code of laws carried out by a Civil Service. This was especially so if any civil servant with whom they were dealing with was a minor chief or a commoner. Since there is no area of Tongan life where the ideas of kinship rights and obligations have no place, the idea of a Government, a code of laws and public property as something independent of the principles of kinship behaviour was too alien to succeed without straining social relations. Besides, knowledge of the mechanics of the new political system needed a long time to be learned.

The rise and policies of Tupou I effectively reduced the prestige and privileges of the chiefs, and their traditional rights to their *ngaahi kainga*.¹⁷ Even the Tu'i Tonga Laufilitonga dwindled in importance to the extent where he surrendered his ceremonial rights to Tupou I and, when he died in 1865, the title of Tu'i Tonga died with him. Tupou I, however, did not find it as easy to suppress the most important of the chiefs who resisted him, the capable and ambitious Tungi Halatuituia whose status and descent made him a traditionally acceptable alternative or succeeding Tu'i Kanokupolu to Tupou I. His father's father was Mulikiha'amea and he was therefore the head of Ha'a Takalaua and the heir to its principal title. Mulikiha'amea, on the other hand, like his father Maealiuaki before him, held the Tu'i Kanokupolu title until he gave it up and remained as the Tu'i Takalaua. Furthermore, Maealiuaki was the elder agnatic brother of the Tu'i Kanokupolu Mumui, who was Tupou I's great great grandfather and the person from whom he had derived his right to be the Tu'i Kanokupolu. Thus not only was Tungi eligible for election to this title, but in fact, through his seniority of descent he had a greater right to it than Tupou I.

Tungi's strong political claims were further enhanced by his kinship superiority over Tupou I. His mother's mother, Fononga Va'inga, was the full sister of Tupou I's father's father, Tuku'aho, so that Tungi was *fahu* over Tupou I. It was probably in recognition of this, and as a politically calculated move, that Tupou I had his adopted daughter, 'Ana Seini Tupou Veihoa married to Tungi in 1853.¹⁸

¹⁷ For further comments on these see Latukefu, *op.cit.*, Chapter 1.

¹⁸ J. Thomas, Journal, 1853.

However, since 'Ana Seini, through an entirely female line of descent, was the great granddaughter of the Tamaha Latufuipeka.

This marriage served only to reinforce Tungi's kinship superiority over Tupou I. And when their son Siaosi Tuku'aho was born in 1858, it was not surprising that he should grow up feeling that he had higher rank and a better claim to the throne than Tupou I's descendants. Besides, Tungi owned the powerful and second part of the ancient town of Mu'a, Tatakamotonga, as well as a great part of the more populous district of Hahake, the traditional Tongatapu opponents to the Hihifo-based Tu'i Kanokupolu.

In 1862, when Tupou I proposed to free the slaves, Tungi opposed it as but another move to strip the chiefs of their privileges, and of their source of labour and livelihood. In November 1875, when Tupou I declared the son of Aleamotu'a Henele Ma'afu, and his legitimate descendants the successors to his legal heirs, Tungi led the opposition in Parliament, arguing that Ma'afu had accepted office under the Colonial Government of Fiji and had sworn an oath of allegiance to Queen Victoria.¹⁹ In 1881 Tungi openly defied the King by supporting the Mu'a Parliament, a movement started in his estate for the purpose of formulating formal complaints against Baker's land policy. Although Baker's biographer claims that Tungi did not actually encourage the movement before September 1881²⁰ when it was already well under way, it would have been almost impossible for it to have developed at all without signs of approval from Tungi.

¹⁹ *Koe Boobooi*, vol. 2, no.6, September and October 1875.

²⁰ N. Rutherford, 'Shirley Baker and the Kingdom of Tonga', Ph.D thesis, Australian National University, 1966, p.294.

The leaders of the movement were his relatives and attendants, and his friend Robert Hanslip; thus Tungi must have learned about its beginnings very soon after it started. Since it was his custom to impose both his will and the law upon his people, as for instance by personally beating those who had not paid their taxes, it is confirmation of his approval that he did not try and stop the movement. Indeed, it is highly likely that his people, fearing the consequences of his wrath, would have sought out his opinion well beforehand. And as Tungi was becoming older, his son, as in the cases of the attempted assassination of Baker in 1887, and the subjection of the King in 1890,²¹ continued the tradition of opposition to Tupou.

The greatest blow to Tungi's ambitions was his exclusion from the line of succession to the throne. In 1875 Tungi did not get the Premiership either, and he was bypassed again in 1880, when Tupou chose Baker to succeed Tevita 'Unga. According to tradition, however, owing to the deaths of Ma'afu and his son Siale'ataongo without legitimate issue, in 1888 the King gave their place in the line of succession to the throne to Tungi and his legitimate descendants. Although Tungi and Tuku'aho were greatly appeased by this and were theoretically indebted to His Majesty for it, they also felt the King was doing only what both circumstances and their position demanded. Besides, with the Crown so much closer to their reach, their ambitions were likely to be fired even further.

21

Thomson, *The Diversions of a Prime Minister*, p.14 and Chapter 1 *passim*.

CHAPTER 2

EARLY CHILDHOOD

On 18 June 1874, during the gathering at Vava'u for the historical *Fakataha* of that year, a son and heir was born to the Tu'ipelehake Fatafehi Toutai and his wife Princess Fusipala. Since there was no distinct female line of descent from any Tu'ipelahake,¹ and Fatafehi had neither a sister nor a daughter, the infant boy occupied the rare and supreme rank of having no *fahu*. Through his father's father's mother, Tupou Veiongo, who was the agnatic sister of Tupou I's father's father Tuku'aho, he was of superior descent to Tupou I. Because he was the son of Salote's only child, he was therefore the *fahu* of all Tupou I's sons and their descendants. The most important of these were Tevita 'Unga and his legitimate children and legal heirs, Princes Uelingatoni Ngu Tupoumalohi and Laifone, and their only full sister Fusipala. As the son of Fusipala, the newly born boy's *fahu* over the heirs² of Tupou I was therefore doubly reinforced. As the grandchild of 'Uluvalu and of the Tu'i Vava'u 'Ulukalala and Tupou I, he was a great chief of Ha'afuluhao. And as the grandchild of Tupouto'a and Tupou I, and as a descendant through the female line of highly ranked and powerful chiefs such as Malupo and Tu'iha'angana, he was also a great chief of Ha'apai. Given his descent, the new royal infant was, without a doubt, Tupou I's most highly ranked grandchild. Probably in recognition of this, and perhaps also as an expression of special affection for him, he was named Siaosi Taufa'ahau after the Great Tupou himself.

¹ See Appendix, genealogy of Tu'ipelehake line.

² See Appendix, descendants of Tupou I.

Other circumstances associated with Taufa'ahau's birth enhanced his social standing even further. Owing to the disappearance of the titles of the Tu'i Tonga and Tu'i Ha'a Takalaua, that of the Tu'ipelehake, and therefore the position of his son, rose in importance. Since the heirs of the Tu'i Tonga had lost to those of the Tu'ipelehake their status as the husbands and the sons of the principal daughters of the Tu'i Kanokupolu and his heirs, Taufa'ahau gained much of the rank and prestige formerly enjoyed by the House of the Tu'i Tonga. Furthermore, he was also the near kin of the men who held the key posts in the new hierarchy of government employment. Tupou I was King and Tevita 'Unga was the Crown Prince and Premier ³ until his death in 1879.⁴ Ngu succeeded him as Crown Prince and was also the Governor of Vava'u and Ha'apai until his death in 1885,⁵ Laifone succeeded him to all those positions until he too died in 1889.⁶ And Fatafehi was the Governor of Ha'apai⁷ from then until 1897.

³ *Koe Boobooi*, vol.II, no.6, September and October 1875.

⁴ Certificate of Death, David Unga, Auckland, 23 December 1879, In Tonga Government papers, Premier's Office, Nuku'alofa.

⁵ J.W. Watkin, Nuku'alofa to G. Brown, Sydney, 3 April 1885, Methodist Overseas Mission Correspondence, Sundry letters, MOM, Mitchell Library, Sydney.

⁶ *Fiji Times*, 5 July 1890.

⁷ *Koe Boobooi*, vol. 2, no.6, September and October 1875.

The birth of Taufa'ahau would therefore have been celebrated in a manner appropriate to his rank; the presence of the great chiefs at Vava'u at the time was additional guarantee that the celebrations would be on a grand scale. The pigs for the *ngaahi veifua* for his mother must have been numerous and of royal size. So must have been the *ngaahi pae* and *ngaahi namoa* for the royal baby. It must have also been impressive to witness the reception, distribution and exchange of the gifts to Taufa'ahau and his parents, the conduct of which would have been a public demonstration of how his ancestry was traceable to all the major and highly ranked lineages of Tonga.

Shortly after his first birthday, the Constitution endowed Taufa'ahau with a status which had never before included the *fahu* of the Tu'i Kanokupolu. Under the new law of succession, he was, after Tevita 'Unga and his three legitimate children, fifth in line of succession to the throne.⁸ It was unlikely that Taufa'ahau would ever wear the Crown of Tonga, but he was at least eligible to do so .

Taufa'ahau grew up as the ceremonially superior chief and *fahu* he was born to be. In early childhood, he must have realized the unusually privileged position he and his parents occupied. The most chiefly vocabulary in Tonga was used only towards his father and Tupou. When other chiefs were in Fatafehi's presence, they exercised towards him all the deference and restraints that were normally accorded by commoners to the chiefs.⁹ Even at the then highest *kava* ceremony in the land, that of Tupou, Fatafehi's special rank was still acknowledged. Unlike that of all the other participants, his *kava* was served to him unannounced, and he alone had the right to eat his *fono*, or food given during a *kava* ceremony, there and then.

⁸ See Appendix, descendants of Tupou I.

⁹ Thomson, *The Diversions of a Prime Minister*, p. 45.

In private and even more so in public, Tevita 'Unga, Ngu, Laifone, Malupo and Tu'i Ha'angana, among other high chiefs, would have observed their *tu'a* relationship to him, by indulging his wishes and by yielding their *fono* to him at a *kava* ceremony.

With the social and material advantages his background provided, Taufa'ahau must have grown up in an environment free of responsibilities and tailored to oblige his wishes. At his home in Lifuka, where he spent most of his first eighteen years,¹⁰ he would have had attendants to do as he bid and to anticipate his desires. For him to perform any manual tasks would have been unnecessary, as well as degrading to his royal dignity. He would have also been supplied with playmates who, as a rule, would have observed his rank even when they were at play. Taufa'ahau's whims would have almost always been obeyed, his abilities exaggerated, and his faults humoured. When his only full brother, 'Alipate Halakilangi, died in 1883, leaving him the only legitimate child of the House of Tupou, all attention would have been focused on him alone.

With the assistance of compliments from society, Taufa'ahau would have realized early in his childhood that he was well built and handsome. He also soon displayed his great keenness for sports, especially for boat racing. Ha'apai, the most numerous and most widespread group of islands in Tonga, was most suitable for the development of this interest. There extensive sailing was necessary and sailing vessels and skilled seamen were plentiful. Besides, Fatafehi himself, as well as Ngu and Laifone, loved sailing and boat racing, and they were the owners of a number of vessels.

¹⁰ *Fiji Times*, 4 January 1890.

With these advantages, Taufa'ahau must have raced numerous vessels both within the Lifuka harbour and between the islands of Ha'apai. Although he was never the fastest at the numerous boat races he later staged, he retained his love for the sport throughout the whole of his life.

Owing to his strong genealogical and historical ties with Ha'apai, as well as his domicile there, Taufa'ahau identified himself much more closely with that group than with any other part of Tonga. He was most at ease at Ha'apai, and when he became King he took his attendants and former playmates with him to become his courtiers in Nuku'alofa. Like his predecessor he spent much of his time each year at Ha'apai, especially if he was in conflict with the chiefs at Nuku'alofa. To date he has been the only Tupou to build a palace at Ha'apai.

Other factors of Taufa'ahau's early childhood also significantly contributed to the formation of his attitudes. Prevalent at the time was the great value placed on the possession of European goods, the cultivation of European habits, and the wearing of European clothes. In fact to succeed in becoming *fakapapalangi* or European-like was synonymous with high birth, sophistication and civilization. Both Ngu and Laifone were known for their *fakapapalangi*. The same was also true of Fusipala and even more so of Fatafehi who, throughout his life, was always susceptible to European ways and opinions.¹¹ At the *Fakakuata*

¹¹ Thomson, *op.cit.* p.61.

held at Ha'apai in 1875, for example, he declared that if European men wore shirts when they went fishing, then Tongan men should be compelled by law to do the same.¹² The superficial concept of Europeans these attitudes reflected (and which Taufa'ahau inherited) left him, therefore, like most of his contemporaries, ill equipped for handling the realities of European contact. The deliberate imitation of European ways, reflecting a re-examination of many aspects of the Tongan way of life, and even more the fact that most Tongans were then so limited in their understanding of European culture, made it a very confused period.

Taufa'ahau grew up when pride in Tupou I's achievements and in the retention of Tongan independence was not only widespread but also extremely meaningful. The adults of his childhood days, a great many of whom had either witnessed or taken part in carrying out Tupou I's numerous military, political and religious feats, spoke proudly of them both privately and publicly. No doubt Taufa'ahau learned a great deal from Tupou himself and from the older members of the Royal Family. Both the annexation of Fiji by Great Britain in 1874, and the increase in the European control of Samoa especially from 1880, had occurred during the lifetime of Taufa'ahau's contemporaries. They served

¹² *Koe Fakalahi ki he Boobooi*, vol. 2, no. 4, June 1875.

to increase not only Tonga's pride in her independence but also her determination not to part with it. Thus in June 1881, at the national celebration of the opening of Vuna Wharf, attended by Taufa'ahau, most of the speeches, songs and dances were tributes to Tupou and Tongan independence.¹³ Growing up in these traditions, Taufa'ahau became extremely proud of what his great grandfather had done for Tonga and exceptionally jealous of any outside interference in Tongan affairs.

When Taufa'ahau was nearing his tenth birthday, an issue which was to erupt into one of the bitterest conflicts in modern Tonga began to appear. Engineered by Baker, who had left the Wesleyan Mission to succeed Tevita 'Unga as Premier, and condoned by Tupou, first a Government College was established in 1882 and then the Free Church of Tonga or Siasi Tau'ataina'o Tonga was formed in 1885. Although the official reason for the new college was to train men for the Civil Service, and the formation of the new church was a just reaction against the refusal of the Australian Methodist Conference to grant Tupou's request for an independent Tongan District, there was a great deal more to it than this. Both the Government College and the Free Church had also been established to take away the role and the status of their parent Wesleyan institutions and of Baker's great enemy, the Principal of Tupou College, the Reverend Dr Egan Moulton.¹⁴ In order

¹³ *Koe Fakalahi ki he Boobooi*, vol. 3, no.2, August 1881.

¹⁴ See also Rutherford, *op.cit.*, Chapter 5.

to please Tupou and Baker, and also to ensure government employment, many chiefs and commoners withdrew their children from Tupou College and enrolled them at the Government College. For similar considerations many former Wesleyans followed Tupou to his church.

Membership or non-membership of the Siasi Tau'ataina soon became identical with socially disruptive connotations such as treason, opposition to Tupou, and the breaking of the law. Under such guises both the Government and Tau'ataina sympathisers combined forces against the Wesleyans, who were beaten and imprisoned and had their property confiscated. The Wesleyans retaliated by clinging to their faith, denouncing the advocates of the Siasi Tau'ataina, and also by force when they were able to. In this way, the flame of religious persecution was fanned.

Springing from very personal issues such as faith and church membership, this trouble caused some bitter divisions even within families. It soon became very common for a father and some of the children to attend one church, while a mother and the rest attended the other.¹⁵ And the Royal Family was no exception. Until his death in 1885, Ngu participated in the efforts to establish the Siasi Tau'ataina and did join it when it was formed. Laifone and, almost certainly, Fusipala did the same. Salote, on the other hand, remained a staunch Wesleyan and Fatafehi, although a Free Church member, was noticeably Wesleyan in sympathy.¹⁶

¹⁵ The author's own maternal grandmother and her daughters remained Wesleyan, while the husband and sons joined the Siasi Tau'ataina.

¹⁶ Thomson, *op.cit.*, p.61.

Such was the division that this caused that Salote joined a group of exiles to Fiji in 1887;¹⁷ there was even talk of forming a new government under her.¹⁸ Indeed the religious difference within the Royal Family never completely healed, for after her return from Fiji in 1890 Salote remained a Wesleyan.

Thus, both outside and inside his home, Taufahau was affected by the religious trouble. He had been born a Wesleyan but raised as a Siasi Tau'ataina. By the time he was sixteen, he had already entered the Government College;¹⁹ he had also become strongly anti-Tupou College. This was particularly well illustrated in July 1890 when, during a fight between the students of the two colleges, Taufahau fired a gun as a dramatic warning to the Tupou Collegians of the possible consequences of any further annoyance from them.²⁰

17 *Ibid.*, p.19.

18 Sekonaia Tu'uhetoka, Minister of Police, to Salote Pilolevu, Nuku'alofa, 11 May 1885, Methodist Overseas Mission correspondence.

19 S.C. Roberts, *Tamai: the Life Story of John Hartley Roberts of Tonga....with an account of Tongan affairs from the native side, not previously published*, Sydney, 1924, p.110.

20 *Fiji Times*, 16 August 1890.

While he was at the Government College Taufa'ahau studied English, music, shorthand, mathematics, algebra, geometry, geography, history, astronomy and gardening;²¹ he was most proficient in the first two. His stay with the family of John Hartley Roberts,²² who was the Principal of the College from 1882 to 1887, and his close contact with the Bakers, especially while they were resident in the Palace (1887-1890), as well as his membership of the class at the Government College where 'not a word but English was spoken', gave him a basic working knowledge of that language. His talent and interest in music was greatly encouraged by Roberts and Ngu, both of whom had composed music and organized choirs. These influences were also evident in his later career.

21 Roberts, *op.cit.*, p.111.

22 *Ibid.*, p.110.

CHAPTER 3

CROWN PRINCE TAUFA'AHAU

Through a series of tragedies to the House of Tupou, the carefree boyhood of Taufa'ahau ended early; the course of his whole life changed. After the promulgation of the Constitution in 1875, each person it had directed to be the King's successor had predeceased him. On 18 December 1879, Tevita 'Unga died in Auckland from an inflammation of the liver. Less than six years later, on 11 March 1885, the bachelor Ngu died of a heart attack. His married brother Laifone, who was also without legitimate issue, followed him on 6 June 1889. Fourteen weeks later, Fusipala also died,¹ leaving Taufa'ahau the only legitimate descendant of Tevita 'Unga. As such Taufa'ahau, the heir of *Ha'a Talafale*, the fahu of *Ha'a Moheofo*, and the great 'eiki without a fahu, also became the heir to the Tu'i Kanokupolu.

The preparation of Taufa'ahau for the kingship began almost immediately. In December 1889, Baker, then still the Premier and the organiser of such affairs for the Royal Family, took him to Auckland, New Zealand.² In January 1890 Baker returned to Tonga, leaving Taufa'ahau at his (Baker's) home in Symonds Street under the charge of a private tutor, Mr C. D. Whitcombe.³ A friend of Baker's, a heavy drinker,

¹ *Koe tohi lau Mahina*, 1891.

² *Fiji Times*, 4 January 1890.

³ C.D. Whitcombe, 'Tongatapu', 1925, Chapter 13, holograph notes, Roman Catholic Mission, Nuku'alofa.

a man with a dubious business reputation and a former member of Garibaldi's army, Whitcombe was to teach Taufa'ahau English. He was probably quite successful at this for Taufa'ahau's English improved sufficiently for him to be able to conduct simple conversations and to read English newspapers. Taufa'ahau also became very attached to Whitcombe and, through his efforts combined with those of Baker, the Tongan Government recruited Whitcombe to be the English master at the Government College.⁴ Exactly why Baker preferred home tuition by Whitcombe to sending the prince to school is uncertain, but it was probably because Taufa'ahau was not intended to stay in New Zealand for very long. The King was old and it would have been wiser for his heir not to be so far away.

The visit to New Zealand must have been a thrilling and awe-inspiring one for the boy Taufa'ahau. His youthful fancy must have run away with the sight of novelties such as trams and the amazingly large size of Auckland harbour and its traffic. Also, instead of the coconut thatched huts and occasional wooden houses, there were now buildings larger and more numerous than anything he had seen before. Instead of the grass tracks there were properly paved roads, and the primitive way of life in Tonga was replaced by something more modernized. A keen athlete and energetic youth, he must have thoroughly enjoyed his daily race with the trams down Khyber Pass.⁵ Also of particular interest to Taufa'ahau must have been the abundance and greater variety in the European clothes, jewellery and perfume which he loved to wear.

4 C.D. Whitcombe, *Diary*, Mitchell Library, Sydney.

5 *Ibid.*

The Scottish Highland costume which he wore at Whitcombe's soon after their arrival in Tonga was probably a favourite bought in Auckland.⁶ Taufa'ahau must have also noticed other things which would have provoked him to reappraise certain situations in Tonga. Contrary to their privileged position in Tonga, the Europeans in their own country were but ordinary people. Whereas they had servants in Tonga who did their household and other jobs for them, in New Zealand they did these themselves. No doubt the Crown Prince would have also noticed Europeans who were more destitute than anyone he had seen before, and thus he would have been corrected of some of his naive opinion about all Europeans being prosperous.⁷ He must have also seen the economic, social and political predomination of the Europeans over the Maoris, and was thus brought face to face with the tragedy of the loss of national independence. Indeed experiences such as these must have contributed greatly to the spirit of independence he was to display towards Europeans throughout his whole reign.

On 2 July 1890, the sixteen year old Taufa'ahau left Auckland for Tonga on board the S.S. *Wainui*. Travelling on the same boat, to take up his new appointment in Tonga, was Whitcombe and his family. The Crown Prince could not have been a very good sailor for on the first few days, when the sea was a little unsettled, he stayed in his cabin most of the time. However, when the weather did improve, he attended meals and stayed on deck for much longer.

Even as late as August 1891, however, Tupou still had not added his usual personal nomination to the name of his new heir. This was

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Tupou I had been struck by the same thing when he visited Sydney in 1852; the same surprise is still experienced today by Tongans when they visit European countries for the first time.

indeed surprising because, owing to the strength of the traditional rules of succession, the King, despite its irrelevance to the Constitution, had personally nominated Ngu and Laifone beforehand. On 29 June 1880, only nineteen days after the burial of Tevita 'Unga, he wrote to the German Emperor that 'Wellington Tupoumalohi [would] succeed [him] D.V. to [his] Kingdom',⁸ and the Parliament immediately following it passed an Act to that effect. After Ngu's death, it was again declared in Parliament that Laifone had succeeded him as Crown Prince. When he hesitated with Taufa'ahau, the public, even Europeans such as E.W. Parker, the Tonga Correspondent to the *Fiji Times*, were understandably puzzled.⁹ At the opening of Parliament on 8 June 1891, an occasion attended by Sir John Thurston, Governor of Fiji and the British High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, and the first one to meet since the change of Crown Prince and the major ministerial reshuffle of the previous year, it was expected by all that Tupou would follow his previous behaviour and announce his new heir, but His Majesty did not do so. Even when the session was closed in August, not to meet again until 1894, Tupou still did not name his heir.

As must have been obvious to the King, his unusual delay created doubts and hopes which were dangerous to Taufa'ahau's chances of succession; and the need to avoid such a situation was far greater than had been the case with Ngu and Laifone. Whoever was going to succeed Tupou I would have been the first to do so by the means of a foreign political system and under the new law of succession. Furthermore, Taufa'ahau's case introduced an even more alien concept, that of succession through a female. Unlike his great grandfather, he lacked

⁸ Tupou I, Nuku'alofa, to Emperor William II, Berlin, 29 June 1880, Royal correspondence.

⁹ *Fiji Times*, 12 September 1891.

the usual traditional qualifications of maturity and achievements.

As well as these 'weaknesses' in his right to succeed was the well known fact that Tungi and Tuku'aho considered themselves more eligible to succeed to the throne than the boy Taufa'ahau. In addition, Tupou was over ninety years old and there was not much time for delays or uncertainties about his successor.

On the other hand, however, Tupou showed no preference for anyone else, nor did he correct any references to Taufa'ahau as his heir. Taufa'ahau was indeed treated as the Heir Apparent that he was. Like his predecessor, Laifone, he had been sent to New Zealand to further his education and acquire European skill and knowledge. Like both Ngu and Laifone before him, he became the official Aide-de-Camp to the King.¹⁰ Not only did he accompany His Majesty to the opening and closing of Parliament in 1891, he also read the speeches from the Throne.¹¹ And, some time between the end of 1891 and his death, Tupou I did officially nominate Taufa'ahau to succeed him.¹²

Under these circumstances, therefore, Tupou's delay could not have sprung from any intention to deprive his great grandson of his constitutional right. Nor could it have been done in order to force Taufa'ahau to give up his more undesirable ways such as heavy drinking and irresponsible pranks, for the Crown Prince certainly did not do so before his succession.¹³ The most probable answer to this was the

¹⁰ Thomson, *op. cit.*, pp. 12, 253.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Fiji Times*, 1 April 1893.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 16 July 1890; H. Ogle, Commander of H.M.S. *Rapid*, to Commander in Chief, Australia, 12 April 1893, Colonial Office Papers, National Library, Canberra; J.B. Thurston, Fiji, to Marquess of Ripon, England, 16 January 1896, Foreign Office Papers.

absence of Baker. The Constitution had been his work and he was a strong supporter of its provisions for the succession of Tupou I's descendants. He was also fully aware of the threats to this and of the advantages of promptly announcing the King's heir. Now he was absent and the new Premier Tuku'aho had nothing to gain from ensuring that Taufa'ahau's rights of succession were secure. Besides, Tupou, and perhaps also his ministers to some extent, were behaving in their normal Tongan way, in which case it was far more usual for the reigning Tu'i Kanokupolu to name his heir when very close to his death, although his favourite would have been quite well known beforehand.

The return of Taufa'ahau to Tonga, after an absence of six months in a distant foreign land, was not the merry and festive occasion it normally would have been. The berthing at Vuna wharf at one o'clock in the morning of Wednesday, 8 July, of his ship the S.S. *Wainui* was little noticed by the town.¹⁴ Unlike his fellow passengers, Whitcombe and family, for example, who did not go ashore until after breakfast, Taufa'ahau probably disembarked straight away, during the quiet and darkness of the early morning. And so there were no immediate welcoming dances or ceremonial presentations of *ngaahi ha'unga* either at the palace or at Finefekai where Fatehi resided.

The main cause of public and private distraction from Taufa'ahau's return, however, was not the hour of his arrival. Since the breakaway of the Free Church from the Wesleyan Church, there had been a great deal of trouble in Tonga, with Baker being considered by both Tongans and Europeans as being the primary cause of it all. The Free Church

¹⁴ Whitcombe, *Diary, op. cit.*

persecution of the Wesleyans was placing the country almost in a state of civil war.¹⁵ The conflict between the Premier and Tupou and Moulton had worsened so much that His Majesty wrote to the Methodist General Conference in Australia to recall Moulton from Tonga.¹⁶ The Free Church magistrates were unjustly harsh on the Wesleyans and the chiefs and town officers beat them and confiscated their property. For relief from all these injustices the Wesleyans appealed to the Premier, who almost always upheld the magistrates' decisions or denied the Wesleyans' charges. When the British Consuls, Symonds and later R. Beckwith-Leefe also complained to Baker on behalf of both European and Tongan appeals for redress, the Premier's response was the same.¹⁷ In addition to the religious trouble, the European traders, most of whom (in Tongatapu) were British, were bitter about the Premier's recent 'stringent' regulations such as increased customs duties.¹⁸ Many of the Tongan people and chiefs, especially Tuku'aho and Fatafehi and even Laifone, were also strongly opposed to Baker.¹⁹ This was mainly because of his extraordinary influence over the King and his abrupt treatment of and haughty behaviour towards themselves. Such was the bitterness against the Premier that, at the instigation of these chiefs and with the support of Robert Hanslip, the most vocal of Baker's European opponents, as well as some of the staff and students of Tupou College, an attempt was made on the Premier's life on the night of

15 See Rutherford, *op. cit.*, Chapter 10

16 Petition, Tupou I, Ngu, David Ahome'e (noble and Chief Justice), Sekonaia Tu'uhetoka (Minister of Police), Sateki Tonga (Paymaster) to the President and Elders of the Methodist Conference, Sydney, 30 October 1883, Palace Office collection.

17 Rutherford, *op. cit.*, Chapter 10

18 *Ibid.*

19 E.W. Parker to Sir Charles Mitchell, 5 February 1886, W.P.H.C. Archives.

13 January 1887.²⁰ Unsuccessful though this was, it resulted in the King ordering the execution of six of the would be assassins, an act that made Baker even more unpopular.

When the British Government learned of these events they became concerned, for they regarded the existence of an organised Government in Tonga as the best and cheapest means of preventing another power from intervening in her affairs. Consequently, on 27 March 1887, the then High Commissioner Sir Charles Mitchell, supported by H.M.S. *Diamond*, arrived in Tonga to investigate the trouble and Baker's activities.²¹ After detailed and humiliating examination of the King, a thorough investigation of all the charges against the Premier and the Government, Mitchell concluded that although His Majesty was primarily responsible for the religious persecution, Baker's actions had undoubtedly been troublesome and he therefore deserved to be deported. However, out of respect for the King's great love and esteem for the Premier²² and on His Majesty's promising to carry out Mitchell's proposals such as the proclamation of religious liberty, the High Commissioner allowed Baker to remain in Tonga. Mitchell also believed that the state of Tongan affairs would deteriorate if Baker was removed.

For a while, after Mitchell's departure, the Premier did less to annoy the British officials. However, as a result of what he considered to be signs of British efforts to deport him and declare a protectorate over Tonga (such as the presence of H.M.S. *Opal* at Nuku'alofa from

20 Rutherford, *op. cit.*, p. 367.

21 *Ibid.*, p.388.

22 *Ibid.*, p.393.

September 1887 to April 1888)²³ Baker became more hostile. In February 1888, he ordered all Government dues to be paid in English currency,²⁴ despite the fact that the traders were required to accept the debased Chilean dollar from their customers. The European traders, as well as the British Consul and High Commissioner, were naturally indignant. However, when the High Commissioner, Thurston, protested to the Premier, the latter charged the British with gross interference in the internal affairs of Tonga and threatened to appeal to Tonga's other Treaty partners,²⁵ Germany and the United States of America, to arbitrate for His Majesty.²⁶ Two months later, Baker circulated a Government Blue Book which was alleged to be the Minister of Police's report of his investigations of the attempted assassination but, as later testified to by an eye witness, Tevita Tui Moala, was obviously the work of the Premier.²⁷ In it, Baker again clearly implied official British complicity in the attempt on his life declaring that a musket bearing the name of Latu, one of the ~~w~~^hould be assassins, had been discovered at the British Consulate and was taken under the charge of the police. Since the musket he referred to was a virtually useless one which bore, not the name of Latu, but those of its possible previous Fijian owners, Raturanga and Ratutuivuna, and since the British Consul himself had pointed it out to Baker when the Tongan Government passed an Arms Act following the attempted assassination, the story was obviously an outrageous distortion of the truth.²⁸

²³ *Ibid.*, p.398.

²⁴ *Tonga Government Gazette*, vol. 2, no. 79, 22 February 1888.

²⁵ Rutherford, *op. cit.*, p.412.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.408.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.406; *Fiji Times*, 1 March 1890.

As was inevitable, Thurston, whom the Colonial Office, in view of Mitchell's recommendations, had prevented from deporting Baker since 1888, finally decided to do so.²⁹ Accordingly, on 25 June 1890, he arrived at Nuku'alofa aboard H.M.S. *Rapid* and was further reinforced by H.M.S. *Egeria*.³⁰ After two days of consultation with Beckwith-Leefe, he called on the King, who was supported by his Premier. At this interview, Thurston requested Tupou 'out of consideration for [his] great age and feebleness',³¹ to 'appoint three chiefs, which [the High Commissioner] shall choose',³² to represent His Majesty in deliberating and acting on the 'serious business'³³ which had brought him to Tonga. Before the King acted on this request, however, the High Commissioner himself invited the chiefs Fatafehi, Tuku'aho, Tungi, Kupu, Sunia and Ata to meet him, and together they planned the future of the Government of Tonga.³⁴

Since Baker, apart from any other fault, had in fact usurped the position and influence which especially Tungi, Tuku'aho and Fatafehi would have occupied, it was not surprising that these chiefs willingly accepted Thurston's invitation. And when the High Commissioner assured them that Britain had no intention of annexing Tonga and that he would personally protect them against any local recriminations, they became even more co-operative. Thus during their daily meetings with the High Commissioner from 28 June to 4 July the chiefs had sworn affidavits

29 Rutherford, *op. cit.*, p.413.

30 *Fiji Times*, 6 August 1890.

31 Mrs H. Symonds, Diary letter to E. Moulton, 25 June to 17 July 1890, Archives of the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga, Nuku'alofa.

32 *Ibid.*

33 *Ibid.*

34 Rutherford, *op. cit.*, p.426.

declaring Baker to have been the sole source of Tonga's troubles.³⁵

With such evidence, Thurston, on 5 July, announced to a gathering of chiefs invited for that purpose that he had decided to deport Baker and that they should therefore elect a new Premier from among themselves.³⁶

After electing the High Commissioner's nomination Tuku'aho, the chiefs, having already planned their strategy for approaching the King, then called on His Majesty en masse. With the strength of the combination between the High Commissioner and the high chiefs, the King was forced to accept and endorse their decisions. Thus, on the evening of 5 July, he dismissed Baker and appointed the new ministry, and the High Commissioner issued the ex-Premier with his order of deportation.³⁷

In their efforts to rescue Tonga from the evils of Baker and supply her with a better and preferable Government, both the High Commissioner, and the chiefs who had co-operated with him, had acted even more high handedly than the ex-Premier had ever done. At his interview with the King on 27 June, the only one they held before Thurston changed the Government, the High Commissioner had completely ignored the presence of His Majesty's Premier.³⁸ Although Thurston had ample evidence to deny that Baker truly represented the views of the Tongan Government, and was correct in concluding that he was dangerous to good government and to Tonga's peace, Baker was still legally appointed Premier of Tonga. It was certainly not Thurston's right to disregard the legally

35 *Ibid.*

36 *Ibid.*

37 *Ibid.*

38 Mrs H. Symonds, *op. cit.*

appointed Premier of Tonga and treat him as if he were already dismissed by the King. To tell Tupou that he was too old and weak to participate in discussing vital questions of state, such as replacing Tonga's Premier and reshuffling ministerial posts, and to decide to choose his representatives for him were in practice an usurpation of the monarch's constitutional rule. And when Thurston did not even wait for the King to decide on his request, but called the chiefs himself,³⁹ he was again acting as if he were the monarch. But he was not the monarch, and ministerial posts were not elected anyway. Furthermore, when he instructed the chiefs to elect a Premier, he was directly inciting them to join him in committing the very sin the British Government had accused Baker of, violation of the Constitution. Not only was it specifically the Crown's prerogative to nominate and appoint the Premier, but chiefs like Tuku'aho and Kupu were not even Privy Council members and therefore not legally qualified to be party to an 'official' body concerned with the appointment of Tonga's Premier. Indeed, such was the disregard for the position of Tupou I, that before they called on him, the chiefs, secure in the High Commissioner's assurances of protection, prepared Fatafehi and Kupu physically to restrain their King,⁴⁰ an old man of over ninety years of age, should he resist any of them by force.

As Baker was a British subject Thurston had the power to deport him from Tonga, but Thurston possessed no legal power for removing Baker from the premiership. Therefore, legally speaking, Thurston's removal of Baker from this position had to be by deporting him. Thurston did not possess the legal power to choose a Premier or a Cabinet Minister either, nor even to summon a meeting to make these choices. On the

³⁹ Rutherford, *op. cit.*, p.426.

⁴⁰ Mrs H. Symonds, *op. cit.*

other hand, Baker's removal from the premiership and his deportation from Tonga were necessary. At the same time, however, Tupou's objections to these actions, and the way in which they were carried out were understandable and predictable. So too was his unwillingness then cheerfully to co-operate with his oponents in choosing the next ministry. Thurston's use of British might, though not the only course left to him, was also predictable. What probably stirred up more ill feeling and confusion was the High Commissioner's inability or failure to acknowledge that he was taking the wisest action but was using illegal means with the backing of Britain's strength.

The new ministry consisted mainly of the chiefs who led the opposition to Baker and to the King.⁴¹ Tuku'aho became the Premier and Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Tungi remained the Chairman of Parliament and Minister of Lands. The most senior government positions below that of the King were thus held by his greatest rivals. Fatafehi, whom the King mentioned as a possible successor to Baker, retained his Governorship of Ha'apai, and Tuku'aho's father-in-law, Sunia Mafile'o remained as Minister for Finance. Kupu was made Minister of Police, and Lasike became the Chief Justice. Tupou I's real preference for the premiership, Siosateki Veikune, a highly experienced civil servant and frequently Assistant Premier to Baker, became the Paymaster General.

Such then, was the situation that dominated the attention of Tonga on the eve of Taufa'ahau's return from New Zealand to begin his proper apprenticeship for kingship. As the very close kin of central figures in the controversy, and as a loyal supporter of Baker's friends such as Whitcombe, who was in close contact with the ex-Premier, during his last days in Tonga, Taufa'ahau must have learned all about the recent events and the attitudes of the rival parties soon after his return. As the heir to the throne and beneficiary of the Constitution, the two institutions that Thurston and the chiefs had openly flouted,

⁴¹ *Koe Kasete* [Tonga Government Gazette], no.1, 8 July 1890.

he was directly affected by the situation he walked into and his sympathies were naturally with the King and with Baker's friends. Indeed Basil Thomson's story about Taufa'ahau and the ex-Premier demanding accommodation payment from each other on 5 July,⁴² the day Baker was forced to leave the Palace, could not possibly be correct, since the Crown Prince did not arrive at Nuku'alofa until 8 July,⁴³ by which time the ex-Premier was completely prevented from visiting the Palace. Moreover, given his friendship with strong opponents of the new ministry, such as Whitcombe and the staff and students of the Government College, it was inevitable that Taufa'ahau would have also learned of the rumours that the High Commissioner preferred Tuku'aho to him as the King's successor.⁴⁴ Perhaps his whole position may have been at stake.

Proud, sensitive, tempestuous youth that he was, Taufa'ahau responded to the whole situation in characteristically unrestrained fashion. Three shots he fired to scare the Tupou Collegians during their fight with the students of the Government College on the night of 30 July almost roused Nuku'alofa to an open battle.⁴⁵ Clashing bitterly with Fatafehi over his part in the recent humiliation of the King, and especially because of his father's opposition to the new Government recognizing Baker's appointment of Whitcombe to the staff of the Government College, Taufa'ahau told Fatafehi that 'in the event of fighting he [would] be the first man he [would] shoot'.⁴⁶ On 1 August, after finding out that the Government, in its determination not to employ Whitcombe, had

42 Whitcombe, *Diary, op. cit.*

43 *Ibid.*

44 *Fiji Times*, 6 August 1890.

45 Whitcombe, *Diary, op. cit.*

46 *Ibid.*

accepted the latter's conditions of £100 and return passages for him and his family to Sydney in return for renunciation of all his claims against the Government, and that the Whitcombes were in fact preparing to leave, Taufa'ahau immediately called on his ex-tutor in a state of 'great grief'.⁴⁷ That afternoon, when the two Government College tutors, Lulu and Tevita, told him of the rumour that the Wesleyans would soon attack the Free Churchers and that Tonga would soon be annexed by England, Taufa'ahau immediately took them with him and made his way to a schooner in order to go to Ha'apai and report the situation, as well as Whitcombe's case, to the King.⁴⁸ Only when Tuku'aho himself intercepted them, and promised to ask Beckwith-Leefe to annul Whitcombe's renunciation, did the Prince turn back and await further developments.⁴⁹ On the next day, having already got a number of chiefs to sign a petition in favour of the Government recognising Whitcombe's appointment, Taufa'ahau wrote to the British Consul seeking that 'the gentleman whom [he] brought to teach and whom the Government can not pay ... be left [in Tonga] ... for [he] was quite capable of paying him'.⁵⁰ The future King of Tonga, however, was eventually frustrated in his efforts, for Tuku'aho and the Government did not employ Whitcombe, and Taufa'ahau never forgot his defeat.

Despite the easing of tension and hostilities, the degree of social, religious and political calm and relaxed atmosphere expected after Baker's deportation and the establishment of the new Government did not occur. Vexed by the recent behaviour of the chiefs who made up the new self-

47

Ibid.

48

Ibid.

49

Ibid.

50

Prince Taufa'ahau to R. Beckwith-Leefe, 2 August 1890, W.H.P.C. Archives.

elected Government, the King left for Ha'apai almost immediately after the High Commissioner's departure on 18 July.⁵¹ After three months there, he visited Nuku'alofa for only a week and then left again for Vava'u where he stayed until the middle of April 1891. During all this time, His Majesty virtually ignored the Government in Tongatapu, concentrating his attention on church building. In August 1890, when Tuku'aho and Fatafehi took Basil Thomson, whom Thurston had sent from Fiji to help the Government, to meet him and receive his appointment, His Majesty was distinctly cool towards them.⁵² Although the King appointed Thomson Assistant Premier, he first reminded Tuku'aho and Fatafehi how only one month before they and their companions had assured him that Tonga needed no European minister for they were fully capable of running the Government. In January 1891, when Tuku'aho wrote to the King that the Government had bought several tablecloths for the palace, His Majesty abruptly replied that this was his personal purchase and therefore no business of the Government.⁵³ And in March 1891, when the Premier instructed Manase, the Governor of Vava'u, to come to Nuku'alofa and explain the deficit in the revenue he sent, Manase replied that His Majesty had told him to stay.

Owing to the co-operation of the leaders of the new Government with the High Commissioner against the King, as well as other signs such as the presence and position of Basil Thomson in the Government,⁵⁴ the whole land was buzzing with the rumour that Tuku'aho had betrayed the

51 *Fiji Times*, 16 August 1890.

52 Thomson, *op. cit.*, p.52.

53 Tupou I to Tuku'aho, 12 March 1891, Methodist Overseas Mission correspondence.

54 Thomson, *op. cit.* p.87.

country and that England would soon annex Tonga.⁵⁵ Since Tungi and Tuku'aho were Wesleyans and Fatafehi closely identified with that church, and since the majority of the population were Free Churchers, there was strong public hostility towards the new Government.⁵⁶ Thus, despite the Government's threats, only a few people obeyed their call to practise dances for the arrival of the Wesleyan exiles from Fiji. Even more serious for the Government, the amount of taxes paid began to drop quite abruptly.⁵⁷

Most disturbing of all, however, was the impact of the news that the High Commissioner and the King's rival chiefs had triumphed over the King. Since both the real and theoretical supremacy of Tupou I was the strongest uniting and stabilizing force in the land, his defeat in the confrontation with his rivals was soon echoed by the emergence of nationally disuniting forces. In Tongatapu, Ha'a Havea chiefs such as Ma'afu, Nuku and Lavaka, who were not only resentful of the rule of Tungi and his family, but, as a branch of the Ha'a Tu'i Kanokupolu and the traditional electors of the Tu'i Kanokupolu were normally more closely aligned with that dynasty, were travelling round the villages preaching opposition to the new Government.⁵⁸ The people of Ha'apai and Vava'u, fellow fighters and the descendants of the warriors who had subdued Tongatapu to the rule of Tupou I, and the people to whom he had always gone when slighted by the chiefs of Tongatapu, were urging the King to give the mainland another taste of the club. And when Tuku'aho was in

55 *Ibid.*

56 *Ibid.*, p.32.

57 *Ibid.*

58 *Ibid.*, p.39.

Ha'apai in August 1890, his spies informed him that the people of that group were saying that they would never be ruled by the chiefs of Tongatapu, while in the last quarter of 1890 the Governor of Vava'u sent only a part of the funds of that group to the central Government in Nuku'alofa.

The nature of these tensions, touching as they did on issues such as the powers and prestige of the King, the question of Tupou I's successor, possible loss of Tongan independence, and the Free Church and Wesleyan rivalry, were obviously of vital importance to Taufa'ahau. Faced with the new ministry's scant respect for his status as heir to the throne and its unsympathetic attitude towards his views and interests, together with his inability to do much about it, Taufa'ahau became more frustrated. Had he been older he would have been more influential, might have even become Premier instead of Tuku'aho.

As it was, even his relationship with his own father had become strained. Before his new inheritance their relationship had been quite normal and their chances of succession to the throne almost equally small. Besides, at least by virtue of his adulthood, Fatafehi had been closer to Tupou I, and he was of course the Tu'ipelehake. Since the deaths of Laifone and Fusipala, however, their relationship had been upset. As Crown Prince, Taufa'ahau was raised to a position of power technically second only to the King in the whole kingdom. In view of the King's great age, he was likely to be the King of Tonga and therefore his father's superior in the fairly near future. Under these circumstances, it was not surprising to find more than the usual father-son tension between them. It is also very likely, considering that he was forty-six (in 1890) and his son only sixteen, and also because he was a generation closer to

Tupou I, that Fatafehi considered himself a more suitable and proper successor to the King. Thurston may have sensed something of this either during his visits to Tonga or from correspondence; hence his note to the Colonial Office after Taufa'ahau became King that there just might be opposition from his own father.⁵⁹ It is also possible that the sensitive Taufa'ahau was hurt by his father's relationships with other women and fathering of other children after Fusipala's death. Even after he had become King and had been married, Taufa'ahau was often jealous of his father's contacts with his other children such as Matekitonga. When he returned from New Zealand and found Fatafehi collaborating with people like Tuku'aho who were extending their control of the Government at the expense of His Majesty's, and therefore his heir's, ego and prestige, Taufa'ahau became sufficiently angry to want to shoot his father. However, since these differences were between a father and his only legitimate son and heir, and since Taufa'ahau was a minor and still dependent on his father, the tensions did not completely uproot their basic concern for and good will towards each other.

During Thomson's one year in Tonga, and owing largely to his efforts, the new ministry recovered from many of its earlier problems and gained the country's confidence. All debts and overdue salaries of the civil servants had been paid, the balance in the Treasury was substantial, and the country had a simpler and less irritating Law Code to follow.⁶⁰ As Tuku'aho was the Premier he was closely identified with these successes; and when Thomson left in August 1891, he became the unquestioned master of the Government.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.32.

⁶⁰ *Fiji Times*, 7 October 1891.

Also following Thomson's departure came the usual European struggle for influence over the native Government. George Stanley Moss, whom Thurston had nominated Secretary to the Premier, died in the second week of July 1892,⁶¹ following which both the European struggle for influence and the Government's vulnerability to it became more intensified. Much to the annoyance of the Wesleyans and the British officials, Bishop Olier seemed to have been more successful than anyone else, as evidenced by Tuku'aho's accompanying him in the last week of July 1892 and aboard the French man-of-war *Duchaffault* on a tour of the Catholic missions in 'Uvea, Futuna and northern Tonga.⁶² The departure of Thomson also meant the removal of what had functioned as a control over the in-fighting between the Cabinet Ministers, a probable outcome of which may have been Fatafehi's return to more permanent settlement at Ha'apai at about the end of 1891.

After his return from New Zealand and also during most of 1891, Taufa'ahau had been staying with Fatafehi at Tongatapu. Although he may still have been attending the Government College then, he certainly could not have devoted much time or attention to it, as shown by Thomson's complaint to Fatafehi that his son was running wild.⁶³ No doubt this was the time when he was settling down to heavy drinking. That Taufa'ahau needed to brush up on even his elementary education is evidenced by his clumsiness when reading His Majesty's fairly short speeches at the opening and closing of the 1891 Parliament. When Thurston revisited Tonga in May 1891, Thomson most probably informed him of Taufa'ahau's behavioural

61 *Fiji Times*, 31 August 1892.

62 *Ibid.*, 8 October 1892.

63 Thomson, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

and educational problems, thereby causing the High Commissioner to approach the King about it and to offer to arrange for the Crown Prince to go to school in Sydney. Whether the High Commissioner changed his mind about Sydney or whether Thomson's presence in New Zealand had anything to do with it, Prince Taufa'ahau was all ready to go to New Zealand in August 1891. He was to accompany Tuku'aho who was then on his way to assist Thomson in supervising the printing of Tonga's new Code of Law. Taufa'ahau's trip, however, did not eventuate, for at that stage Salote was very seriously ill. At her death on 18 September 1891, the Crown Prince and Fatafehi were the principal mourners.⁶⁴

Some time in November or December 1891 after the ceremonies for Salote's death were over Fatafehi and Taufa'ahau moved to Ha'apai. The influenza epidemic that hit Tongatapu then and caused migration to the less populous islands of the north may have been partly responsible for this move. What is more likely, however, is that Cabinet decided that it was time Fatafehi attended to the long neglected administration of Ha'apai, a decision that would have reflected the new confidence of Tuku'aho, who no longer needed Fatafehi in Tongatapu to support his Government. As was the usual practice with the sons of chiefs who held high government office, and as had been the case with Tuku'aho before he became the Premier, Taufa'ahau was appointed the mayor of a village. This was the Crown Estate of Holopeka, adjacent to Pangai. Although this appointment was belittling to Taufa'ahau in that none of the preceding Crown Princes had been made anything less than a Governor, it was also a most useful experience for him. As mayor, he was the liaison officer between the Government and the people, and he had certain powers to punish

⁶⁴ *Fiji Times*, 7 November 1891.

law breakers. In this capacity Taufa'ahau had what was perhaps his most meaningful contact with the people he was going to rule, and thus he served until Tupou I's death on 18 February 1893.⁶⁵

⁶⁵ J. B. Watkin to R. Beckwith-Leefe, 18 February 1893, W.P.H.C. Archives.

CHAPTER 4

FIRST TASTE OF KINGSHIP

On the morning of Tuesday 21 February, Taufa'ahau arrived at Nuku'alofa for the funeral of Tupou I¹ and to receive the crown of Tonga. That same day, the years of rumours and anticipation that Tuku'aho would challenge his succession were proved wrong when the Premier himself proclaimed Taufa'ahau King.² Moreover, Beckwith-Leefe, representative of the country which had the greatest influence on Tongan affairs and some of whose officers had distinctly preferred Tuku'aho as the successor, enthusiastically congratulated both the Premier and 'King Taufa'ahau' on the new succession.³ From then on, although all stabilizing influences were still important to strengthen the position of the new Tu'i Kanokupolu, there was to be no querying of his right to be King and no disorder because of his occupancy of the throne. How the successor of Tupou I was going to be accepted and judged would be primarily determined by the execution of his responsibilities.

As the Tu'i Kanokupolu and Western-style King, the dual social and political roles he now occupied, Taufa'ahau had to attend immediately to a host of pressing and complicated tasks. While Tupou I was still lying in state, hundreds of mourners had to be fed and housed, and the numerous gifts and ceremonial presentations to him had to be received and distributed in accordance with Tongan protocol. Meanwhile, a new vault and bier had

1 *Fiji Times*, 1 April 1893.

2 Tuku'aho to R. Beckwith-Leefe, 21 February 1893, Premiers' correspondence.

3 Beckwith-Leefe to Tuku'aho, 22 February 1893, Premiers' correspondence.

to be built, and the funeral procession and ceremony organised. Each night, hundreds of lamps for the *tutupakanava* had to be kept going; each day until its burial, the body of the late Tupou had to be anointed with cocoanut oil, ground sandalwood and other fragrant mixtures. Although Fatafehi, Tuku'aho and the principal female relatives of the Royal Family had to carry out most of these tasks for Taufa'ahau, because of his limited experience, both his position and his own spirit of independence demanded that his final approval be sought and ensured that he would take the initiative in the making of decisions.

There were also issues where his direct intervention may have been necessary. On his arrival at Nuku'alofa, he found the chiefs of Vava'u and Ha'apai bitterly opposing those of Tongatapu for insisting that Tupou I should be buried, not with the majority of his family in their burial ground at 'Uiha, but in Tongatapu.⁴ It was probably Taufa'ahau's wish that finally settled the dispute in favour of Mala'ekula, which has since become the official Royal burial ground.

As soon as he arrived from Ha'apai, Taufa'ahau had to attend to Tupou I's will, of which ex-Premier Baker was an executor. He also had to deal with those of his relatives who had already helped themselves to some of his great grandfather's possessions such as his sheets.⁵ Since the Government had contributed to the Royal expenses, as shown by its payment of Ngu's personal debts after his death, and its purchase of such personal effects as bed sheets for the late King, Tuku'aho, as soon as Tupou I had died, had instructed Kupu to take an inventory of everything in the Palace.⁶ The Palace residents, however, protested to Kupu that

⁴ *Fiji Times*, 1 April 1893.

⁵ Kupu to Tuku'aho, 19 February 1893, Premiers' Correspondence.

⁶ *Ibid.*

that it was disrespectful to turn the palace upside down while Tupou I was still lying in it. Tuku'aho had also asked Sunia Mafile'o and Sateki Veikune to audit the Royal finances, and this was already under way before Taufa'ahau arrived at Nuku'alofa.⁷

Promptly at 3 p.m. on 6 March the funeral procession of Tupou I, watched by almost the whole of the kingdom, left the Palace for Mala'ekula.⁸ Greatly adding to the pomp and attraction of the occasion was the handsome figure of 'King Taufa'ahau', in military uniform, walking alone a short distance behind the bier with the dignitaries of his new realm behind him. In this, his first official public appearance, his subjects were satisfied with the appropriateness and dignity of his bearing. At the funeral ceremony, the Royal Chaplain and President of the Free Church of Tonga, the Reverend J. B. Watkin, voicing the people's feelings about the late King and his successor, paid tribute to the sun that had set and hailed the new one that had risen.

After the funeral came the post-burial tasks and responsibilities, which lasted until the end of the official period of mourning or *tapu* on 1 June. The grave must be visited daily, and its mound had to be completed before the final post-burial ceremony. Although many of the mourners had gone home, a great number of them, particularly the chiefs, were staying until the set period of providing company for the bereaved was over, and they continued the drain on the King's resources and time. There were also the condolence gifts to deal with, as well as the variety of post-burial kava ceremonies the new King had to attend. Finally, in the second week of May, came the *lanu kilikili*, or covering of the grave

⁷ Sateki to Tuku'aho, 26 February 1893, Premiers' correspondence.

⁸ *Fiji Times*, 12 April 1893.

with smooth, black, volcanic stones and their smearing with cocoanut oil.

After the funeral, and again especially when the official mourning period or *tapu* was over, Taufa'ahau had to attend to Tupou I's unfinished business and commitments. There was, for example, the arrival of a buggy ordered by the late King from Cousins and Cousins of Auckland⁹ as well as an account of £39 at Mr Plesner's of the Kautaha at Fasi.¹⁰ Taufa'ahau returned the buggy to New Zealand and paid the debt in November 1893.¹¹

At the death of Tupou I, Tonga, for the first time, had to come to terms with Western principles and formalities associated with the succession of a new monarch, some of which were at odds with her customs. On the principle that the King never dies, the English Government announces the death of a monarch and proclaims the succession of his heir at the same time. Under Tongan custom, however, the dead monarch is still King until after he is buried. In order to get around this problem and to enable the execution of Government business before Tupou I was buried and Taufa'ahau installed as King, Government declared that Taufa'ahau had succeeded but did not officially make him King.

After this ambiguous compromise, the Government and the chiefs turned to another new problem, the official ceremony of installing the King. As the first monarch to succeed to a Christian Tonga, and by means of a European political system, it was inevitable that Taufa'ahau should

⁹ Cousins and Cousins to Tuku'aho, 12 August 1893, Premiers' correspondence.

¹⁰ S. Plesner to Tupou II, 3 June 1893 and Receipt of Payment No 153, 1 November 1893, Royal correspondence.

¹¹ *Fiji Times*, 13 May 1893.

have what Tonga had not experienced before, a Christian, Western-style installation as King, and a coronation. For these events, the Tongan Government and the chiefs relied entirely on the advice of Europeans such as Beckwith-Leefe, the German Vice-Consul W. Treskow, J.B. Watkin and Bishop Ollier of the Roman Catholic Church, none of whom had ever participated in the appointment or coronation of a monarch. The result was a ceremony only superficially similar to the English coronation ceremonies it was supposed to imitate.

At a separate official ceremony on 9 March, attended by local dignitaries such as the British Consul, Taufu'ahau, using a newly coined oath, was sworn in as King of Tonga.¹² Eight days later, in a half-hour ceremony in the Royal Chapel, the coronation took place.¹³ Since a principal guest such as Beckwith-Leefe was not officially invited until the morning of the same day, the coronation could not have been very well organised.

Before the appointed hour of 1 p.m., all the guests, who had been saluted by the guard of honour at the front door were already in their places, and the interested spectators sat in the shade in the palace and adjoining grounds. At 1.16 Taufu'ahau entered the chapel through his private door. Just before he did so, and probably at his own intimation, the spectators had rushed into the church filling up all the vacant chairs and floor space, and forecasting the bold independence which the new King was to demonstrate again and again towards Tongan society and its elite.

Once Taufu'ahau was seated on the throne, the coronation service began. After reading several passages from the bible, Watkin descended

¹² Tuku'aho to R. Beckwith-Leefe, 9 March 1893; R. Beckwith-Leefe to Tuku'aho, 9 March 1893, W.P.H.C. Archives.

¹³ Tuku'aho to R. Beckwith-Leefe, 17 March 1893, W.P.H.C. Archives.

from the pulpit and walked towards Taufa'ahau. Picking up the crown from a cushion on the right hand side of the throne he placed it on the new King's head, addressing him as King George of Tonga. At that instant the gunners fired the Royal Salute. Watkin then replaced the crown on its cushion and returned to the pulpit from where, in a speech of about ten minutes, he called Tupou I's successor by his chosen title, King George Tupou II.

After his speech, Watkin joined the congregation and the brass band played several airs for them. When this ended, the chapel bells were rung and His Majesty left the way he had entered. Probably because the mourning period for Tupou I's death had not ended, the coronation celebration consisted only of more brass band music in the Palace grounds and fireworks at night. (As was obvious from the form it took, the coronation of Tupou II was literally only the placing of the crown on his head. However, despite its incorrect representation of Western coronation ceremonies, the Tongans, ignorant of this fact may be supposed to have been greatly awed by the whole affair.)

As a clear reflection of the fact that the European coronation of Tupou II was neither adequate nor fully meaningful to himself or his subjects, the traditional Royal Kava ceremony for the installation of the Tu'i Kanokupolu was also held.¹⁴ Originally arranging it for the morning of 17 March, the chiefs changed their minds at the last minute and decided to postpone it until the next week, thus setting the precedence of the coronation taking place before the Tongan ceremony.

Traditionally, all the Tu'i Kanokupolu, with their backs to the historical koka tree, were installed at their *pangai* or royal meeting

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

ground at Kanokupolu. Tupou II, however, partly because Nuku'alofa had truly become the new seat of the Tu'i Kanokupolu and the centre of the more effective central government, broke this tradition also. Thus on the morning of Tuesday 21 March all the chiefs and *matapule* or chiefly attendants gathered at the palace grounds, since then called *pangai fo'ou* or the new *pangai*, for the installation of the nineteenth Tu'i Kanokupolu. In its membership and seating, in the selection of the kava makers and cup bearers and in the conduct of the whole ceremony, this *taumafa kava* was not only a recalling of past history and traditions, but also a formal expression of the country's relationship and allegiance to the King. As a customary precaution against any attempts on the King's life, his principal *matapule*, Lavaki was given the first cup. When the all-important second cup was announced the officiating *matapule* called out, 'Take it for Tupou.' And when George Tupou II drank it, he became Tu'i Kanokupolu.

With the recent change of monarch in Tonga, it was not long before the interested powers made their particular kind of 'contribution' to the situation. On 26 March, the gunboat H.I.G.M. *Bussard* arrived in Tonga to protect German interests in the event of the expected disorder after Tupou I's death.¹⁵ Finding the country in peace with an undisputed King, the captain accompanied by von Treskow, called on His Majesty. On their arrival, they found the King accompanied by many of his nobles as well as Beckwith-Leefe. After the usual exchange of assurances of friendship, the king invited the captain to a dinner party in the Palace and accepted the captain's invitation to visit the *Bussard*. Owing officially to continuous bad weather (but more probably because

¹⁵ *Fiji Times*, 13 May 1893.

of the captain's failure to attend His Majesty's dinner) the King did not visit the German vessel. On 1 April the Germans sailed away in anger.¹⁶

Seven days later, H.M.S. *Rapid*, sent at the direction of the British Foreign Office on a mission similar to that of the *Bussard*, also sailed into Nuku'alofa.¹⁷ Like Thurston, however, Beckwith-Leefe, who was convinced that his prompt recognition of Tupou II was greatly responsible for the King's immediate acceptance and therefore the prevention of trouble, was anxious lest the arrival of the *Rapid* be interpreted in Tonga as British distrust of the new King and his Government.¹⁸ Consequently, when he and Captain H. Ogle of the *Rapid* called on the King, the emphasis of their message was on British pleasure at his succession and goodwill towards his Government.¹⁹

Once the *tapu* over Tupou I's funeral ended, the Government and the people prepared for Tupou II's nineteenth birthday. Since it fell on a Sunday, the celebrations did not take place until 19 and 20 June. On Monday morning, the King and the chiefs held a shooting competition, which Fatafehi won with fifty-four points, and where His Majesty scored only twenty-seven. That afternoon, there was an official reception organised by Tuku'aho and paid for by Government. On Tuesday, there was a grand *lakalaka* (dancing) competition between the young men and women of Mu'a, Fua'amotu, Houma and Hihifo. The Mu'a dancers, probably led by the beautiful 'Ofa-ki-Vava'u Ma'atu, to whom the young King was later

¹⁶ S. Baker to Tupou II, personal, 26 April 1893, Royal correspondence.

¹⁷ H. Ogle, Commander of H.M.S. *Rapid* to Commander in Chief, Australia, 12 April 1893, C.O. 225, No. 43, Colonial Office Papers.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

to be a suitor, won the first prize.

The first three months of Tupou II's reign were thus mostly spent in attending to such ceremonies. His earnest desire to rule well, as shown by his giving up drinking, impressed both Tongans and Europeans into becoming very optimistic about his reign. Also probably responsible for this optimism was the fact that he had not made any of the politically stirring changes that might have been expected of him, such as checking or perhaps even depriving Tuku'aho of his powers and position. In his restraint, Tupou II was almost certainly acting on the advice he had sought and received in a letter from the long standing adviser of Tupou I, the ex-Premier Baker.²⁰ The latter had advised Tupou II not to hold any Privy Councils too soon and not to do anything about the position of the Premier in the mean time. Whatever the ex-Premier's motives may have been, the advice he gave was sound. Any clash between Tupou II and his Government would inevitably have become a confrontation between himself and Tuku'aho and an invitation to foreign intervention and the possible loss of Tonga's independence. Furthermore, given the seniority and established influence of the Premier, and the absence of Tupou I, it was uncertain as to whether local support for the new young King would be sufficiently great to deter any such uprisings or ensure victory for him.

After his succession, therefore, Tupou II was distinctly respectful towards Tuku'aho and eager to cultivate good relations with him. Unlike his predecessor the new King accorded exceptional tribute to Tuku'aho's rank by addressing him in the chiefly language,²¹ and not in ordinary

²⁰ S. Baker to Tupou II, personal, 26 April 1893, Royal Correspondence.

²¹ Tupou II to Tuku'aho, personal, 24 May 1893, Premiers' correspondence.

Tongan, which was the customary way he addressed all the chiefs except Fatafehi. He was also careful to convey his commands in the form of requests. In both their private and official communications, His Majesty frequently alluded to their personal and kinship ties as a means of strengthening the bond between them and of winning Tuku'aho's co-operation.²² Thus when asking his Premier to do one of his usual tasks and prepare the royal address for a meeting of all 'Tongatapu males of poll tax age, His Majesty added 'pea teke kina he'eku fakahela' (I hope I am not being a nuisance to you).²³ And when the King wanted to free two men whose sentence by the Supreme Court for slandering Tuku'aho had been upheld by Cabinet, he wrote the Premier a personal letter in which he said that as kinsmen it was *taau* (appropriate) for him to pardon those who had offended Tuku'aho and vice versa.²⁴ These gestures, whether dictated by goodwill or by political expediency, could not completely eliminate the background to Tupou II's relationship with his Premier, nor could it entirely subdue his sensitivity to it. Indeed his attempt at conciliation demonstrated his keen awareness of this.

Tuku'aho, on his part, did not really respond positively to the young King. Although he had not challenged Tupou II's succession, his restraint seems to have sprung largely from his basic lack of initiative and inability to mastermind and carry out such a plan. Moreover, at the time of Tupou I's death, he was highly unpopular with high government officials and high chiefs such as Kupu.²⁵ By virtue of his seniority of

22 *Ibid.*

23 *Ibid.*

24 *Ibid.*

25 Inoke Fotu to Tuku'aho, 10 January 1893, Premiers' correspondence.

fourteen years over Tupou II, and no doubt conscious of his *tamaha* rank, he assumed the role of mentor to the young King, a part he often played without sufficient consideration for Tupou II's inherent stubbornness and consciousness of his rank. Thus when he visited the King specifically to advise him that the schooner *Malokula* was unsafe for travel to Ha'apai, His Majesty annoyingly told him that he was absolutely wrong.²⁶ With his relatively free control of government since Thomson's departure, Tuku'aho had gained so much more status and influence that he assumed a dangerous air of confidence and boldness in his dealings with the King.

As Premier, Tuku'aho was not as capable as Basil Thomson had described him. Although intelligent, he had an essentially chief-like attitude to work and he was not sufficiently consistent or firm to be efficient. Moreover, he was not adequately shrewd or skilled in the workings of government. When Thomson arrived in Tonga he was shocked to find that Tuku'aho had signed a contract with one of the traders for all copra in Tongatapu to be sold to him,²⁷ and when he visited Tuku'aho at his home he found important government papers lying around the house.²⁸ After Thomson's departure the rate of financial and administrative improvement that he had helped to stimulate gradually slowed down. After the death in 1892 of David Moss (clerk to Tuku'aho since 1890), the efficiency of the Premier's Department declined even more rapidly.²⁹ By the time Tupou II succeeded, an unusually great amount of poll tax was overdue, much of it for more than two years.

26 Tupou II to Tuku'aho, 25 June 1893, Premiers' correspondence,

27 Thomson, *op. cit.* p.38.

28 *Ibid.*

29 *Ibid.* p.286.

The number of cases which had not been heard by the courts was embarrassingly high, and the central Government's control of the country apparently less effective. Perhaps the greatest reflection of Tuku'aho's lack of initiative and diligence was the fact that this state of administrative and financial stagnation and, to some extent, regression had occurred during Tupou I's old age and concentration on church affairs. The opportunities for a Tongan Premier to make his personal mark on Government were probably at their greatest in the nineteenth century, and Tuku'aho had failed to take advantage of them.

On 22 May 1893, five weeks before the Treasury was due to make out the payments to the government departments for the second quarter of the year, the Auditor General informed Tuku'aho that the estimate for His Majesty's Department had, from a probable quarterly total of £120 dwindled to 8/-.³⁰ This shortage although partly caused by his official obligations of the previous months, was also very much the result of his large personal expenses.³¹ As well as his purchase of items such as a typewriter, saddle, shoes and clothes, Tupou II, having decided to renovate and enlarge his residence at Ha'apai, had also ordered at least £100 worth of building material from Auckland.³² Probably for the first time in his reign, therefore, Tupou II was not only reduced to having to seek advance payment from the Government but was also brought face to face with a fact of the greatest importance to him, the Premier's power to authorise such payments.³³ Although the King was financial enough at the end of June to be able to draw £32 from his safe,³⁴

30 Sateki to Tuku'aho, 22 May 1893, Premiers' correspondence.

31 Statement of Salaries, 1893, Royal correspondence.

32 Receipts of payment nos. 148 of 16 June, 154 of 7 September and 156 of November 1893, Royal correspondence.

33 Authority for advance from Treasury at Ha'apai, No. 152, 31 August 1893, Royal Correspondence.

34 Handwritten receipt no.151 of 29 June 1893, Royal correspondence.

he again sought Tuku'aho's assistance at the end of August, one month before the money for the third quarter of the year was due, for an advance of £100 on his salary.³⁵

Probably on 29 June, Tupou II left for Ha'apai to carry out the work on his house. Shortly before he did so, an event that was to have great political consequences as well as tragedy for the country took place without much notice. In the third week of June the monthly steamer, the S.S. *Upolu*, having come directly from Auckland where measles was widespread, anchored beside the quarantine island of Fafa for the usual health inspection. On investigation, the custom officials found that, although the ship carried a bill of health, it also had an endorsement by the New Zealand authorities pointing out the prevalence of measles in that country.³⁶ The Collector of Customs, A. M. Campbell, was also assured that before the *Upolu* left New Zealand a New Zealand health officer had examined all the passengers for the Islands and had found them free of measles. This opinion was confirmed by the European doctor in Tonga.³⁷ After the captain had signed a £200 bond guaranteeing that there were no measles on board the *Upolu*, both Campbell and Tuku'aho signed the document allowing the ship to berth at the wharf and to clear its cargo and passengers.³⁸

Even as Tupou was leaving for Ha'apai, several people were already suffering in Tonga from this completely new disease. About two weeks later most of the students in the Government College had measles, and before the end of July it had spread to most of the kingdom.³⁹ Between the first

35 Authority for advance from Treasury at Ha'apai, No. 152, 31 August 1893, Royal correspondence.

36 *Fiji Times*, 2 September 1893.

37 R. Beckwith-Leefe to J.B. Thurston, 4 December 1893, W.P.H.C. Archives.

38 *Ibid.*

39 *Fiji Times*, 2 September 1893.

weeks of July and August, thirty-four people died in Nuku'alofa alone and by the end of August one hundred people had died at Ha'apai.⁴⁰ In the four months from July to October 1893, 550 of Tongatapu's total population of 6675 died, an alarmingly large number when compared with the 627 deaths between 1889 and 1892.⁴¹ By November at least 1000 out of Tonga's total population of 19,000 had died.⁴²

Government was virtually brought to a standstill. Fatafehi, Tungi and Tuku'aho were all ill at the same time and Cabinet could not meet.⁴³ For the same reason, the courts and almost all the Government offices were closed.⁴⁴ And the civil servants' salaries, due since July, were not paid until three months later.⁴⁵ With the Government thus thrown out of action, no proper relief work could be organised and the people, particularly in the distant islands of Ha'apai, Vava'u, Niuafou'ou and Niuatoputapu, were almost destitute for food and help.

By the beginning of October, the worst of the epidemic was over. In Ha'apai, His Majesty, under the care of Watkin and Dr Moulton's son-in-law, A. W. Mackay, had fully recovered and was continuing work on his house.⁴⁶ In Tongatapu the government offices opened and business began to liven up. People also returned to their gardens and when the *Halsel* called at Nuku'alofa from mid-October, it was able to take away fifty tons of copra in the first week of November. Probably in order to celebrate both the completion of his Palace and Constitution Day His Majesty held a festival at Ha'apai attended by all the chiefs of Tonga.

40 *Ibid.*, 11 November 1893.

41 *Ibid.*, 16 December 1893.

42 *Census of the Kingdom of Tonga*, Nuku'alofa, 1894.

43 Tuku'aho to R. Beckwith-Leefe, 26 August 1893, W.P.H.C. Archives

44 *Fiji Times*, 2 September 1893.

45 *Ibid.*

46 Tupou to Tuku'aho, 22 June 1893, Royal correspondence.

of Tonga including Fatafehi and Tuku'aho. As soon as the celebrations were over, the Ministers hurried back to Nuku'alofa and started to prepare for His Majesty's coming visit. They had also prepared all the business to be laid before the King in Privy Council. These included proposals to increase import tariffs by fifteen per cent, to charge an export duty of £1 on each ton of copra, and to abolish poll taxes altogether.⁴⁷

Sometime between 21 and 24 November, His Majesty arrived at Nuku'alofa. On the night of the 24th, he dismissed Tuku'aho from the premiership on the grounds that he had been negligent in his duties and had been responsible for the recent epidemic.⁴⁸ That same night, Tupou appointed Sateki Veikune as Premier.⁴⁹ Although this had been rumoured before hand, neither the people nor the Premier actually expected it to happen. In fact only several hours before his dismissal Tuku'aho had been assuring Beckwith-Leefe that there was no truth whatsoever in the rumour.⁵⁰ The next day, His Majesty held another Privy Council meeting and dismissed Campbell and the Assistant Customs Officer Mr Smart for violating the Civil Service regulations by trading.

The professed reasons for these dismissals, however, were not on their own satisfactory grounds for such penalties. As argued by people such as the Tonga correspondent to the *Fiji Times*, the three men's actions deserved investigation and rebuke, but hardly the extreme penalty of dismissal.⁵¹ In the case of Tuku'aho, although the advent of the measles had earned him a great deal of anger and unpopularity and had considerably reduced his influence, he had, after all, acted on the

⁴⁷ *Fiji Times*, 16 December 1893.

⁴⁸ Tuku'aho to R. Beckwith-Leefe, 24 November 1893, W.P.H.C. Archives.

⁴⁹ Tupou II to Sateki, 24 November 1893, letter of appointment, Premiers' correspondence.

⁵⁰ R. Beckwith-Leefe to J.B. Thurston, 4 December 1893, W.P.H.C. Archives.

⁵¹ *Fiji Times*, 10 January 1894.

advice of the best medical authority available in Tonga and there were no reasonable grounds for him to doubt that opinion. What was most probably the case, as the local traders and Beckwith-Leefe and Thurston believed, was that the S.S. *Upolu*, which had left Nuku'alofa on 23 November, had brought with it advice from Baker to dismiss these officials.⁵² They also claimed that in order to prevent news of this reaching the High Commissioner too soon, Baker had advised the King to postpone the dismissals, as His Majesty did, until after the *Upolu* had left Tonga.

⁵² *Fiji Times*, 16 December 1893.

CHAPTER 5

SATEKI IS PREMIER

Born in about 1830, Siosateki Tonga Veikune was the eldest son of a minor chief from Vava'u, 'Osaiasi Fotu Veikune, and his wife of obscure and therefore probably low rank, Meleane Talia'uli.¹ In 1838, however, when Tupou I established the Vava'u Government, it was 'Osaiasi whom he appointed as Governor.² Right from early childhood, therefore, Sateki was brought into contact with members of the traditional rulers of Tonga, and with the concepts of Western government as well as the status and privileges derived from employment in it. Almost certainly educated at Tupou College, the only school in existence when he was a student, Sateki probably emerged from it with sufficient education and maturity of judgment to impress the high chiefs into including him in the Fakakuata, or quarterly meeting of the chiefs.³ This gave Sateki valuable information on the state of the country's affairs, as well as practical experience in devising and carrying out measures for taking care of them. It also gave him first hand knowledge of Tupou I's zeal for civilizing Tonga and preserving its independence.

¹ Information from Fusi Ma'atu, eldest daughter of Sateki.

² Vava'u Code.

³ Sateki to R. Beckwith-Leefe, 26 April, 1895, W.P.H.C. Archives.

Furthermore, as he was to demonstrate later, it made Sateki identify himself with the cause of Tupou I, a part of which was support of Tupou II's succession and reign. When the first Government was established in 1875, Sateki's quiet, orderly and industrious manner, and perhaps his useful contacts as the brother-in-law of Lavinia Veiongo, the daughter of Laufilitonga and Tupou I's sister,⁴ won him the very important position of clerk to the Premier.

During his five years under Tevita 'Unga, Sateki's efficiency, loyalty and agreeable manner as a subordinate were probably responsible for the ever-closer personal links he soon had with the Royal Family. In 1878, for example, it was he who wrote the Tongan draft of the letter to Queen Victoria in which Tupou I again sought and finally succeeded in receiving British recognition of Tonga.⁵ And the Tongan Draft of the Anglo-Tongan Treaty signed in the following year was also written by him.⁶ In 1890, when the Tuku'aho-Thomson ministry started, Sateki was the only senior officer in the central Government who had remained aloof from the clique.⁷ In May 1891, just before the opening of Parliament, and when Tupou I was still obviously vexed with his ministers for their conspiracy against his wishes in the previous year, Thomson was dismayed to find that the speech from the throne which he had written for His Majesty had been drastically changed.⁸

⁴ Genealogies, Palace Office collection.

⁵ Tongan translation held in the Palace Office collection.

⁶ Tongan draft of Anglo-Tongan Treaty, 1879, Palace Office collection.

⁷ Thomson, *op.cit.*, p.97.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p.250.

Instead of the original, which had carefully tried to strengthen support for Government and to avoid potentially disruptive subjects such as Thurston's actions in 1890, there was now a long reference to Baker's forced dismissal. Unknown to Thomson, the amended version had been written by his Paymaster General, Sateki.⁹

In the Premier's Department during Baker's ten years as Premier, Sateki had gained an even more thorough education in important skills such as the conduct of official correspondence, the interpretation and application of regulations, the ordering of government supplies, and knowledge of the powers that the Premier could exercise. When Baker appointed his son to be his clerk he moved Sateki to the key post of Paymaster, giving the future Premier vital information and experience in handling the country's finances. After Ngu's death, Baker, in yet a further expression of his trust in and good relations with Sateki, made him Assistant Premier.¹⁰ In this capacity, Sateki acted as Premier during Baker's frequent and often lengthy visits to New Zealand, and also attended Cabinet and Privy Council meetings. With such a position in the department and in the Premier's confidence, Sateki was therefore even more familiar both with the ordinary business of Government and with the more controversial events of Baker's ministry. In fact, under these circumstances, it would seem highly unlikely for Sateki not to have shared some of Baker's views and willingly participated in carrying out his policies.

⁹ Copy of amended version, Palace Office collection.

¹⁰ Thomson, *op.cit.*, p.97.

As was vividly borne out by his later behaviour, such as his unusually polite and apologetic replies to Baker's claims on Government and his typically rigid guard against any official or unofficial European encroachment upon the rights of the Tongan Government to conduct its own affairs,¹¹ Sateki revered Baker and adopted some of his attitudes.

Sateki had continued in the Premier's Department for another three years as Paymaster General under Tuku'aho. His appointment as Premier therefore brought into that office a combination of ability and experience from which both Tupou II and Tonga stood to benefit. Sateki, in 1893, was the most knowledgeable person on the past and present affairs of Government and the Premier's Department, and therefore the best qualified for the premiership. Since Tupou II was young, inexperienced and often irresponsible, and the Government under Tuku'aho was reduced in efficiency through that Premier's inherently easygoing and casual manner, Sateki was a potentially valuable asset for all who wished Tonga well.

As illustrated by the hitherto complete domination of all ministerial posts by either high chiefs or Europeans, and by Sateki's own plea of unsuitability for the premiership in 1890 on the grounds of insufficient rank,¹² Tongan society considered the first two groups the only ones with legitimate rights to such high governmental status and their associated powers.

11 Sateki to R. Beckwith-Leefe, 26 April 1895, W.P.H.C. Archives.

12 Thomson, *op.cit.*, p.17; *Fiji Times*, 6 August 1890.

Although Tupou I and his successor had made an exception when they chose the lower ranking Sateki to be Premier, they were both faced with similar special reasons. None of the high chiefs and senior Government officers such as Fatafehi, Kupu or Tungi had either the ability or experience of Sateki, and at the time when they chose Sateki to be Premier, neither Tupou I nor his successor wanted any more European Premiers. More important though, in determining the two Kings' choice of Sateki, was the actual disloyalty of Tupou I's ministers in 1890, and their potential threat to Tupou II in 1893. Under these circumstances, Sateki was the only senior official who was both loyal and experienced, and therefore the best alternative for both Kings. Besides, a Premier who was in no position to threaten His Majesty's throne or assume social superiority over him, as Tuku'aho had done, was much safer for the King to have around and considerably easier to work with.

From Sateki's point of view, however, his position and indeed his tenure in it was almost entirely dependent on the King's favour. As was inevitably clear to all, he had been elevated beyond the rank to which he was born and above the highest chiefs and closest kin of the King. He was therefore vulnerable and highly exposed to the envy of an influential and large group. Faced as he was with such threats to his hard-earned reward, Sateki's only protection was the support and goodwill of the King. Thus Tupou II was further assured of his Premier's loyalty and compliance with his wishes.

In the first week of December, after placing the venerable, trusted and grateful Sateki in command of Government, Tupou II, who had already spent five of his first nine months as King on private business and away from the seat of Government, left Nuku'alofa again for a further five months at Ha'apai.¹³

¹³ Tupou to R. Beckwith-Leefe, 15 December 1893, W.P.H.C. Archives; *Fiji Times*, 10 January 1894.

To the already pressing need to familiarize himself with and actively contribute to the administration of his Government, Tupou II now had added the responsibility of helping the new ministry establish itself and face the hostility of the supporters of the Tungi family and the dismissed Europeans. Beside these extra problems, however, His Majesty and the new ministry needed more than just a week to acquaint themselves with the state of the Government's affairs as they found it.

That Tupou II's first major work after his succession was the expensive renovation of his palaces at Ha'apai and Vava'u clearly indicated that he intended to spend a good deal of time away from Tongatapu, and it was therefore no surprise when he did so. Whether prompted by resentment of Tongatapu's traditional opposition and superior attitude towards the social rank of Tupou I and his House as 'Ha'apai chiefs' or by his natural fondness for Ha'apai, Tupou II's long absences from Tongatapu disrupted and held up the work of Government; they were clear signs of his inherently irresponsible attitude towards his duties as King. With Parliament meeting only *once in three* years and unable to anticipate all extra expenses or legislation, Privy Councils were vital in keeping the Government's business going. Besides, there were always appeals against the rulings of the Supreme Court, and only the Privy Council could deal with them. Even questions Cabinet *had* the powers to deal with, such as Tungi's request for an extension of his lease of Fasi, were often referred to the King for his decision.¹⁴

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Cabinet Minute Book, 1893-5, Palace Office collection.

A Privy Council matter that could not be postponed without serious consequences to Government was the authorization of both the annual and extra Estimates. As shown by the £3,400 excess above the Estimated Revenue from the Department of Customs and Duties alone in 1892,¹⁵ the Government's assessment of its income and expenditure was usually quite erroneous. The need for extra Estimates, and therefore for His Majesty and his ministers to hold Privy Councils, quite frequently arose. Although these Estimates were normally discussed in Cabinet before being presented in Privy Council, their final form was usually worked out by the Premier and the King. The result was that Tupou II was inevitably well informed about and absolutely essential to all the financial arrangements of the country. Since he chose to make extended stays at Ha'apai, the ministers, usually represented by Sateki, as well as the Estimates, had to go to him. Besides the inconvenience of such an arrangement, any benefit from discussion with all his ministers was also lost. Furthermore, under these circumstances, it was much easier for the King and the Premier to have their own way with the Estimates and to be open to suspicion of having done so.

As was to become increasingly clear, especially during Sateki's Premiership, Tupou II's attitude to kingship was basically that of the socially and ceremonially superior chief he was born to be. It was his due to possess and enjoy privileges, and it was the task of others to do the work. When he succeeded to the throne he was more aware of its additional status, privileges and powers than of its duties.

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Fiji Times, 9 April 1892.

Furthermore, His Majesty tended to have a literal interpretation of the notion, particularly reinforced and identified with the House of Tupou I since his conquest of Tonga, that the King owned the country. Unfortunately, Tupou II still lacked the wisdom and the sense of duty required to rescue him from the pitfalls his background had left him very vulnerable to. Thus it was that he neglected his essential part in Government when he wanted to pursue his own interests at Ha'apai, and he saw little wrong in expecting Government to provide for personal needs such as the cost of repairing and painting his boat.

A week after the King's departure for Ha'apai, Sateki held a meeting to which all Tongatapu males of poll tax age were summoned. In his address, the new Premier focused his attention on two subjects with which he was continually concerned. These were the payment of taxes and observance of the law.¹⁶ Obviously displeased with the enormous number of taxes that were overdue, and the former Government's failure to bring to trial and punish all defaulters and other law breakers, Sateki exhorted his listeners to pay their taxes or be prepared to face prosecution. To impress them further with the unpleasant consequences of their misdemeanour, he reminded them that the penalties for non-payment of taxes were either imprisonment, sale of their property, or loss of their lands. As illustrated by the 1045 prosecutions in May 1894 in the Nuku'alofa courts alone, Sateki was a man of his word.¹⁷

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 10 January 1893.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 18 July 1894.

Most probably to soften the impact of this firm policy and to popularize the King and Government at the expense of the chiefs, Sateki also announced the abrogation of the tedious and unpopular custom of the commoners preparing food and presenting it to visiting chiefs, and dancing in the *lakalaka* when summoned to do so.¹⁸

After thus launching his programme and quickly taking stock of Government's affairs and finances, Sateki went to Ha'apai on 31 January to report to the King and obtain his approval and signature for the new year's Estimate. He returned to Nuku'alofa a week later, shortly after which the Estimate for January to December 1894 was published.¹⁹ The first Estimate drafted under Tupou II and Sateki, its most conspicuous feature was an increase of £600 in the amount allocated to His Majesty's Department. Although this sum was intended for the statue of Tupou I, and therefore understandably the concern of his great grandson and successor, it was a large amount and a significant portion of the country's total estimated revenue for the year of about £19,600. To assign the spending of that amount to Tupou II for what was in fact government business was to establish a precedent that was potentially open to abuse or to suspicions of it. Besides, Baker, who was then purchasing goods for the Tongan Government, such as the material for the new Parliament House, was also in charge of all arrangements to do with the statue and there was no point in the Government's not paying for the whole order directly.

18 *Ibid.*

19 *Ibid.*, 7 April 1894.

In this respect Tupou II was conspicuously different from his predecessor, who had strictly adhered to the idea that the monarch had no personal rights to government funds, property and services, and had also avoided any casual financial arrangements with Government in order to prevent misunderstanding.

In March, when the Estimate had only just come out and the disbursement of funds for the second quarter of the year was about to begin, the parts for the new Parliament House arrived. In what proved to be the first significant difference between Sateki and the Europeans, the foreigners complained about their loss of profit through the new Premier's not putting this valuable order through them. When Sateki did not employ a European in the construction of the building, the Europeans felt discriminated against by the person whom they had welcomed as the most honest man in Tonga.

In May, just as the House was nearing completion, the long-awaited statue of Tupou I arrived. Made of Italian marble and Timaru (New Zealand) blue stone, and measuring 25 feet high and seven feet across at its base, the statue was a sight of a kind never before seen in Tonga, and a source of great excitement. About the same time, and probably in order to supervise its erection, Tupou II returned to Nuku'alofa. Since the statue had cost £900 and the man sent by Baker to erect it was charging £200 for his services, His Majesty also needed to discuss the payment of the balance with Sateki. Besides, Parliament was due to open soon, and, particularly because it was the first to meet since Tupou II's succession, it was imperative that he and the ministers prepare their reports and proposals for the Assembly.

By virtue of their direct representation of the Crown, their control of the country's executive system and legislation between Parliament's sessions, the ministers were undoubtedly the most influential group in Parliament. Unlike the nobles and the people's representatives, many of whom were only slightly familiar even with their role as Parliamentarians, the ministers were informed on government business and the way the administrative machinery operated. Thus in the House they were normally called upon to supply information about government procedures, such as prosecutions being the business of the Judiciary and not of the Premier's Department. Given such a preponderant position, the ministers directed most of the House's discussions and decisions and were in the best position to take the initiative on what the Government was to do about its responsibilities and problems. Although outnumbered and often defeated by the approximately sixty nobles and representatives of the people²⁰ (as in their efforts to reduce divorce fees in 1891)²¹ the ministers won most of what they wanted.

As the chief minister, and with his experience and increasingly obvious tendency to have a hand in all branches of Government, Sateki was the greatest single influence in Parliament after the King. He personally prepared the speeches from the throne and controlled the procedure and agenda for each day's session. And since His Majesty was publicly considered to like Sateki and accept his word, the Premier's position was exceptionally strong.

20 Election returns, 1878, in the author's possession.

21 *Fiji Times*, 5 August 1891.

On 6 June 1894, Tupou II, amidst all the pomp he loved, opened his first Parliament as King.²² At either Sateki's suggestion or with his permission, a group of female Free Church singers opened each day's session with a hymn. Originally intended to last only two weeks, Parliament did not rise until three months later. Its review and almost complete overhaul of a large section of Thomson's code of 1891 bore the marks of Tupou II and Sateki,²³ the two individuals with the greatest influence on Parliament and holders of the only principal positions to have changed since the passing of the code. Reflecting Sateki's essential puritanism and his Bakerian use of the law to instil 'morals' into the Tongans, Parliament forbade children to play marbles and removed a likely source of disturbance to the holiness of the Sabbath by specifically making it illegal to transport any load on that day. Moves to reduce divorce fees from £20 to about £4 or £6 and to allow Europeans to sue Tongans for bad debts were, however, both defeated.

One of Parliament's last acts was to urge His Majesty to marry, and to supply him with names of the ladies whom they considered suitable. There were three foreigners, a high born Fijian lady, the sister of Queen Liliuokalani of Hawaii, and the daughter of the Samoan high chief Tamasese.²⁴ The sole Tongan was 'Ofa-ki-Vava'u, the only daughter of the high chief of Niuatoputapu, Ma'atu. Through her mother's mother, Tupou'ahau, who was a full sister to Tungi's father, Fatu, she was the *fahu* of Tungi. Whether in

²² C.D. Whitcombe to R. Beckwith-Leefe, 4 June 1894, W.P.H.C. Archives.

²³ *Fiji Times*, 22 and 29 August, 6 October 1894.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 1 December 1894.

reaction against this or not, Tupou II, suddenly sent Fatafehi, Sunia Mafile'o and Finau 'Ulukakala to prorogue the House for him on 27 August.²⁵

Some time between then and mid-October, Tupou appointed Tuku'aho Governor of Vava'u. Whether His Majesty was prompted by his granduncle and Tuku'aho's father-in-law Sunia, or by a genuine reconciliation with his former Premier, the appointment of Tuku'aho was a politically sound move. It returned to the King's services a man whose goodwill and co-operation were beneficial to the King and to Tonga's stability, and it proved wrong critics such as Thomson and the Tongan correspondent to the *Fiji Times*, who believed that Tupou had simply used the measles incident to reduce his rival for the throne to insignificance and helplessness. Because His Majesty was still without legitimate issue, Tungi and Tuku'aho were still constitutional heirs to the throne, and their potential for opposition were still great. Winning them over with Royal patronage was considerably advantageous to His Majesty.

By about the middle of 1894, dissatisfaction with Sateki's actions had spread to a fairly large group. Most probably during Parliament's sitting, which was the first time all the nobles had gathered at Nuku'alofa and personally witnessed and experienced Sateki directing Government, the high chiefs voiced their indignation at having to bow to the authority of their social inferior. They were also insulted by the fact that the Premier's annual salary of £700 was considerably higher than the ministers' £175. Consequently Sateki offered to reduce his salary to £200 a year, but, whether through His Majesty's intervention or that of the Premier's supporters, the salary remained the same.

Sateki's arbitrary dismissal and use of old charges to remove Government officials was also stirring up more discontent.²⁶

In about April, a police inspector and a clerk of the court at Vava'u were dismissed without trial on the basis of a letter Sateki received from one of his relatives at Vava'u stating that these two officials had drunk gin at his wedding. About the same time, the magistrate of Vava'u was charged with an offence allegedly committed four years before, and was demoted by transfer to Niuafu'ou. As Sateki was a foundation member and Trustee of the Free Church, and since all three of the demoted officers had returned to the Wesleyan Church after Tupou I's death, their treatment was interpreted by Wesleyan sympathisers as punishment for their change of faith.

Sateki's relationship with Beckwith-Leefe was also strained. Given his former support of the Baker Ministry and in view of Beckwith-Leefe's strong ties with and affection towards Thurston and Tuku'aho, the new Premier and the British Agent were suspicious and somewhat resentful towards each other from the start. For the same reason, Beckwith-Leefe was displeased with signs of Baker's continued influence on Sateki (such as the ex-Premier handling all Tonga's business in New Zealand). Knowing full well from Tupou II's proclamation of 28 November 1893 that Tuku'aho had been dismissed and Sateki appointed in his place, Beckwith-Leefe, after receiving Sateki's first communication as Premier, tersely replied that he was not officially aware of any change in the premiership.²⁷

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 18 July 1894.

²⁷ R. Beckwith-Leefe to J.B. Thurston, 4 December 1893, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

In April 1894 they clashed directly over the Premier's use of the shopkeeper Barnard to audit Government's accounts.²⁸ Having failed to dissuade Sateki from this, Beckwith-Leefe and W. Von Treskow, the German Consul, reported the matter to the King, thus eliciting a strong note from the Premier to the British Consul to mind his own business and stop trying to influence the King. Beckwith-Leefe demanded a public apology from the Premier to this insult to Great Britain's representative and, having been directed to do so by His Majesty, Sateki had no alternative but to apologise.²⁹ When Beckwith-Leefe requested permission to attend Parliament's sessions, Sateki refused saying that Beckwith-Leefe's presence might distract the House.

Neither the Tongans nor the Europeans who were critical of and discontented with Sateki, however, were giving him due credit for his significant achievements. Barely six months after his appointment, he had collected almost all the taxes and other court fines, giving the Government more funds for its recent heavy expenditure.³⁰ The £8,000 surplus the Government was reported to have in the middle of 1894,³¹ although perhaps an exaggeration was a tribute to Sateki's success in handling the country's finances.

28 R. Beckwith-Leefe to H.S. Berkeley, 22 April 1895, W.P.H.C. Archives.

29 Sateki to R. Beckwith-Leefe, 26 April 1895, W.P.H.C. Archives.

30 *Fiji Times*, 29 August 1894.

31 *Ibid.*

As implied by Thomson's description of Sateki in 1890 as a a civil servant first and anything else next, the new Premier's example of regular attendance and dedication to his work lifted the standard of performance in the whole Civil Service. As was to become increasingly clear later, he also kept a close watch on all the other departments' affairs as well as those of 'Eua and the northern groups. The result was a more efficient Government. Nevertheless, the punitive methods by which he achieved his greatest success, the collection of taxes, won him more enemies than admirers.

The worst criticisms of His Majesty at the time, which came mainly from Europeans, were that he was unnecessarily extravagant for the sake of display and less accessible to the people than his predecessor had been. The people of Tongatapu were made jealous by his preference for Ha'apai. Apart from these complaints, as reported by both Thurston and British Captain Cusack Smith to the Colonial Office, Tupou II's image in Tonga and with the British authorities was a generally favourable one and his rule was accepted. Despite his obvious support for Sateki, His Majesty, partly because of his youth, but more so because of the already clear distinction people had made between the monarch and the Government, was not identified with the faults of the administration. No doubt as an expression of the deference for superiors so inherent in Tongan society, His Majesty was identified with Government only when there was credit to be accorded.

On 18 October 1894, after his first real attention to serious duties as King, Tupou II returned to Ha'apai. For the next eleven months he remained there, frittering away more of his time, energy and resources on more sailing, horse racing and merry making.³²

On 17 March 1895, he held a grand festival to celebrate the second anniversary of his coronation. Barely three weeks later, he held a choir competition for which young men and women of Tongatapu went to Ha'apai. His Majesty's mood for festivals, however, was still unabated; he instructed the Tongatapu singers to continue practising after their return home for another competition in June. Probably because his twenty-first birthday was in that month, His Majesty intended to be in Nuku'alofa by June. Perhaps owing partly to his contracting the fever then widespread in Tonga, Tupou II celebrated his birthday at Ha'apai and did not return to Nuku'alofa until September 1895.

Whatever Tupou II's principal reasons for this extraordinarily long absence from Tongatapu, it indicated that he was, at the very least, sufficiently satisfied with and confident in Sateki's performance and his ability to conduct Government. That Sateki continued with his policies, even when threatened by people like Beckwith-Leefe with reports to the King (a threat repeated when Sateki refused to accept Beckwith-Leefe's allegation that the policeman Afemui had been mistried and should be tried again) shows that the Premier was confident of winning His Majesty's approval and support for his actions. Consequently, Sateki's control of Government increased even further. The result was that, in what were probably signs of old age or evidence of hard work or power having gone to his head, Sateki became less patient with any disagreements with his views, more stubborn, and more abrupt with the chiefs and the Europeans.

Soon after Tupou's departure for Ha'apai, the Premier held a *fono* where he emphatically told the young people to give up their loose ways and get married.³³ He then visited

Ha'apai, Vava'u, Niuatoputapu and Niuafo'ou, returning to Nuku'alofa in time to publish the Estimates for 1895. After almost two years of heavy expenses since Tupou II's succession, the Government found itself in financial difficulties. The high missionary collections at the time, such as the f4,000 collected by the Free Church in December 1894 in Ha'apai alone, and the fact that in the first half of 1895 Tongatapu exported more copra than it did for the whole of the previous year,³⁴ indicated that the Government's shortage did not result from a general economic decline. In view of Sateki's efficiency in collecting whatever was due to the Government, it could not have been caused by a drop in the collection of taxes either; taxes then accounted for almost half of Tonga's revenue. The simple situation, as was further illustrated by the almost complete exhaustion of the 1895 Estimate only half way through that year,³⁵ was that Government had overspent. Tupou II had lived expensively since his succession and had habitually overdrawn both his salary and the funds for his Department, so it may be assumed that he was partly responsible for the deficiency and that Sateki could not possibly have been unaware of it. Plagued by the whole problem, Sateki sailed to Ha'apai in both May and June 1895 to work out with the King ways of obtaining the necessary funds for Government. As shown by later events, whatever solutions were proposed did not pull Government out of debt.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 6 November 1895.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 24 July 1895.

On the first Sunday of September, Tupou II arrived back at Nuku'alofa. In another act of display that could only have been organized by the Premier, because he was the only one with the necessary powers to do so, the King was escorted to the Palace by the brass band, the Royal Guards and the students of the Government College in breach of the laws about the Sabbath. Shortly afterwards, three large schooners and several small boats loaded with people and goods from Ha'apai arrived at Nuku'alofa. The singing competition postponed since June was then held, with His Majesty attending both performances. Since his public appearances in Tongatapu were very few, the King's presence at these functions may have been prompted not just by his love of music but also by the fact that one of Kupu's two daughters, perhaps Lavinia whom His Majesty later married, was one of the two best singers in the competition.

CHAPTER 6

A PERIOD OF TENSION

At the end of 1895, Tupou finally settled down in Tongatapu, but the political and social scene became even more confused and unsettled. By the beginning of 1896, some of the discontented sections of the community had begun to try and remedy their grievances against Sateki's Government. In February, the European traders resurrected the defunct Chamber of Commerce, to promote their various business concerns and to safeguard their interests against a Government they considered corrupt, inefficient and prejudiced against Europeans. About the same time the King was asked to replace Sateki with a European,¹ who would have almost certainly been Dr Moulton's son-in-law, William Mackay. He was buying copra for a German firm; he would have therefore been important both as a buyer and as a creditor; and he was a persistent aspirant for the premiership. He was strongly supported by his brother-in-law, then Principal of Tupou College, the Reverend Egan Moulton.² His principal Tongan supporters were Fatafehi,³ who was his friend and beneficiary, and Maealiuaki,⁴ who was a son of Sunia Mafile'o, a steward of the Wesleyan Church in Nuku'alofa and one of the leaders of the Wesleyan exiles to Fiji.

¹ R. Beckwith-Leefe to Tupou, 9 March 1896, Palace Office Collection.

² R. Beckwith-Leefe to H.S. Berkeley, 30 May 1897, W.P.H.C. Archives.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

In their bid to replace Sateki the Wesleyan party, as this group came to be known, was perhaps encouraged by the King's recent gestures of friendship towards them, which they may have interpreted as a drift away from the Premier. At the end of 1895 Tupou, who had made very few public appearances since his more permanent residence in Tongatapu, had attended the Tupou College prize-giving ceremony. In December, when Dr Moulton himself visited Tonga, the King entertained him at the Palace.⁵ Tupou refused, however, to replace Sateki or to have a European Premier. The Wesleyan party had not been truly aware of His Majesty's close ties with the Premier, and he was, after all, still the head of the Free Church. Even more important, the Wesleyans had reckoned without Tupou's aversion to European domination of his Government. This alone would almost certainly have been sufficient for him to refuse to appoint Mackay Premier. Even Whitcombe, to whom His Majesty had been attached, had been made only the European clerk to Sateki. Beckwith-Leefe, who was then holidaying in New Zealand, wrote and congratulated Tupou on his decision. Probably because of his memories of Baker's domination of the Government, his distrust of Mackay and his conviction that Mackay would serve only the Wesleyans, not the country, Beckwith-Leefe assured the King that Tonga needed no European Premier.⁶

Embittered by this incident, Sateki began to take his revenge on the Wesleyans. In 1894, the

⁵ *Fiji Times*, 25 December 1895.

⁶ R. Beckwith-Leefe to Tupou, 9 March 1896, Palace Office collection.

Wesleyan Conference had requested his permission to establish a primary school in Nuku'alofa to be attached to Tupou College, and the Premier had replied that as there was nothing in the law against it the Wesleyans were at liberty to do so. Encouraged by this the Wesleyans had established primary schools in Nuku'alofa and in some of the other villages. Since then, the educational successes of the Nuku'alofa school had attracted not only Wesleyan but also Free Church pupils away from the Free Church dominated government schools. Although the Free Church authorities had been annoyed by this trend since 1894, it was only now that Sateki decided to take any action. In March, he instructed Tevita Finau, the Head Tutor of Tupou College and one of the conspirators in the attempt to assassinate Baker, to close the Nuku'alofa primary school because it was illegal.⁷ When Egan Moulton and Tevita Finau reminded him that he had declared it legal in 1894, the Premier replied that he was then mistaken about the law. And when the Wesleyans refused to close the school, Tevita Finau, on the allegation that the Wesleyans had solicited students away from the government schools and into joining the Wesleyan ones, was charged with having incited people to rebel against the law of the land. The prosecution failed, however, to name those whom the Wesleyan teachers were alleged to have incited, and so the magistrate recommended that the charge be amended. The prosecution preferred the original charge because the penalty for it was imprisonment for a minimum of one year and a maximum of ten years. Owing to the deadlock that ensued the case remained unsolved, but the relationship between Sateki and the Free Church and the Wesleyans had deteriorated considerably.

⁷ *Fiji Times*, 25 May 1896.

Unable to triumph completely over the Wesleyans in this case, Sateki soon found one where he was able to do so. 'Esi, a sixteen year old Tupou College student from 'Eua, had written urging his parents to send his younger brothers and sisters to the Wesleyan school on that island. The police in 'Eua discovered this letter, which they immediately sent to Sateki. — 'Esi was then charged and the Free Church Judge of the Supreme Court, Lasike, gave him the maximum penalty.⁸ In June, when Tupou returned to Tongatapu after his first tour of all the northern group since his succession, the Free Church-Wesleyan animosity was probably at its worst since his succession. Not surprisingly, the Wesleyan party tried again to place their candidate in a key position in Government. This time they asked Tupou to appoint Mackay as Assistant Premier.⁹ But the King would give neither Mackay nor any other European an influential position in Government, and he would not replace Sateki.¹⁰ On other matters, such as his reduction of 'Esi's sentence to one year, he appeared more co-operative to the Wesleyans. Judging from his request to Egan Moulton for some of the Tupou College students to join his bodyguard, His Majesty's relations with the Wesleyans had become very cordial.

In February 1897, when Baker visited Tonga for the first time since his deportation,¹¹ the rumour that Tupou was holding the assistant premiership for him was finally proved wrong.

8 *Ibid.*

9 R. Beckwith-Leefe to J.B. Thurston, 16 June 1896, W.P.H.C. Archives.

10 *Ibid.*

11 *Fiji Times*, 27 February 1897.

His Majesty gave him no government appointment; when Baker returned again to Tonga in 1898 Tupou refused to endorse his application for a position in the Free Church and even instructed the Conference not to accept his application.¹² Sateki, Fatafehi and the other ministers also wrote to Watkin to pass a law at the 1898 Conference prohibiting any more European appointments to the Free Church.¹³ It is probable that, although Tupou had sought Baker's advice and had used him for important work such as purchasing the material for his houses and the wedding cake for when he first decided to get married in 1897,¹⁴ he just did not want Baker returned to power in Tonga. It was also unlikely that Sateki would welcome his former forceful head back as his assistant. And the Wesleyan party had no wish to see Baker even in Tonga. Thus it was that the fears of the High Commissioner and the Colonial Office that the succession of Tupou II might lead to the return of Baker to power in Tonga were conclusively proved wrong.

On 18 May 1897, after he had opened Parliament, Tupou instructed Sateki to call a meeting of the nobles only for the following day so that he could inform them of his decision to retire the aged ministers, Sunia Mafile'o and Tungi, and to appoint Semisi Fuapau and Tuku'aho to their respective offices.¹⁵ This unusual and technically unnecessary move may have been prompted by His Majesty's feeling that the retirement of such high chiefs might lead to misunderstanding among the nobles and perhaps even to objections from Sunia and Tungi.

¹² J.B. Watkin to Tupou, 20 May 1898, Palace Office collection.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Tupou to S. Baker, 21 June 1897, Palace Office collection.

¹⁵ Tupou to Sateki, 18 May 1897, Premier's Office collection.

Tupou may have also realized that, given the mounting opposition to Sateki, the appointment of his sister's husband and the minor Vava'u chief Semisi Fuapau as the new Minister of Finance would be repugnant to the nobles, especially to the anti-Sateki party. There may even have been opposition to Tuku'aho's appointment, perhaps from Fatafehi. The only positions he had held since 1877, were as Acting Governor and then Governor of Ha'apai. He had been passed by each time there had been a ministerial appointment. Nevertheless, the Chairmanship of Parliament and the Ministry of Lands were both appropriate to his rank and his seniority of age and tenure in the Civil Service. That there was opposition to Fuapau's and Tuku'aho's appointments is even more strongly suggested by the fact that 'Ulukalala and Ma'atu, the principal chiefs of Vava'u and Niuatoputapu respectively, were appointed Governors of these islands on the same day,¹⁶ but Tupou did not call a special meeting of the nobles for that purpose.

Several days later, and indicating that there was more than the usual opposition to Sateki and indirectly to the King, Mackay applied to the House for the premiership¹⁷ and Fatafehi and Maealiuaki tried to persuade Tupou to accept the application. By doing this, Mackay and his supporters were ignoring Tupou's repeated refusals, and were also ignoring the King's and the Privy Council's prerogative to make such an appointment. Instead of informing Mackay that the House was not the proper authority for his application, the nobles showed their sympathy for his case by deciding to hold a special meeting at Tungi's house to discuss the application.¹⁸ Both the

¹⁶ Letters of appointment (copies), 19 May 1897, Palace Office collection.

¹⁷ H.S. Berkeley to R. Beckwith-Leefe, 24 June 1897, W.P.H.C. Archives.

¹⁸ R. Beckwith-Leefe to H.S. Berkeley, 30 May 1897, W.P.H.C. Archives.

meeting and the place where it was to be held would have angered Tupou; in these ways he became directly involved in the whole issue, for he had been personally insulted.

On the evening of 27 May, the nobles, Mackay and Tupou met at Latai.¹⁹ Recognising that the feelings between the Wesleyan party and the King's and Sateki's supporters were running high, Tupou had his guards completely surrounding the house during the whole meeting. This may have also meant that Tupou intended to scold and frighten the nobles for their intrigue to remove the Premier he had chosen and replace him with a person they knew he did not like. As he later told Watkin, so long as he was King of Tonga, Mackay would never be Premier. Judging from their heated argument afterwards, in which Fatafehi accused his son of filial disrespect and His Majesty charged his father with insubordination to his King,²⁰ the meeting probably consisted of little but Tupou lashing at the nobles and cowing them into compliance with his will.

The tension between the nobles and the King and Sateki, however, was not completely due to the opposition to Sateki's Premiership. Since 1896 particularly Tupou had begun to demand taxes on Royal estates that had been used tax-free by individuals, by the Wesleyan Church and by the Government during Tupou I's reign and Sateki had already obtained some of these taxes for him. Probably encouraged by these taxes, at least seven nobles had asked Tupou either for more land or for a review of their estates, claiming that Tupou I had not given them all the lands that were theirs before the Constitution.²¹

19 *Ibid.*

20 *Ibid.*

21 Tupou to Tuku'aho, 24 May 1897, Royal correspondence.

These requests had infuriated Tupou because of their insult to Tupou I's memory and the implication that the nobles, who had made no such requests to his predecessor, did not respect him as much as they did Tupou I. Consequently, Tupou wrote Tuku'aho a hostile letter in which he instructed him to inform the nobles that he had no intention whatsoever of approving their requests.²²

Like Mackay and his supporters, others who felt that Sateki and his Government were unfair to them, and who were prepared to take whatever risks may have been involved, appealed to Parliament to intervene on their behalf. Egan Moulton, represented by Mackay and Robert Hanslip, appealed against the Government's failure to do as directed by the House's resolution on 7 August 1891, which was to return all the Wesleyans' property and lands confiscated during the religious persecution.²³ On behalf of the traders, Beckwith-Leefe asked the House to endorse his request for Government to purchase supplies only from the shops in Tonga and not directly from overseas as Sateki had frequently done. The Chamber of Commerce also sent Parliament a petition against Cabinet's determining the value and duration of leases, arguing that these should be left entirely to the lessee and lessor.²⁴ Although all these petitioners, aware of the King's powers to influence the House's decisions, had appealed to him to help get their petitions accepted, Tupou did not do so, and none of them was passed.

Tupou did however, use his influence over Parliament in relation to other issues, and he was responsible for preventing the House from passing some unwise laws. On 9 June

22 *Ibid.*

23 R. Beckwith-Leefe to H.S. Berkeley, 30 May 1897, W.P.H.C. Archives.

24 *Fiji Times*, 17 July 1897.

he informed Parliament that its decision to exclude Roman Catholics from the proposed compulsory assistance in the building of Government primary schools in the villages was wrong because the schools were for public use and the Government was not a religious denomination.²⁵ His Majesty also pointed out to the House that its decision to empower the nobles and the town officers to take away garden plots from people who had not lived in their villages for over two years was contrary to the spirit and the letter of the Constitution. Article 119, he wrote, clearly declared that garden plots were hereditary and that the only way their legal holders could lose them was by failing to pay the estate owner the annual rent of four shillings or the Government their poll taxes for two consecutive years. He told Parliament that the only improvement upon the existing laws was to require the estate holder not simply to take away the land of a tenant whose rent was overdue, but to sue him in the magistrate's court.²⁶ By making Parliament accept these proposals, Tupou was able to prevent the nobles from resuming one of the principal powers by which they had dominated the commoners.

The younger membership of Tupou's new Government gave hopes of the rejuvenation of government work after two years of little other than routine administration. The return of Tuku'aho, with his well known Wesleyan sympathies and popularity among Europeans, promised to lead to a reduction of opposition from these people to Government. Besides, most people saw him as a more positive check on Sateki and a better helper to the King than the weak Tu'ipelehake.

²⁵ Tupou to Tuku'aho, 6 June 1897, Palace Office collection.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

On the other hand, however, the new members of the Cabinet had greatly strengthened Sateki's position in it. Fu'apau was his brother-in-law. Ma 'atu, the son of Tae and the brother of 'Ofa, had recently married Sateki's eldest daughter Fusi. This meant that even Tuku'aho himself had kinship obligations to Sateki as the father-in-law of his *fahu*. Under these circumstances, it was unlikely that Tuku'aho would risk losing his new appointment or spoil his kinship relationship by opposing Sateki. In any event, before there was any real chance for him to achieve the changes he was expected to make, Tuku'aho collapsed and died of a heart attack at Tofoa while out riding with the King.²⁷

This time Tupou finally appointed Fatafehi as the Chairman of Parliament and Minister of Lands. To succeed him as the Governor of Ha'apai, Tupou appointed Sione Mateialona, a capable chief who had been educated in Tupou College and in Auckland. Mateialona was the illegitimate son of 'Isileli Tupou who was the illegitimate son of Tupou I by one of his kitchen hands, Pasikole. Mateialona's mother was Veisia Moalapau'u, the daughter of the Vava'u chief Fulivai Ke-moe-'Atu, whose mother Palu Vava'u was the agnatic sister of Fatu. Veisia's mother was Hulita Tu'ifua, who was the daughter of Tu'i Ha'angana Liufau and the mother also of Fusipala's mother, Fifita Vava'u. Thus Mateialona was a very high chief except for the embarrassingly low rank of his father's mother. He was the kinship inferior of especially Fatafehi and Taufa'ahau and also of Fusipala, and he was of *fahu* descent and close kin to Tungi and to the Tu'i Ha'angana. He was a staunch Wesleyan and his wife Sela was the daughter of Kata, also a well known pillar of the Wesleyan church.

Like Maealiuaki, Mateialona had also been one of the Wesleyan exiles to Fiji in 1887, a fact that may have been partly responsible for his close association with Fatafehi. As such, the new appointments had strengthened the anti-Sateki party to an extent where divisions within Cabinet were bound to increase.

At this stage, Government was faced with its first major financial crisis since Tupou II's succession. The shaky financial situation in 1895 had been worsened by the hurricanes of 1896 and the droughts of 1897. With expenses such as the allowances and food for the Members of Parliament during the House's recent and extraordinarily long session of twelve weeks, Government was finally unable even to keep the Civil Servants salaries up to date.²⁸ It therefore borrowed £500 from the German firm Deutsche Handel's- und Plantagen-Gesellschaft (the D.H.P.G., as it is known). In July 1898, when Commander Sturdee of H.M.S. *Porpoise* visited Tonga, he found the Government owing about nine months' salary to the civil servants and seeking a further loan of £2000 from the same firm. Furthermore, the Government, in return for two years' credit, had signed an agreement with the Polish-Hungarian Jew, Meyer Hutter, to buy all their supplies from his store.²⁹ Since Hutter charged about twenty per cent more than the other traders, this arrangement was destined to drain Government's finances even further and to reduce severely its chances of getting out of debt. Since Hutter had at the same time extended credit to Tupou,

28 Commander F.C.D. Sturdee to Rear Admiral H.L. Pearson, 25 July 1898, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

29 *Ibid.*

Sateki, Fatafehi and Kupu, the Government was dangerously vulnerable to his influence.

In the following year Tupou made a decision that divided the people, especially in Nuku'alofa, almost as much as the Free Church of Tonga-Wesleyan controversy had done. This concerned his choice of a bride. In 1896 there were widespread rumours that he would marry the pretty socialite Miss Jane von Treskow.³⁰ Parliament registered its objection to this choice when it presented Tupou with its own nominations. This was only natural since although Jane was partly Tongan her Tongan descent was not of royal or aristocratic blood. She was therefore socially and politically unacceptable, and Tupou was fully aware of this,³¹ though he probably still decided to marry her. This would explain why he had quietly ordered a wedding ring and a wedding cake from Auckland in 1897,³² without announcing who was to be his bride. It would also explain why this wedding did not eventuate.

30

J.B. Thurston to the Marquis of Salisbury, 3 December 1896; T.B. Cusack-Smith, British Vice Consul, Samoa to the Marquis of Salisbury, 29 December 1896, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

31

Ibid.; Commander F.C.D. Sturdee to Rear Admiral H.L. Pearson, 25 July 1898, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

32

Tupou to S. Baker, 22 May 1897, Palace Office collection.

The local favourite, however, was the beautiful and haughty 'Ofa-ki-Vava'u Ma'atu.³³ As the daughter of the high chief Ma'atu and the *fahu* of the Tungi line she was socially and especially politically the most suitable match for His Majesty. There was even a tacit understanding between the Houses of Tupou and Tungi that the two would marry, and Tupou had strengthened this idea with his regular courtship of 'Ofa. Since about 1898, however, Tupou had also been courting Lavinia Veiongo Kupu. She was not as beautiful as 'Ofa and she was certainly more unassuming in manner. Her mother Tokanga was the daughter of Fotofili, the noble of Niuafou'u, and his wife Kalolaine, neither of whom was of truly aristocratic descent. Since social rank is acquired from the mother, Lavinia, as Tokanga's daughter, was not, therefore, considered equal in rank to Tae's daughter. Lavinia's maternal grandmother, after whom she was named, however, was the *fahu* of the Tu'i Tonga line and of Tupou I and his children. She was in fact the most highly ranked woman in the land.

A keen and bitter rivalry soon developed between the two sides. The supporters of each side, especially those of 'Ofa, tried to poison the King's ears against the opposition, to disrupt his communications with them and generally to embarrass them. There were numerous verbal clashes, and occasionally violence. Tupou, of course, fanned this animosity by continuing to court both girls.

33 *Fiji Times*, 1 December 1894.

Early in 1899, however, Tupou told the chiefs to prepare for his long awaited marriage, which was to take place soon. Towards the end of April Tupou summoned all the principal chiefs to Nuku'alofa to discuss his choice for a bride. The wedding was to take place five days after this meeting.³⁴

On 22 May the chiefs met at Parliament House. The King then informed them by letter that he had decided to marry Lavinia. The chiefs were up in arms. There ensued a stormy meeting, followed by a vote of seventeen to seven in favour of 'Ofa. That same day, when this decision was conveyed to Tupou, he replied that his original decision was to stand. The chiefs met again the following day and again they asked Tupou to change his mind. Again Tupou refused. Two days later the chiefs called on him with the same request as before. This time Tupou lost his temper. He told the chiefs that that they ought to have been grateful for having been consulted at all. Their approval was unnecessary and the monarch's approval required by the Constitution would be given only for Lavinia. Besides, Tupou threatened, if he did not marry Lavinia then he would not marry at all. Silenced but not pleased by this response the chiefs then tried to make their peace with Tupou, but he refused to speak to them. On 1 June he and Lavinia were married at the Royal Chapel.³⁵

These were not the only undesirable consequences of Tupou's choice, however. The hostility towards the King and the Queen was so strong that Tupou placed guards around the Palace, and they rarely went outside the grounds. Three months later

34 Sateki to R. Beckwith-Leefe, 11 May 1899, W.P.H.C. Archives.

35 *Fiji Times*, 17 June 1899.

eight houses belonging to supporters of the two sides were burned down in Nuku'alofa. Tu'ipelehake then held a special *fono* (meeting) where he warned that the whole of Nuku'alofa would pay for any such damages to property.³⁶ Barely one month later the house of Tu'^uzhetoka, a landed matapule who was sympathetic to Tupou, was also burnt out.³⁷ Even by May 1900, when Seddon visited Nuku'alofa, Tupou, Lavinia and their two month old daughter Salote Mafile'o Pilolevu, were still very much confined to the Palace.³⁸

36 *Ibid.*, 4 November 1899.

37 *Ibid.*, 6 December 1899.

38 *The Right Hon. R.J. Seddon's Visit to Tonga, Fiji, Savage Island, and the Cook Islands*, Government Printer, Wellington, 1900, p.21.

CHAPTER 7

THE ANGLO-TONGAN 'TREATY'

After her annexation of Fiji (which lies directly leeward from Tonga), where Tongan socio-political influence was superior to that of other neighbours and where the Tongan chief Ma'afu had become one of the two most powerful conquerors, it was clear that Great Britain would not wish to see any other power become predominant in Tonga. In the 1880s, political strife in Samoa had become more frequent, making it essential for the powers most involved in her affairs (Germany, Great Britain and the United States) to determine what Samoa's Government and their future participation in it was going to be. In January 1887 Thurston, then Acting High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, suggested to the Colonial Office that since German commercial and political involvements in Samoa exceeded those of the other powers and Germany ardently desired to control that island group, and since Tonga was virtually a British dependency, Great Britain, if she decided to support Germany's wishes, should do so with a request for Germany to surrender her claims in Tonga to Great Britain.¹ Subsequently, Lord Salisbury, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, told Count Von Hatzfeldt, the German Ambassador to England, that in order to allay the Australian colonies' opposition to German control of Samoa, Germany should leave Tonga to British influence.² In February 1887 Baron Von Plessen, on behalf of Hatzfeldt, verbally informed Salisbury that Tonga was most important to Germany and that, contrary to Thurston's claim, German commercial interests

¹ Memorandum by Sir E. Hertslet, 15 April 1887, F.O. 58, Foreign Office Papers.

² *Ibid.*

in Tonga were superior to those of Great Britain. However, he indicated German willingness to accept the British proposal by adding that Germany would not be indisposed towards such an arrangement should Britain's trade and influence in Tonga exceed those of Germany.³ In April, however, having received an official British Memorandum reiterating Great Britain's desire to return Tonga to her sphere of influence and adding that German trade was fast falling below that of the British, Hatzfeldt replied that, since Great Britain wanted to be the only European influence in Tonga, she must offer Germany more than a mere approval for her to run the Government of Samoa under a commission from Great Britain and the United States.⁴ On receiving this information, the Colonial Office advised the Foreign Office that any arrangement by which Great Britain was to become the sole European influence in Tonga must include Tonga's other Treaty partners, France and the United States; furthermore that since the United States had killed the Washington Conference in 1887 by refusing to let Germany control Samoa, it was unlikely to accept the Thurston proposal, and perhaps the matter should be dropped for a while.⁵

This the British Government had done until October 1898, when it received Commander Sturdee's report of the Tongan Government's financial mess and its dependence on German money. In January 1899, the Colonial Office also received information from Earnest Maxse, British Consul in Samoa, that the German Consul in that island and the Director of D.H.P.G. were about to go to Tonga, the latter in connection with a proposal for a loan to the Tongan Government.⁶ By then Salisbury's successor, Joseph

3 *Ibid.*

4 *Ibid.*

5 F.E.D. Sturdee to H.L. Pearson, 25 July 1898, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

6 *Ibid.*

Chamberlain, had analysed all British and German negotiations regarding the political control of Samoa and Tonga; when Germany informed Great Britain of her intention to occupy the Caroline Islands, he advised the Foreign Office not to object but to couple its approval with a reminder that Britain expected Germany to do likewise should she decide to make her relationship with Tonga closer.⁷

Unable to secure such a definite commitment from Germany, and with fresh rumours of German intention to annex Vava'u, the Colonial and Foreign Offices decided to impress the Germans with Britain's right to predominate in Tonga, while at the same time devising some means of preventing Germany from strengthening her position in Tonga.⁸ The Admiralty suggested that Tupou should be made to promise that no coaling station in Tonga would be fortified.⁹ Realising Tonga's inability to impose such a restriction on the Germans, the Colonial Office suggested and the Foreign Office concurred that the only practical solution was to obtain an agreement from Tupou not to cede any part of his territory or sovereignty to any other power but Great Britain, and that now was the time to approach Germany again for a fresh engagement about Tonga.¹⁰

In accordance with the first part of this plan the Foreign Office obtained the Treasury's approval to offer the King of Tonga a loan of no more than £6000 to induce him to agree to the British proposal for the new Anglo-Tonga Agreement.¹¹ In February 1899 the Colonial Office

7 Marquess of Salisbury, Colonial Office to Sir F. Lascelles, Foreign Office, 11 January 1899, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

8 Colonial Office to Foreign Office, 12 January 1899, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

9 J. Anderson, Foreign Office to Under Secretary of State, Colonial Office, 16 January 1899, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

10 F.H. Villiers, Foreign Office to Under Secretary of State, Colonial Office, 20 January 1899, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

11 F. Howatt, Treasury to Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 11 February 1899; F.H. Villiers, Foreign Office to Admiralty, 11 February 1899, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

telegraphed instructions to the Commander in Chief of the Australia Station to send a man-of-war to Tonga to offer Tupou the loan and seek his approval for the proposed agreement. When Commander L.C. Stuart of H.M.S. *Tauranga* arrived in Tonga, Tupou and his Government, strongly suggesting that the loan for D.H.P.G. had already been obtained, did not accept the British offer for a loan.¹² But probably because rumours of imminent German annexation of Tonga were then particularly strong, and encouraged by assurances that Great Britain did not intend to annex Tonga, Tupou accepted the proposed Anglo-Tonga Agreement.¹³

Coinciding with Britain's intention to approach Germany again about Tonga was the Emperor's determination to settle the question of European control of Samoa once and for all, and in Germany's favour. The result was that on 14 November 1899 a new Anglo-German Agreement was signed.¹⁴ Great Britain withdrew all her rights and claims to Upolu and Savai'i in return for similar German concessions in Tonga. Although the United States refused to allow this agreement to abrogate her right to have a coaling station in Tonga, she, in return for British and German acknowledgement of her control of Tutu'ila, assured Britain that she had no intention of using this right.¹⁵ And so Britain was finally the sole European power with influence in Tonga.

In order to ensure conclusively that Tonga would remain a possible coaling and repair station for the Australian colonies, and that it could never harbour another power and thereby threaten the security as

12 G.M. O'Brien to J. Chamberlain, 22 March 1899; Report of L. Stuart to H.L. Pearson, 20 March 1899, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

13 Copy of Anglo-Tonga Agreement, 14 March 1899, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

14 Copy of Anglo-German Agreement, 14 November 1899, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

15 Colonial Office minute to J. Chamberlain, 30 November 1899, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

well as the commercial transactions of these colonies, Chamberlain proposed to Salisbury that there should be a more binding arrangement with Tonga.¹⁶ Salisbury concurred in this view and the British Government selected Basil Thomson, on the basis of his good relations with and knowledge of the people to obtain a new Treaty with Tonga.¹⁷

As was consistent with its origin and purpose, the Draft Treaty¹⁸ that Thomson carried with him was geared to the satisfaction of England's interests and only incidentally to those of Tonga. Article I required Tupou 'freely and unreservedly' to place 'himself his subjects and his Dominions' under the protection of the British Crown, while Article II gave Britain sole control of all Tongan foreign relations.¹⁹ In Article III, Tupou, in return for British protection against external hostility, was to allow English officers free access to Tongan waters and harbours and the British Government to lease any sites or harbours as coaling and repairing stations. Britain was to also have the right to fortify these stations, and Tonga was required to co-operate in their defence, should the need for it arise. A British Resident concerned only with matters relating to foreigners but available to advise on internal matters was provided for in Article IV, while Article V brought most of the criminal and civil jurisdictions over all foreigners under the British Agent. Changing the situation that had obtained since 1879, Article VII required all foreigners to be amenable to Tongan jurisdiction only in matters relating to customs, taxation, public health and local

¹⁶ Colonial Office minute to Sir R. Herbert, 12 December 1899, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

¹⁷ Colonial Office to Foreign Office, 16 December 1899; F.H. Villiers, Foreign Office to Colonial Office, 29 December 1899, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

¹⁸ Copy of Draft Treaty, Colonial Office, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

police. Finally, the Anglo-Tonga Treaty of 29 November 1879 was to be abrogated by this proposed treaty, which was to be deemed as operative from the date it was signed.

In a special communication, Chamberlain instructed Thomson not to give any direct assurance that England would not annex Tonga, in case 'circumstances may arise either in connection with the internal affairs of the Islands, or otherwise, in which they might consider it necessary to do so.'²⁰ Furthermore, Thomson was discreetly and 'without exciting suspicion in the minds of the King and people [to] endeavour to find out how such an act, if it should become necessary, was likely to be received, and particularly if there was any likelihood of active resistance to it.'²¹ Finally, he was to try and find out whether Tonga would prefer the Consul to be under the Governor of Fiji or of New Zealand, a precursor to the consideration whether British or New Zealand annexation would be preferable to the Tongans.

A strong believer in the inherent inability of Pacific Islanders to operate a Western political system and understandably proud of his selection for this mission, Thomson had strong personal reasons for successfully concluding the Treaty. Judging from his repeated and ultimately successful representations to the Colonial Office after his return to England to be knighted for his success in Tonga,²² his desire for a decoration was very strong and may have even been prominent in his mind before he set out for Tonga. Besides, he had never liked Tupou II or respected him as King, or even as a man, and he had been angered by

20 R.L. Antrobus, Colonial Office to B. Thomson, 20 January 1900, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

21 *Ibid.*

22 Foreign Office to Colonial Office 17 December 1900, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

his dismissal of Tuku'aho. Tupou, on the other hand, had equally powerful reasons for wishing to frustrate Thomson's mission. He was passionately attached to Tonga's independence, and he was a lover of power and prestige. Thomson's intruding mission was bound to be repugnant to him and he was likely to resist him with all his might.

On 9 April 1900, Thomson arrived in Nuku'alofa in H.M.S. *Porpoise*.²³ Although the circumstance was not a part of the English scheme Tonga was then in a particularly weak position for bargaining, especially with a European power. The German declaration of a Protectorate over Samoa had been followed, on 1 March, by the hoisting of the German flag in Apia, an act that was presumed in Tonga to constitute annexation. On 2 April, a severe hurricane at Vava'u, the chief producer of copra in Tonga, had destroyed most of the cocoanut trees there and seriously set back Government's chances of economic recovery. Besides, this was the period of the bitter clashes and acts of incendiarism that Tupou's marriage had caused. Only the week before Thomson's arrival more houses had been burnt. Worse still, Tupou and Lavinia were not only unpopular; they were afraid to leave the palace for fear of possible attacks. Consequently, there was little chance of Tupou and Tonga making a united and strong stand against any undesirable aspects of the proposed Treaty.

Although Thomson discovered that there was already expectation in Tonga that he had come to hoist the British flag and take over the kingdom for Great Britain,²⁴ this, as he was to find out soon, did not constitute Tongan willingness to accept such a situation. Fearing that Tupou's

²³ Thomson's official report of Mission to Tonga to J. Chamberlain, 28 May 1900, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers,

²⁴ *Ibid.*

apparent objection to British intrusion upon his sovereignty might cause him to reject the whole Treaty, while at the same time realising the importance of the right for coaling stations to his Government, Thomson decided to negotiate for the latter first and separately from the Treaty. After obtaining the King's permission for this Thomson and Fatefehi sailed for Vava'u on 15 April and surveyed the site chosen. On their return to Tongatapu, they surveyed the site of the second coaling station at Ma'ufanga and signed the documents giving Britain ninety-nine year leases to both. Apparently still not having received Tupou's approval for the Draft Treaty, Thomson sailed for Niue on 19 April where he carried out another part of his mission, the declaration of a British Protectorate over that island. In this new position of strength he arrived back at Nuku'alofa for the third time in sixteen days to try and secure the Treaty he had come to make.²⁵

According to Thomson, between then and 1 May he discussed the proposed Treaty three times with Privy Council.²⁶ Faced with the chiefs' fears that acceptance might endanger Tonga's independence, he suggested that the words 'without prejudice to the sovereignty of the King of Tonga' be added to Article I,²⁷ after which 'all the members present, including the King expressed their acceptance of the Treaty'.²⁸ On 2 May, however, Tupou sent him the following communication:²⁹

I write this letter in reply to the questions you put to me yesterday, which were as follows:-

1. What is our mind towards the new Treaty? And our answer

25 *Ibid.*

26 *Ibid.*

27 *Ibid.*

28 *Ibid.*

29 Tupou to B. Thomson, 2 May 1900, No. 1, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

is, we agree to it, but the first section only is difficult to us where the word 'protection' is used.

2. Your second question. Who is to be appointed our Plenipotentiary for this Treaty? Our reply is George Fatafehi.
3. Your third question. On what day will the Treaty be concluded? Our reply is, on the day we are agreed about it it shall be concluded.

Do not be pained at this letter Mr Thomson, for I agree to everything that is in the Treaty; it is only the first section that appears difficult to me, and if you will consent to alter the first section it would be easy for us to agree on the matter.

You asked whether the Consul should be under the Government of Fiji or that of New Zealand. And my reply is, let the British Government decide where their Consul shall take his orders. I answer thus because it is difficult for us to meddle in things that concern the British Government. And also because it had never been the custom in former years to inquire from us from whom the Consul is to take his orders.

Tupou II

Quite clearly from this letter, the King had presumed that no agreement had been made and that the Treaty was still being discussed. The letter gives no indication whatsoever that there had been any acceptance of the Treaty, as Thomson had claimed. Unfortunately, this glaring contradiction in the recollections of the two principal negotiators can not be fully elucidated, for the only account of it is Thomson's report to Chamberlain. What is certain is that one of them had either deliberately or unknowingly misrepresented the outcome of their meetings. In the absence of accounts from others similarly involved or informed on

these meetings, the next best check on the two men's recollections would have been Thomson's reply to Tupou's letter. Surprisingly enough, considering how highly relevant if not essential his letters were to an official account of his mission, Thomson did not, except for his letter to Tupou on the day he left Tonga, either enclose or describe in his report any of the six or more other letters he wrote Tupou on the subject of the Treaty. The certainty with which Tupou, in his letter of 2 May, tabulated Thomson's questions and his answers to them, suggests the King was sufficiently clear that no treaty had been settled. At the same time, however, Tupou's appeal to Thomson for forgiveness after receiving Thomson's reply to this letter³⁰ suggests that the British Special Commissioner had caught His Majesty out in some wrong action. Considering it was not at all unusual for Tupou to revoke his decisions, and that Thomson could not really expect not to be found out by his Government had he deliberately and completely made up his explanation to the Colonial Office, it was highly likely that Tupou had knowingly misrepresented the truth to some extent. Thus it was that not only was he excessively apologetic in his second letter to Thomson on 2 May but he also begged the Special Commissioner to come and see him the next day (with the implication that he was then going to do as Thomson had asked).

At their interview on 3 May, Tupou asked Thomson to replace the word *lalafi* (to hide by or to snuggle up to for comfort or security), which then stood as the Tongan translation for protection (*malu'i*) in Article I, with the word *falala* (to lean against, to rely on).³¹ Thomson agreed to this, but owing to his wrong translation or perhaps

³⁰ *Ibid.*, No. 2.

³¹ B. Thomson's official report to J. Chamberlain, 28 May 1900, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

deliberate use of *lalafi* to mean protection he regarded Tupou's request as unnecessary and peculiar. Although *falala* was not a completely correct translation for protection either, it more positively committed Great Britain to protect Tonga. Thus it was preferable in Tupou's eyes and much closer in meaning to the English text. As was his habit when he was not in agreement with anything, Tupou told Thomson that he must refer the matter to some other authority and that he needed time to do so. The people he decided to consult were the chiefs, who were then due in Tonga for Parliament. Thomson agreed and Tupou immediately sent for them.³²

While waiting for the chiefs to arrive, Thomson claimed, he sought out the feelings of the Tongatapu chiefs on the proposed Treaty and found that Fatafehi, Tungi, Mateialona, Ata and Vaea were openly in favour of a British Protectorate; many of the lesser chiefs felt the same but were afraid to voice their opinions.³³ The inference Thomson drew from this of there having been a general agreement among the Tongans to surrender their country to British protection was, at the most, only partially correct. All the chiefs he named were still very bitter towards Tupou for his humiliation of 'Ofa and Tungi and his rejection of Parliament's advice to marry her. Besides, Thomson's closest friends in Tonga were the late Tuku'aho and Tungi, and it would have been exceptionally unusual for him not to have met Tungi earlier than after 3 May, as he claimed in his report. Thomson stayed at Fongoloa, only about five hundred yards from Latai, and it would have been very unlikely for him not to have visited the aged and blind Tungi soon after his arrival, if only to see how he was. Tungi on the other hand would have almost certainly sent Thomson a *ha'unga*, an act that would have compelled

32 *Ibid.*

33 *Ibid.*

Thomson to communicate with him. That Thomson soon shared the depth of the bitterness of Tungi and his supporters against Queen Lavinia is evident from his description of her as suffering from the dual defects of very low birth on her mother's side and a hereditary taint of scrofula,³⁴ and his failure to mention her high rank through Kupu and the suitability of her gentle and humble nature as a wife for the haughty and often unruly Tupou. Thomson and the chiefs he named had common grounds for opposition to Tupou, and the reduction of the King's sovereignty would have been, especially from the point of view of the chiefs, appropriate revenge for his recent insult. Consequently the willingness that had been shown by Tungi and the chiefs who supported him for a British Protectorate could not have sprung entirely from a genuine acceptance of its terms.

On 16 May, Tupou and Thomson met with forty chiefs.³⁵ In an error of simple fact unexpected from a man with Thomson's official and social experience in Tonga, he described these chiefs as *nopēle* (nobles) or landed and titled chiefs, although there were only thirty noble titles in Tonga. In saying that only one noble was absent from the meeting and thereby implying that all the rightful leaders of Tonga were consulted about the Treaty, Thomson was using the wrong fact and drawing the correct conclusion from it. The forty men present were most probably all *hou'eiki* (chiefs) and mostly nobles, but they could not all have been nobles. As *hou'eiki*, however, and as constituting the majority of Parliament, they represented Tonga in accordance with both Tongan and Western standards.

34 *Ibid.*

35 *Ibid.*

Thomson was the first to address the meeting; he explained the terms of the Draft Treaty and encouraged the chiefs to accept.³⁶ When Tupou followed him, he, contrary to his earlier promises, successfully persuaded the chiefs to accept only those parts of the Treaty which he accepted. This suggested that the influence of the Tungi faction had failed to overcome the strength of traditional obedience to the King and dislike for foreign intrusion. That his speech, as Thomson and Mateialona claimed, had been largely tailored by Father Ollier, ought not, as it did in Thomson's report to have obscured these points. The meeting completely rejected the British draft for Article I, and replaced it with one that guaranteed the independence of Tonga for all time.³⁷ When Thomson then asked Tupou to sign the rest of the Treaty His Majesty temporized, suggesting that he may have also been unwilling to agree to parts of the remaining articles.

When Thomson reminded him of his written acceptance of these articles, His Majesty, in what the Special Commissioner described as a change of front, invited himself to dinner at Thomson's residence on the following evening and promised to sign the Treaty before he returned home. The probable explanation for this, however, was that the King had been surprised and shaken by the dangerous significance that Thomson had attached to his letter and that he needed time either to think about it or to confer with his advisers. Also Tupou was probably still hopeful that he would be able to persuade Thomson to accept the Treaty that he wanted.

On the following evening, the British plenipotentiary discovered Tupou's second major objection to the Treaty. His Majesty flatly refused

36 *Ibid.*

37 *Ibid.*

to sign unless Thomson removed from Article II the requirement that Tonga should refrain from all foreign relations of any kind 'except under the sole advice and through the channel of Her Majesty's Government'.³⁸

Judging from His Majesty's stubborn resistance to Thomson's further efforts to persuade him to drop this objection, and his apparent inclination to scrap the Treaty altogether if his wishes were not obliged, it seems almost certain that Tupou had finally decided, perhaps on the basis of renewed confidence derived from Father Ollier's assurances of French protection against British pressure,³⁹ that there should neither be a British Protectorate over Tonga nor British control of its foreign relations. Without these provisions however, the Treaty would have been virtually useless to England and Thomson's mission to Tonga would have been a failure.

In Thomson's own words, the next developments were as follows:

Accordingly, I invited him to state what he was prepared to sign, and I said that I would accept it on condition that the remainder of the Treaty was signed immediately, at the same time, warning him that he would be held bound by his written engagement of the 2nd May. The Treaty was signed at 2 a.m. on the morning of the 18th.⁴⁰

Quite apart from the fact that success rather than reason and ethics was Thomson's and Great Britain's chief concern, Thomson's logic in the light of this information is amazingly foggy. The section of Tupou's letter he had used to make Article II binding on the King in the way that a Treaty did contained the words 'What is our mind towards the new Treaty? And our answer is, we agree to it'.⁴¹ If, by virtue of this

38 *Ibid.*

39 *Ibid.*

40 *Ibid.*

41 Tupou to B. Thomson, 2 May 1900, No. 1, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

statement, Article II became binding on Tupou, then so must the remaining articles to which the statement also applied. In this case there was no need for Thomson's continuation of the negotiations for the acceptance of Articles III to VIII after 2 May, and certainly no need for the Treaty that was signed on 18 May. Conversely, if Articles III to VIII had not become binding on Tonga after 2 May, as Thomson obviously and correctly believed, then neither could Article II. What is clear, therefore, is that Thomson, in order to give his illegal and forceful abduction of Tonga's control of her foreign relations the legality and respectability of a mutually agreed Treaty, had at least to explain it in this way. In 1902 when the then British Consul in Tonga, W. Hamilton Hunter asked the Colonial Office for an official definition of the status of the other powers' Consular representatives for Tonga, the British Government finally admitted to itself, although only privately, that Thomson's proceedings in Tonga and British acceptance of the special clause of the Treaty were questionable. For that reason the Colonial and Foreign Offices decided to depart from the usual procedure and not publish the Treaty.⁴²

For Tupou to have been 'obstinately determined to resist [Article II] at all costs'⁴³ whilst at the same time (as Thomson clearly implied in his report) signing a Treaty which he understood to accept the same indirectly, is difficult to believe. Judging from his prompt approval and co-operation in securing the sites and leases for the British coaling stations, and his continuation of the negotiations, Tupou seemed to have been quite willing to sign a new Treaty with Great Britain. In his letter to Thomson on 7 May, however, Tupou had asked 'If a great and powerful State wishes to make a Treaty with a small and weak State, is it right that the

⁴² Colonial Office minute by H.E. Dale, 29 March 1902, C.O.225
Colonial Office Papers.

⁴³ B. Thomson's official report to J. Chamberlain,
28 May 1900, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

small and weak State should be punished by the strong State because it does not wish to make the Treaty?⁴³ and 'Will England punish poor Tonga for wishing to keep the existing Treaty of Friendship she made with England?'⁴⁴ In view of these points, and his continued resistance to the British drafts for Articles I and II, Tupou must have wanted either a new Treaty to his liking or the retention of the old one. With the pressure of Thomson's powerful chiefly supporters on him to sign the British Draft, Tupou may have felt that he had to sign something and the second best thing to a Treaty, including his drafts for Articles I and II, was one consisting only of the British draft for Articles III to VIII. The Treaty Tupou signed on 18 May was indeed just that.⁴⁵ For it to have embraced a corollary to which Tupou was bitterly opposed could only mean that His Majesty had been fooled or forced or had misunderstood something. If Thomson's explanation that he had warned Tupou beforehand that 'he would be held bound by his written engagement of the 2nd May'⁴⁶ meant that he did not specifically and clearly tell His Majesty that that meant the indirect reading into the Treaty of the original British draft for Article II, then it is highly likely that Tupou had not been fully aware that that was what Thomson's warning meant. On the day Thomson left Tonga, Tupou, obviously referring to Articles I and II of the Draft Treaty, wrote to him saying, 'We did not refuse the Treaty from arrogance or dislike, but only because we did not feel able to accept it for our land could not be justly seized for having wronged any State, or having broken any Treaty, but only for having wished

⁴³ Tupou to B. Thomson, 7 May 1900, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Copy of Anglo-Tongan Treaty, 18 May 1900, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

⁴⁶ B. Thomson's official report to J. Chamberlain, 28 May 1900, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

to keep ourselves independent.⁴⁷ Given his limited understanding of Thomson's warning and ignorance of the illegality of Thomson's action, Tupou seemed to have accepted what Thomson put to him on the night of 18 May.

On the morning of 19 May, just before he left Tonga, Thomson completed his emergency plan for achieving the whole of his mission. Having failed to persuade Tupou to surrender Tonga to British protection voluntarily, and convinced that Ollier, although not acting under official French instructions, was trying to bring about a Treaty of Protection between Tonga and France, Thomson decided that he must proclaim Tonga a British Protectorate. After taking his leave of Tupou, his Cabinet and the chiefs at the Palace, Thomson went to the square in front of the Post Office about three hundred yards from the Palace and there read the following proclamation in English and in Tongan:

Whereas His Majesty the King of Tonga has been pleased to sign an Agreement, dated the 2nd May 1900, and a Treaty dated 18th May 1900, wherein he agrees that his relations with foreign powers shall be conducted under the sole advice of His Britannic Majesty's Government, and that Her Majesty shall protect his dominions from external hostile attacks, it is hereby proclaimed that a Protectorate by Her Britannic Majesty has been established accordingly, and all persons concerned are commanded to take notice of this establishment.⁴⁸

Since Tupou had explicitly rejected the declaration of a Protectorate and had not even been informed before Thomson made his proclamation,

⁴⁷ Tupou to B. Thomson, 19 May 1900, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

⁴⁸ B. Thomson's official report to J. Chamberlain, 28 May 1900, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

this was a simple act of force. The first and only information which Tupou received from Thomson about the change in his kingdom's status, was from the notice the Special Commissioner sent him after his proclamation and just before his departure. In replying to this notice, Tupou revealed that he had finally accepted the painful truth that British might, and not justice or Tonga's rights, was the only thing which counted. Tupou wrote, 'I thought that the British flag would have been hoisted this morning, and if it had been done we should have been content, for that is the way with strong Governments.'⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Tupou to B. Thomson, 19 May 1900, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

CHAPTER 8

FURTHER CORRUPTION AND EROSION OF INDEPENDENCE

On 16 February 1901, the Anglo-Tongan Treaty was ratified. G. O'Brien, then High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, represented Britain. After the ceremony O'Brien introduced the newly appointed British Consul, W. Hamilton Hunter,¹ to Tupou and his ministers. Hunter was fifty-five years old and had been in the British Colonial Service for some twenty-seven years. Apart from a brief term as Acting British Consul in Samoa in 1899, all of his years of service had been spent in Fiji, where he had been Chief Police Magistrate, Stipendary Magistrate of Cakaudrove, Official Receiver in Bankruptcy, Registrar of the Supreme Court and Acting High Commissioner for the Western Pacific.² In recommending him to the Colonial Office for the new post, O'Brien had described him as an efficient and skilful administrator. On his return to Fiji from Tonga, O'Brien again informed London that Hunter, unlike Leefe, would know how to put Tupou's vanity to good use.³

¹ Dr Deryck Scarr, biographer of J.B. Thurston, says (pers.comm.) that Hunter started life in the Pacific as a planter. Thurston always considered Hunter 'anti-native' and a planters' man. For this reason Thurston, while Governor of Fiji, never promoted Hunter.

² G.H. Scholefield and E. Schwabe (eds), *Who's Who in New Zealand and the Western Pacific*. Wellington, 1908, p.82.

³ Sir G.T.M. O'Brien to J. Chamberlain, Secretary of State for the Colonies, 22 February 1901, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

Convinced that the Pacific Islanders attached great importance to the outward appearances of rank, and equally convinced of his own importance, Hunter attended first to the improvement of the British Consulate. With O'Brien's support he obtained permission from the Colonial and Foreign Offices to renovate the Residency, to erect a new flagstaff and to repair the old flags. He was equally successful in persuading the Foreign Office to acknowledge the proper rank of its Agency in Tonga by granting him a consular seal.⁴ Hunter then decided that the site of the Consulate was not large enough and on the first week of March 1901 he applied to Sateki for some of the land adjacent to it.⁵ After consultations between Tupou, Sateki and Fatafehi, it was decided that the Minister of Lands should negotiate with Hunter's neighbours for the extra land.⁶ On 18 March Fatafehi sent Mateialona to Sateki with the information that Hunter's neighbours had refused to co-operate. Fatafehi then suggested to the Premier that Hunter be given Baker's former home, Mala'e'aloa, as well as the land adjacent to it, which belonged to the Governor of 'Eua, Sipu. In return Sipu was to receive the existing British Consulate.⁷

Only two weeks beforehand, however, Sateki had sent to Auckland for Emil Hutter's brother-in-law, Edmund Lowe, to come to Tonga to a government appointment and to stay in this choice house.⁸

4 Sir G.T.M. O'Brien to Colonial Office, 1 May 1901, F.O. 58, Foreign Office Papers.

5 Sateki to Tupou, 18 March 1901, Royal correspondence.

6 *Ibid.*

7 *Ibid.*

8 *Ibid.*

This the King had not known - Sateki immediately wrote to him about it and he also suggested how the existing British Consulate could be enlarged.⁹ Tupou probably accepted this suggestion, for the Premier then went ahead and obtained the approval of the people concerned to give up their land for the British Consulate.¹⁰ Why Hunter's neighbours changed their minds cannot be ascertained, but it now began to appear as though Hunter had had his eyes on Mala'e'aloa all along because it was only half the distance of the existing Consulate from the Palace. He and his friend Fatafehi may have even discussed this before the latter had suggested Mala'e'aloa to Sateki. Thus it was that Hunter now refused to keep the old site and, through his representations, O'Brien asked Tupou to give the Consul all the assistance necessary for the selection and acquisition of a site within easy distance of the Palace. But Tupou, still appearing to accept Sateki's reasons for not giving Mala'e'aloa to Hunter, offered O'Brien the alternative site of Pangai. Traditionally the grounds for ceremonial and public occasions, Pangai was a costly compromise, and its loss was sure to arouse strong objections from the Tongans. Perhaps for that reason, Tupou, on 6 July, finally agreed to give Mala'e'aloa and Sipu's land to Hunter.¹¹

But the controversy over the new British Consulate was not yet over. O'Brien had insisted that Sipu must agree to give up his land before the new Consulate would be surveyed. The independently minded Sipu, however, took two months to agree to this.

9 *Ibid.*

10 *Ibid.*

11 W.L. Allardyce to Tupou, 22 July 1901, Royal correspondence.

On 3 September he and Fatafehi signed the Agreement whereby three days later he was to be paid £500 by Government and be given another piece of land.¹²

On 7 September, when the Government had not paid him his money, Sipu remained on his land and complained to Hunter about the Government's failure to keep its word.¹³ To prevent any further complications Fatafehi asked Sipu to move, promising that his money would be ready for him two days later. Sipu refused to do this, then immediately left for 'Eua. Eventually Sipu settled his differences with Government, but at that stage another complication arose. In the map of the proposed Consulate that he had sent O'Brien, Hunter had included two small sites, which Tupou and Sipu had clearly told him were the homes of an old widow and an old man by the name of Sioape.¹⁴ Hunter, however, was determined to have as few neighbours as possible, and he was glad that the proposed Consulate had the cemetery on its western side and the sea on its northern side; he wanted no homes between him and Mount Zion. Finally, when H.M.S. *Torch* arrived in Tonga in the last week of September, Hunter took the captain with him to the Palace and together they were able to make Tupou give Hunter all the land he had asked for.¹⁵

12 Sipu to Fatafehi Tu'ipelehake, 3 September 1901, W.P.H.C. Archives; Sipu to W.H. Hunter, 7 September 1901, Palace Office Collection.

13 *Ibid.*

14 Tupou to W.H. Hunter, 20 September 1901, W.P.H.C. Archives.

15 W.L. Allardyce to Tupou, 10 October 1901, Royal correspondence; Sateki to Fatafehi Tu'ipelehake, 25 September 1901, Premiers' correspondence.

Although the relationship between Tupou and Sateki and Hunter started off in this way, the King and the Premier would have been suspicious of the British Consul right from the start, whoever he might have been. Both the terms of the recently established formal relationship between Tonga and Great Britain, and the circumstances by which they had come about, would have guaranteed this. The Consul, on the other hand, now that he was responsible for all the Europeans and was aware of the British desire not to give any foreign power, especially Germany, an excuse to challenge Britain's predominance in Tonga by claiming that their citizens were not satisfactorily and fairly taken care of by the British Government, was compelled to use all his influence to protect the Europeans' interests. When to this was added the recent extension of the area of consular control of European affairs and Hunter's efficiency and dedication to his job, it was inevitable that consular contact with the Tongan authorities on behalf of the Europeans would increase. As it turned out, this was also going to lead to greater consular interference in the internal affairs of Tonga, on the grounds that the state of internal affairs affected the welfare of the Europeans. This meant that the Tongan Government, already under severe strain, was going to experience an intensification of official British pressure, which was the kind it was least able to absorb or control. On the other hand, the Tongan authorities, especially Tupou and Sateki, were not likely to submit without resistance or to accept even sound British advice with anything more than their usual skepticism. The scene was set for more numerous and more serious confrontations.

Whatever chances there might have been of minimizing this were virtually removed by two things. Firstly, Emil Hutter, already the man with the greatest influence on Tupou and even more so on Sateki, and the man consulted by the Premier on all important business of

Government and on matters concerning Europeans, was anti-British and opposed to any sign of European influence other than his own on the Tongan Government. He persistently reminded Tupou and Sateki that the Tongan Government was independent and not answerable to any one, that the British had no right to interfere in Tonga's affairs, and that the German Government was hovering somewhere in the background and waiting to rescue Tonga from the British bullies. He kept emphasising to the King and to the Premier that Europeans had no rights in Tonga, that they were not needed and that the Tongans were perfectly capable of running their own Government.¹⁶ In expressing these views, Hutter was basically motivated by his desire to be the only European influence on the Tongan Government so that he could continue his exploitation of Tonga for his own benefit.

Secondly, the new Anglo-Tongan Treaty, along with Hunter's apparent efficiency and confidence, caused an immediate rush in European requests for consular intervention in claims upon the Tongan Government and people. One of the most complicated cases was that of Mrs Krause, widow of a naturalised British subject. In 1898 she had arranged with one 'Esafe to rent part of his land in Nuku'alofa for twenty-one years at £20 per annum.¹⁷ They explained their arrangement to the Minister of Lands, who assured them that it satisfied all the requirements of the law and would be approved. On this assurance Mrs Krause gave 'Esafe £80. However, when Fatafehi, as he was required to do by law, submitted their application to Cabinet, Sateki caused the lease to be raised to £50 a year and no reasons were given. When Mrs Krause appealed for a reduction to within the £7 to £15 a year normally levied on European trading sites, Cabinet, again acting on Sateki's advice, replied that it could not alter a ruling.¹⁸ For the following three

16 Extracts from Correspondence between E. Hutter and Sateki, 1901-4.

17 Cabinet Minute Book, 1898.

18 *Ibid.*

years, Mrs Krause lived at this site while Beckwith-Leefe unsuccessfully pressed Tupou, Sateki and Cabinet to reduce her rent. Soon after Hunter's arrival Mrs Krause took her case again to him but when Hunter wrote to Tupou the King repeated what Cabinet had said in 1898.¹⁹

Some time between 1901 and 1903 Mrs Krause, perhaps now convinced that any more attempts to reduce her rent would be useless, arranged with Tevita Polutele Kaho, the heir to the noble title of Tu'ivakano, to live on his land in the trading centre of Nuku'alofa until 31 December 1904.²⁰ They signed a document guaranteeing Mrs Krause's right to live on Polutele's land. After paying him more money Mrs Krause moved her house and business to this new site. On 23 February, however, Cabinet instructed Fatafehi, again against his will, to instruct Mrs Krause - three months before the end of her arrangement with Polutele - to move all her property from Polutele's land. This Fatafehi did whereupon Polutele replied that the Government had no right to forbid him to have Mrs Krause on his land. Knowing that the strong-willed and outspoken Polutele, who had recently been dismissed by Sateki from the Premier's Office for insubordination, would continue to resist Cabinet's instruction, Tupou decided personally to persuade his former school-mate to refuse co-operation. His Majesty even offered to make him a noble and to give him more land if only he would sign the document limiting Mrs Krause's stay on his land to their existing arrangement.²¹ Polutele,

19 W.H. Hunter to Tupou, 20 June 1901; Tupou to W.H. Hunter, 20 September 1901, Palace Office collection.

20 E. Hutter to Sateki, 10 February 1904, Extracts from correspondence, 1901-4; Sateki to Tupou, 23 February 1904, Royal correspondence.

21 Tevita Polutele Kaho, confidential statement to W.H. Hunter, July 1904, W.P.H.C. Archives.

however, refused to oblige His Majesty, and thus began an enmity that did not heal until many years later. From the Palace Polutele went to Hunter and told him what had taken place between him and the King. He then wrote to the High Commissioner to use his influence to prevent Tupou and Sateki from their injustice to him and Mrs Krause.

According to Hunter, Hutter was at the bottom of the widow's persecution. Mrs Krause was successful in her business (as shown by her ability to pay these very high rents, the extra amounts of money she had given to 'Esafe and Polutele, and the approximately £500 worth of property she had on Polutele's land). This meant that she was a rival to the Hutters and therefore must, in what was said already to be Jewish fashion, be bullied out of her business.²² Moreover, some time before 1904 one of the Hutters (probably Emil, who had been living in Auckland since 1901) had asked Mrs Krause to buy his store off him, but the widow had refused because the shop was badly situated for trading with the Tongans. While these may have been good reasons for the hot-tempered Jew to hound Mrs Krause out of business, her unusually long and severe persecution suggests that Hutter may have had even stronger reasons for doing so, though there is no direct evidence of these. It was not until H.M.S. *Torch* visited Tonga again in the last week of October 1904 that Tupou gave in to Hunter on Mrs Krause's case.

Soon after he started on Mrs Krause's case Hunter had had a number of other differences with Government. His report to the Colonial Office on Tonga's trade and commerce for 1900 was late because he could not obtain from the Customs Department the necessary information.²³ Lee, Collector of Customs was corrupt and

22 W.H. Hunter to Sir H.N. Jackson, 24 July 1904, W.P.H.C. Archives.

23 W.H. Hunter to Foreign Office, 9 September 1901, F.O. 58, Foreign Office Papers.

inefficient. It was thus impossible to ascertain Tonga's annual imports and exports from his books. What books Hunter did see annoyed him further, because of their clear indication of favouritism in the application of the wharf regulations and other corruption. A few exporters were allowed to take their cargo to the wharf days before a ship's arrival while the rest were forbidden to do so until the ship had arrived.²⁴ Probably because his mind was then on the Customs Department, and after learning from von Treskow that he had never been charged any duty for his goods, Hunter asked Tupou to be given the same privilege. He also added that this was a privilege normally accorded to diplomats throughout the world. To this Tupou replied that he knew nothing about von Treskow being permitted to receive his goods free of duty and that Tongan law demanded duty from all except the King. Hunter's reply was that he, as the British Consul, was not amenable to Tongan law, a statement that would have infuriated the King even more. Thus it was that in September 1901, when Hunter related these incidents to the High Commissioner in his first comprehensive report on Tonga since his arrival, he added that the Government of Tonga was corrupt from top to bottom,²⁵ and devoid of 'any ideas of truth, honesty, or any other virtue, which would tend to guide them to do common justice to those living in the islands'.²⁶

24 *Ibid.*

25 W.H. Hunter to the Marquess of Landsdowne, Foreign Office, 9 September 1901, F.O. 58, Foreign Office Papers.

26 *Ibid.*

Hunter, in analysing the problems Europeans were having with land in Tonga, made an observation that was significantly different from those of his predecessors. In their efforts to protect and satisfy the Europeans' land interest in Tonga, former British representatives such as Beckwith-Leefe had based their requests and protest to the Tongan authorities, as well as their representations to the High Commissioners for help, on the allegation that the Tongan land laws were not justly carried out by Government. Hunter, however, went further than this to point out to the High Commissioner that there was an 'absence of any definite system of land tenure'²⁷ that was in turn, responsible for the 'uncertain and precarious'²⁸ state of British and foreign interests in Tonga. For this same reason, he added, the Tongan economy suffered because the 'working class'²⁹ would not plant any new coconuts for fear that they might not reap any profits. In short, it was the land system itself that was at fault. By going on to request the British Government to tackle this as the fundamental obstacle to European security in Tonga, Hunter was initiating moves for even greater British involvement in the internal affairs of Tonga. Hunter also summed up what Beckwith-Leefe had only hinted at by stating that, so long as Sateki remained the Premier, the unsatisfactory state of the Government and the Europeans would not end.³⁰

The situation in Tonga at this time, however, showed no signs of changing in any way acceptable to the British Consul or beneficial to good government. The estimated

27 W.H. Hunter to Sir G.T.M. O'Brien, 10 February 1902, W.P.H.C. Archives.

28 *Ibid.*

29 *Ibid.*

30 *Ibid.*

surplus of £24.1s.6d. for 1900 had been swallowed by deficiencies in the estimated revenue such as the £3,032.1s.6d. shortage in the poll-tax estimate.³¹ With the copra output for 1901 worse than that for the previous year, Government was quite clearly going to need credit, or another loan or both. This meant that it was going to be more heavily in debt and less able to pay it back. Besides, as was revealed in their correspondence, Hutter's influence on the aged Premier was becoming even stronger.³² True to the Jew's advice to order more and more from him so that the world could see that Tonga was prosperous Sateki, in the first three months of 1901, ordered stationery, tanks, drays, flour, ammunition, tools, and uniforms for the King and his Guards. Sateki also ordered a house for the Royal Guards but Tupou cancelled the order because he thought the cost was too high. With regard to other questions Hutter's advice was for more high-handed behaviour. In order to prevent one Maryanne Smith of Lifuka, Ha'apai, from receiving the land lease which a late Mr Smith, perhaps a relative, had willed to her, Hutter told Sateki to get Cabinet to raise the lease to £122 per annum. Since Fatafehi and Mateialona were agreeable to Maryanne's application, Hutter told Sateki to 'tell the King'³³ to hold a Privy Council and pass a law forbidding the Governors and the Minister of Lands from leasing land or transferring leases without the Premier's permission.

31 W.H. Hunter to the Marquess of Landsdowne, 9 September 1901, F.O. 58, Foreign Office Papers.

32 Extracts of Correspondence between E. Hutter and Sateki, 1901-4.

33 E. Hutter to Sateki, 21 April 1901, *ibid.*

The great drop in the estimated poll-tax revenue was one indication that the Government had lost the support and respect of a large section of the Tongan population. As indicated by Hutter's reference to Mateialona and Fatafehi, these two chiefs, for example, were still strongly opposed to Sateki and his policies. Indeed Hutter himself, in April 1901, noted that the ministers were all at war. In what appeared to have been an indication that Hutter and Sateki did not always have their own way with Tupou, and as a clear proof of the closer collusion between them to the exclusion of the King, Hutter also wrote to Sateki that 'If you work together you Ministers you can pay the King \$15,000 per annum,³⁴ presumably so that they could do as they liked.

By the end of 1901 Hunter perhaps cheered by the King's and the Queen's full participation in the celebration of King Edward VII's birthday, wrote to the Secretary of State for the Colonies 'that the bitter feeling of suspicion and distrust that existed at the time of [his] arrival in February, in the minds of the leading chiefs towards His [Britannic] Majesty's Government [was] gradually dying away'.³⁵ But Hunter's elation was short lived. Towards the end of 1901 he had unsuccessfully tried to persuade Tupou to renew the lease of a Mr Lui Harpfner, who had lived for forty years in Lifuka at a site belonging to the King. In January 1902, and without any warning, Sateki removed Harpfner's tramway, forbade the renewal of his recently expired trading licence, and informed the old man that unless he accepted a certain price for his buildings on or before 16 or 17 January 1902, they would be sold by the Government at a public auction.³⁶

34 *Ibid.*

35 W.H. Hunter to J. Chamberlain, 6 December 1901, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

36 W.H. Hunter to Tupou, 10 June 1902, W.P.H.C. Archives.

Hunter immediately protested to Tupou about Sateki's actions, calling them 'illegal and high handed . . . and distinct breaches of the Treaties . . . between His Majesty's Government'³⁷ and Tupou.

Hunter then warned Tupou that should he fail to rectify the situation, he as Consul would have 'to take active steps to prevent the Premier and his tools from repeating such arbitrary . . . acts'.³⁸

But Tupou supported Sateki on the ground that Harpfner had, for two years, disobeyed Government's rightful and repeated orders to move from land which was no longer legally his.³⁹ For the same reason Tupou rebuked Hunter for his 'rash' and 'hasty'⁴⁰ criticisms of the Premier.

To Hunter's claims that the treaties between Tonga and Germany, the United States of America and Great Britain had committed the King to accord to British and foreigners opportunities for residence and trade, and that Harpfner's treatment was a violation of these commitments, Tupou replied that such privileges could be extended only to foreigners who abided by the law of Tonga.⁴¹ Owing either to his acceptance of this answer or to his conviction that Tupou would not change his mind, Hunter finally stopped pressing for the renewal of Harpfner's lease and continued pressing only for the renewal of his trading licence. In this he was successful some two months later. In 1904, Hunter gave a clearer clue to the cause of Harpfner's severe treatment by Sateki when he informed the High Commissioner that Harpfner, deprived of his lease and his trading licence, had finally done what the 'Jew Hutter had planned all along, by buying his lease and store for fl,800'.⁴²

38 *Ibid.*

39 Tupou to W.H. Hunter, 14 January 1902, W.P.H.C. Archives.

40 *Ibid.*

41 *Ibid.*

42 W.E. Hunter to H.M. Jackson, 24 July 1904, W.P.H.C. Archives.

In reporting Harpfner's case to the High Commissioner Hunter added that the Cabinet was composed almost entirely of Sateki's relatives and, since he was always opposed to any suggestion that tended to assist or foster British and foreign interests, 'the result was fatal'.⁴³ The sole influence for good in Cabinet was Fatafehi. This time the Consul forecast that the Premier would from now on raise all the leases that came up for renewal. The only solution to the problem, Hunter clearly hinted, was to give him a hand in the internal affairs and administration of Tonga. The acting High Commissioner W.L. Allardyce, at the specific request of the Consul, sent this report to the Colonial Office with a covering letter, which described Tonga's land laws and the Government's disregard of them. Contrary to Section 110 of the Land Law, which empowered Cabinet to determine the amount of rent only in respect to land the King had given to the Government, Cabinet had raised the rents on leaseholds whenever it wished to. Allardyce also stated that it was contrary to Tonga's Treaties with the European powers to require Europeans to get Government's permission before arranging for land leases. The only action which Allardyce himself took, however, was to advise Hunter to point out to the Government its breaches of the Constitution and to obtain from it a pledge to keep more strictly to the law and to the King's Treaty commitments. The Colonial Office approved Allardyce's action and requested the Admiralty to send a man-of-war to Tonga at least once a year.

While Hunter was fighting for Harpfner, a case representing the other major problem of the Europeans in Tonga was also brought to notice.

⁴³

W.H. Hunter to W.L. Allardyce, 10 February 1902, W.P.H.C. Archives.

On 8 November 1900, a newspaper at Apia had published a letter by Polutele, then still the clerk in the Premier's Office, accusing ex-Collector of Customs M. de Lambert of having appropriated Government stamps to the value of £6,400.⁴⁴ Some time between then and Hunter's arrival in Tonga, de Lambert had sued Polutele for slander, but when the case was brought before the Tongan Court the Magistrate dismissed it without hearing any of the evidence.⁴⁵ Despite de Lambert's and Beckwith-Leefe's protests, neither Tupou nor Sateki or the courts ordered a retrial. By the middle of 1902, after many more representations from Hunter and the High Commissioner, the Tongan authorities still refused to do so. It was not until Tupou had received an even more strongly worded letter from the High Commissioner on this issue and seen the arrival of H.M.S. *Torch* and H.M.S. *Pylades* in the last week of June 1902, that Tupou finally gave in.⁴⁶ According to Hunter, Polutele, then still on good terms with Sateki, pleaded guilty in case the Premier should be called for questioning and Hutter left for a tour of Europe in case he was required for the same reason.⁴⁷ The Magistrate gave Polutele the maximum fine of £5, a penalty that dissatisfied de Lambert.⁴⁸

44 W.H. Hunter to High Commissioner, 22 September 1902, W.P.H.C. Archiv

45 W.L. Allardyce to J. Chamberlain, 16 July 1902, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

46 W.H. Hunter to W.L. Allardyce, 16 July 1902, W.P.H.C. Archives.

47 *Ibid.*, 22 September 1902.

48 *Ibid.*

Allardyce sent the Colonial Office a detailed account of the maladministration of justice in Tonga.⁴⁹ He cited the de Lambert case, and also reported how, in about June 1902, a German subject was jailed on a Saturday afternoon for being drunk and incapable. The German was refused bail and was kept in prison until Monday morning when, 'in spite of the evidence of four respectable Europeans in his favour',⁵⁰ he was convicted and fined. He also criticized the Tongan practice of taking court proceedings in shorthand and requiring the plaintiff, defendant and witnesses, irrespective of whether they could read shorthand or not, to endorse the correctness of the records by signing them in their shorthand form. To illustrate that the Tongans were equally victims of official injustice and shortcomings, Allardyce also quoted the case of an old couple who had recently been sued and fined for adultery allegedly committed thirty years beforehand. Allardyce enclosed in his report a petition from 102 foreigners, presumably most of whom were Europeans, appealing to Hunter to ask the British Government to bring all foreigners entirely under the jurisdiction of the High Commissioner's Court and make them subject only to its rules governing procedure, 'anything in the Tongan law notwithstanding'.⁵¹

For Tupou, the second year of official British protection was less tolerable than the first. On 5 April, for example, Hunter requested an audience with him for the purpose of clarifying their differences over the status of British, American and German citizens in Tonga. As he was also instructed

49 W.L. Allardyce to W. Chamberlain, 16 July 1902, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

50 *Ibid.*

51 *Ibid.*

by the High Commissioner to clarify the same points with the chiefs, Hunter asked Tupou to have the Privy Councillors present in the Palace when he called.⁵² Tupou became hostile because he saw this as an unprecedented attempt by the Consul to take part in a Privy Council meeting.⁵³ The rest of his kingdom's political autonomy, he felt, was at stake. Consequently he told Hunter that since he held no Privy Council position he would not address the Privy Council. Tupou also directed the Consul to send the subject of his proposed visit to the Cabinet, which was the proper authority for forwarding business to the Privy Council.⁵⁴ Hunter was eventually beaten on this issue, but he had succeeded in giving Tupou a rude shock.

What probably disturbed Tupou most in 1902, however, was the news he received some time in June and probably from Emil Hutter, that Richard Seddon, Prime Minister of New Zealand and a great advocate of a Pacific Empire under his colony, had asked the Imperial Government for New Zealand annexation of Tonga. Unknown to Tupou, the British Government had promised Tonga to Seddon in 1899,⁵⁵ and the only things preventing this in 1902 were the King's continued life and the strong opposition of Sir Edmund Barton, Prime Minister of the newly created Commonwealth of Australia, to a New Zealand empire.⁵⁶ Besides, Barton was still of the opinion that New Zealand should join the Commonwealth and that in fact the majority of the New Zealanders wanted to.

52 W.H. Hunter to Tupou, 5 April 1902, Palace Office Collection.

53 *Ibid.*, 7 May 1902.

54 *Ibid.*, 9 May 1902.

55 Colonial Office Minutes, 1 September 1902, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

56 *Ibid.*

On 16 July 1902, Tupou cabled the Secretary of State for the Colonies that Tonga objected to annexation by New Zealand and that he wished his kingdom to retain its present political status. The Chairman of Parliament also sent a similar telegram. The Colonial Office decided to find out for itself how the Tongans felt; from Hunter they learned that Tupou and Fatafehi had correctly given their people's feelings on the subject.

Between mid-July and mid-August of the same year, Hunter visited Suva, where he and Allardyce appear to have discussed the Tongan situation thoroughly. Consequently, on 15 August, Allardyce sent the Colonial Office a detailed report on the way the Tongan Government operated its affairs. Although a Colonial Office official, probably on the basis that their information about Tonga was mostly from the High Commissioner and Hunter, noted a year later that London did not really know much about the Tongan side of the story, Allardyce's report would have been mostly correct. Much of what it said was common knowledge in Tonga and therefore easily learned by Hunter; Fatafehi, who was 'at daggers drawn'⁵⁷ with Sateki most of the time but on excellent terms with Hunter, would have supplied the Consul with his confidential information. As Allardyce reported, the Tongans, were dissatisfied not with the form of their Government but with the existing administration's corruption and inefficiency.

57

W.L. Allardyce to J. Chamberlain, 15 August 1902,
C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

Sateki, in whom nearly all the power was centred, was the 'fons et origo of Tonga maladministration'.⁵⁸ He was an astute person and, together with his 'Hebrew confederate', exercised evil influence 'over the impressionable mind'⁵⁹ of the King. Apart from Fatafehi, the other members of the Government (presumably that at Nuku'alofa) were colourless individuals and mere tools in the hands of the Premier.⁶⁰

The King, Allardyce continued, was vain, selfish and without any regard for the welfare of his subjects. Want of money was his normal condition and it was alleged in Tonga that this was always met by Sateki from the Treasury irrespective of the votes of the Legislative Assembly. In this claim the Acting High Commissioner was corroborated by people such as Howard Watkin, who informed the Colonial Office that Tupou's guards regularly went into the Treasury with bags to collect money for His Majesty.⁶¹ In what was obviously meant to be further testimony to Tupou's and Sateki's deep involvement in the appropriation of Government funds, Allardyce also said that although periodical audits of the revenue officers' accounts such as those of a collector of poll-tax, revealed large deficiencies, nothing was done to follow them up. He also said

58 *Ibid.*

59 *Ibid.*

60 *Ibid.*

61 H.W. Watkin to Sir H.M. Jackson, 30 June 1902, C.O. 225, Colonial Office Papers.

that stamps to the face value of more than £1,000 were 'missing from the Custom House stock simultaneously with the advertisement of large quantities at low rates by the Sydney and Auckland stamp vendors',⁶² yet no steps had been taken. In a claim that was probably an exaggeration, Allardyce stated that there was a surplus of revenue over expenditure of nearly £4,000, for 1900 but that the use of this fund was not apparent from Government's books. For this reason, the Acting High Commissioner explained, the Tongans were complaining that they were being taxed for the benefit of the King, the Premier and his relatives and satellites, 'and the Jew Hutter'.⁶³ Thus, according to Allardyce, it was only the superstitious reverence of the Tongans that still kept Tupou on the throne.

Allardyce, apparently prompted more by Hunter's aversion to the chiefly system and less by any real evidence of Tongan desire to change it, also complained of the injustice of unchecked chiefly exactions of property and services from the commoners. The judiciary, he said, especially the Chief Justice, was guided mainly by Sateki. Clearly reflecting the kind of argument commonly used by both the Tongans and the European residents to justify their claims for land, Allardyce stated that Tupou had never done and was unlikely to do as his predecessor had ordered - which was that the nobles, of whom the King was the head, should subdivide more of their estates. Under these circumstances, Allardyce concluded, and given the preclusion of the British Agent from the internal affairs and administration of Tonga, matters would drift from bad to worse until British intervention was unavoidable.

62 W.L. Allardyce to J. Chamberlain, 15 August 1902, W.P.H.C. Archives.

63 *Ibid.*

The Acting High Commissioner then suggested four courses of action for the British Government.⁶⁴ One was to allow matters to remain as they were until Tupou's death when England would annex the Protectorate, making due provisions for Tupou's heirs and the Royal Family. Secondly, Great Britain could revise the existing Treaty to give her Agent a leading part in the administration of Tonga's internal affairs. Thirdly, Great Britain could dismiss Sateki and replace him with a man of whom the British authorities approved. The last course, and the one that Allardyce and Hunter appear to have favoured most, was for Great Britain to annex Tonga at once. Quite correctly, they noted that annexation to New Zealand was unacceptable to the Tongans; annexation by Great Britain, however, was already accepted in Tonga as inevitable and the commoners were looking forward to it. The King, so Allardyce quoted from a letter he had received from Hunter, 'if he realized that annexation was unavoidable, would accept his deposition and a pension, though probably with bad grace'.⁶⁵

When this report reached England, the Colonial Office, which till then almost decided to bypass Australia's objections and give Tonga to New Zealand as they had originally intended, instructed the new High Commissioner, Sir H. Jackson to warn Tupou in very strong terms that the existing state of affairs must not continue.⁶⁶

64 *Ibid.*

65 *Ibid.*

66 J. Chamberlain to Lord Landsdowne, 31 October 1902, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

Jackson was also to ask Hunter to find out more about the feelings of the three principal islands of Tonga regarding annexation to New Zealand, without giving any hints that this was likely to take place quite soon. On 6 March 1903, Jackson cabled Tupou's indifferent reply to the British Government's warnings to London. In a brief note addressed to the Consul, Tupou had said that he had nothing new to say about the British authorities' complaints. A week later Jackson sent London another cable saying that the whole of Tonga was expecting Great Britain to do something about Tupou's light dismissal of her recent warning, and that delay would weaken the existing respect for British control. Jackson recommended the immediate revision of the existing Anglo-Tongan Treaty to give Great Britain the controlling power in internal affairs.⁶⁷

For this to be done, however, would have meant that Tonga, as Hunter and the High Commissioner had wanted, would come completely under the Imperial Government. But Britain did not want this and preferred to pass Tonga on to New Zealand instead.⁶⁸ Consequently the Colonial Office told Jackson that he should not take the extreme measure he was proposing. If, however, during his coming visit to Tonga, he felt that the continuation of the existing state of affairs was impossible, then he was to obtain from Tupou a Treaty whereby the King was bound 'to ask and act upon the advice of the British Consul on all questions',⁶⁹ especially those affecting Europeans and their rights and the collection and control of revenue.

⁶⁷ Sir H.M. Jackson to J. Chamberlain, 28 March 1903, C.O.225 Colonial Office Papers.

⁶⁸ Colonial Office Minutes, 1 September 1902, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

⁶⁹ Foreign Office Minute, 19 March 1903; Copy, Foreign Office Telegram to H.M. Jackson, March 1903, F.O. 58, Foreign Office Papers.

On 28 March Jackson, having by then spoken with Hunter in Fiji and received his report on his enquiries at Ha'apai and Vava'u, informed the Colonial Office that Mateialona, who was 'reported to be the ablest and most enlightened of the Tongan officials',⁷⁰ and also Finau 'Ulukalala felt that if Tupou and Sateki persisted in their present course Britain would be forced to annex Tonga. With regard to the form of Government Hunter repeated what he had said earlier - the people would prefer to retain the existing form of Government if only it were rid of its abuses. The foreigners, especially the Germans, felt that they were worse off than before 1900 when they were at least able to call on their own Governments for help. Given Hunter's report and perhaps his own disappointment with the Colonial Office for not permitting him to take the more decisive action he had recommended, Jackson now told London that since it was unlikely he would learn anything more than what Hunter had reported, and owing also to his heavy load of work in Fiji, he had decided to postpone his visit to Tonga.

On 12 May Tupou, disregarding the overwhelming European and Tongan opposition to Sateki, created him the Noble Veikune.⁷¹ His Majesty's reason for doing so was to reward the Premier for his years of faithful service. It was Sateki's tenth year of premiership and he had certainly made it easy for Tupou to act towards and take from the Government as he liked. To Tupou, Sateki was

70 H.M. Jackson to J. Chamberlain, 28 March 1903, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

71 Copy, Letter of Appointment, 12 May 1904, Premier's Office Collection.

entirely his man and always behind him, whereas the higher chiefs and his own near kin such as Fatafehi and Mateialona, as well as the British Representatives, tried to restrain his freedom too much. For better or for worse, Tupou had always relied heavily on Sateki's advice and trusted his opinion on Government's affairs more than that of anyone else. Shortly after this Tupou granted Sateki support and the reportedly corrupt Auditor General Nanase Lavaki the estate of Tofoa. In this way Tupou reinforced the feeling that he was rewarding those, such as Sateki, who had allowed him a free hand with Government money.

Hunter was almost certainly disgusted with Sateki's elevation to the nobility. About the same time he suffered the severest insult to his position and dignity since his arrival in Tonga, when one of the Palace guards assaulted him for trying to enter the Palace without his permission. Probably for that reason Hunter refused to attend either the opening of Parliament on 25 May or the celebration of Tupou's birthday. Through Hunter and his friends, such as Robert Louis Skeen, who usually acted as Consul during Hunter's absences from Tonga, it was already learned in Tonga that something more serious than the usual British warning was on its way and that this was probably annexation by Britain along with deposition of the King. Hunter himself had told Fatafehi that the High Commissioner was coming to Tonga to take Tupou's crown. Tupou also learned of these stories and, perhaps partly for that reason, when Jackson visited Tonga at the end of May 1903, Tupou would not allow him to land without undergoing eleven days of quarantine.⁷²

His Majesty gave as his reason, however, a measles epidemic that had just started in Fiji.⁷³ Jackson and Hunter were probably correct in calling this a lame excuse, because five Tongans who had slept on shore in Lau on their way back to Tonga had recently been allowed to land without undergoing quarantine. Before he left Tonga Jackson received a petition from the Europeans against annexation to New Zealand. This, together with the information it had received about the Tongans' feelings on the same subject made the Colonial Office decide that Jackson was to visit Tonga again and 'persuade' Tupou to give the British Deputy Commissioner 'controlling influence in the government'.⁷⁴ If Tupou refused, then Jackson was permitted to deport him.⁷⁵ If desirable, the High Commissioner was then to instal a new King.⁷⁶

Despite the rumours of Britain's intentions Tupou and Sateki continued to exercise their internal authority as they liked and to yield to British demands only when it was unavoidable. Hunter did not receive the information for his report on Tonga's trade and commerce for 1902 and 1903 until the middle of 1904.⁷⁷ Sateki and Tupou still prepared the annual Estimate between them, without any reference to Cabinet. On 2 February 1904, Siosua Kaho, husband of Sisilia who was a daughter of Sateki's sister Tupouaonu'u, was appointed Chief Justice.⁷⁸

73 *Ibid.*

74 Colonial Office Minutes, 18 August 1903, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

75 *Ibid.*

76 *Ibid.*

77 W.H. Hunter to H.M. Jackson, 24 July 1904, W.P.H.C. Archives.

78 *Koe Kasete*, vol.18, no.2, 26 February 1904.

At the same time Sione Tupou Faletau, son of one of Sateki's brothers, was appointed Magistrate for Vava'u.⁷⁹ Three weeks later, the Privy Council proclaimed that the leases on all the King's land in Nuku'alofa, Lifuka, Vava'u, and 'Eua, as well as certain portions of land outside these centres which had been used by Government since 1875, were to be returned to him.⁸⁰ Tupou I, however, had declared all town land government land and so the legality of this proclamation was questionable. Besides, the reason given by the Privy Council that Government was now able to meet its expenses was not true. By the end of August 1904, Government had spent the whole of its vote for the year (£21,440.0s.0d.) and on 4 September the Privy Council authorised an extra Estimate of £28,000 for the rest of the year.⁸¹

79 *Ibid.*

80 *Ibid.*

81 *Koe Kasete*, vol.18, no.7, 8 October 1904.

CHAPTER 9

A PREMIER LOST, A KINGDOM ALMOST LOST

In the first week of December 1904, Hunter went to Fiji to see the newly arrived High Commissioner, Sir Everard im Thurn, and to press again for decisive British action against Tupou and Sateki. The result of his visit was that im Thurn arrived at Nuku'alofa on 8 December aboard H.M.S. *Clio*, accompanied by the despatch ship *Ranadi*.¹ The next day the High Commissioner paid Tupou a courtesy call and requested His Majesty to call a meeting of the Privy Council for the following day, when the British Representative intended to explain the purpose of his visit.² At this meeting on the 10th im Thurn stated that the King of England, having heard that all was not well in Tonga and mindful of his heavy responsibility to secure good government for the white residents, and remembering also that the Tongans were 'more or less children',³ inexperienced in Western ways, had sent him to tell Tupou and the chiefs to turn away from their bad practices. He and Hunter, the High Commissioner continued, were going to show the Tongans the best possible way for ensuring the welfare and prosperity of all Tongans and white residents. Although the King would lose his position as head of his Government, if Tupou did not use this last chance for reform 'there must be a complete change'.⁴

¹ Report on Tongan Affairs, December 1904 to January 1905, Sir Everard im Thurn to Colonial Office, 15 March 1905, Turnbull Library, Wellington.

² For an account of im Thurn's visit, see *ibid*.

³ Copy, notes on interview between His Excellency Sir Everard im Thurn and the King of Tonga, Palace, Nuku'alofa, 10 December 1904, Royal correspondence.

⁴ *Ibid*.

But first of all, im Thurn told the meeting, he was going to find out for himself the 'exact truth'⁵ of the complaints against the Government and how it had gone wrong in the past. In particular he was going to examine the 'financial condition of the Colony'⁶ and he therefore asked His Majesty to instruct the Treasurer to give him all the information he wanted. Im Thurn also emphasised that it was for the good of the King and the chiefs that all Tongans should be allowed to speak freely and frankly with him. In conclusion the High Commissioner apologised to Tupou for any pain he might have caused him and called upon His Majesty to regard him as a powerful doctor who had to 'cut off a diseased part however unpleasant the operation might be'.⁷

On the morning of Monday 12 December, im Thurn met almost all the leading chiefs of Tonga at the British Consulate; Sateki and Fotu were noticeably absent. Almost certainly they were not invited. When he began his enquiries the High Commissioner found the chiefs reluctant to discuss government affairs. Then he asked them whether they wanted Tupou to continue to rule under the direction of Sateki and his European associates. The chiefs 'responded like gunfire'.⁸ Polutele gave a heated speech in which he declared that there was nothing else to do but to 'turn out the Premier and his whole family, and the Jew'⁹ and to make Mateialona the Premier.

5 *Ibid.*

6 *Ibid.*

7 *Ibid.*

8 E. im Thurn to Colonial Office, 15 March 1905, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

9 *Ibid.*

At about two o'clock that afternoon, im Thurn took possession of the Treasury in the presence of Fatafehi, whom the Privy Council had chosen to represent the King for the remainder of the High Commissioner's investigations. Thomas Roberts, whom im Thurn had brought from Fiji, Merton King, Secretary to the High Commissioner, and the Paymaster of the *Clio*, then began to examine the Treasury. When they opened the safe they found it empty except for a few Chilean coins. Just then Sateki, Fotu, Lowe and the clerks to the Treasury entered the building. The Premier then proceeded to infuriate the High Commissioner further by insisting that he was another Representative of the King and that he too would therefore remain in the Treasury. When the High Commissioner asked him to explain why the safe was empty, Sateki replied that Tonga had had a bad year owing to the scarcity of coconuts. Once im Thurn left the Treasury Sateki also left and went straight to the Palace, leaving Fotu and his staff to keep watch over the investigations. At about 5 o'clock that afternoon Merton King asked Fotu to hand him the keys to the Treasury, but the Minister of Finance, acting on what King was certain were Sateki's instructions, refused to do so. When im Thurn learned of this he became even more convinced that Tupou and Sateki intended to block his enquiries and immediately set up a picket of marines outside the Treasury.

The next morning, while the examination of the Treasury was still in progress, im Thurn interviewed Sateki for two hours at the British residence. To the High Commissioner's further annoyance the Premier answered most of his questions and charges with 'I do not remember'¹⁰ and 'Look in the Books'.¹¹ The only information of any

10 *Ibid.*

11 *Ibid.*

significance that Sateki revealed was that although the position of the Hutters as Agents to the Government of Tonga had been officially terminated for some years, they had in fact continued to act as Agents. After his interview with Sateki, the High Commissioner learned that the deficit in the Treasury was roughly £2,000. In his later report to the Colonial Office im Thurn stated that it was not until this interview that he finally decided that Sateki and Fotu must be deported to Fiji. Certainly he made the necessary arrangements following the interview. It is more than possible, however, that im Thurn had, in fact, almost completely decided on his course of action before he even left Fiji - his returning Thomas Roberts to Tonga (and later giving him a Cabinet post) and his bringing of the *Ranadi* with him both point to this conclusion. What he found in Tonga would have reinforced his decision. Although the investigations were not completed he already had enough justification for the immediate removal of the Premier and the Minister of Finance from Tonga.

On the morning of Wednesday 14 December Sateki went to the Consulate and apologised to the High Commissioner for his obstructive behaviour. But his apologies were too late. The High Commissioner ordered him and Fotu to go directly from the Consulate to the *Ranadi* in which they were to be deported to Fiji. About 10.30 as the marines escorted the two men to the waiting ship, im Thurn sent Fatafehi, who had called in at the Consulate 'of his own accord',¹² to inform Tupou of what was about to happen. About mid-day the *Ranadi* steamed out of Nuku'alofa.

12 *Ibid.*

In a very brief letter he wrote to Tupou the next day, the High Commissioner told His Majesty that he had found it necessary to remove Sateki and Fotu from Tonga, and requested the King to appoint Fatafehi and Thomas Roberts temporarily to their respective offices. Im Thurn also 'asked' Tupou to have the removal of the late Premier and his son gazetted at once.¹³ No reasons were given for the forceful abduction of Tongan citizens from Tongan soil by alien officials or for the complete disregard for the rights of the King. Afraid that he too might be deported, Tupou immediately did as im Thurn had asked.

On the High Commissioner's instructions Fatafehi published a special gazette and asked all the civil servants who had not been paid up to the end of September 1904 to collect their salaries from the Treasury.¹⁴ The money with which these were to be paid was made up of funds from the various departments in Tongatapu and those from the northern islands, which quickly found their way into the Nuku'alofa Treasury. For the next two weeks the High Commissioner completed his investigation of the administration and the Treasury in Nuku'alofa and interviewed more chiefs and European residents. He saw little sign of business in the government offices and was shocked to find the Supreme Court bench and the offices of the Premier and the Chief Justice littered with empty champagne and whisky bottles.¹⁵

¹³ *Koe Kasete*, vol.18, no.9, 16 December 1904.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, no.10, 16 December 1904.

¹⁵ E. im Thurn to Colonial Office, 15 March 1905, C.O.225 Colonial Office Papers.

On 28 December im Thurn explained his findings and proposals to Tupou and the chiefs.¹⁶ The real deficit at the Nuku'alofa Treasury for 1 January to 12 December 1904 was £1,600. This, said the High Commissioner, included a balance of £1,000 from 1903 which seemed to have vanished without any trace. The overdue salaries for the second and third quarters of 1904 amounted to £1,500 received in the Treasury in the past fortnight. Government, however, owed £200 in debts from 'previous quarters' and £1,960 to traders and others. Debts not shown in the books could amount to £1,000 and those from overseas were yet to come. The known debts in Tonga as well as the revenue needed for paying the salaries for the last quarter of the year amounted to £5,000. In order that Tonga might be 'freed' from this debt the High Commissioner offered the meeting a British Government loan of £5,000. If Tonga accepted this loan, he said, she would be acting rightly.

Turning to the question of the Government officials im Thurn said that Kupu was 'not the right man',¹⁷ to be Minister of Police and that the Auditor Manase Lavaki was 'more stupid in auditing books than some other Tongans'.¹⁸ Lee and the chief European clerk in the Customs Department, Mr Macauley were not fit to hold their positions and they would be replaced by two other white men whom im Thurn was going to choose. The new officials im Thurn desired to appoint were Mateialona as Premier and Auditor and Ata to be his Assistant. Fatafehi was to have the additional office of Treasurer and Thomas Roberts was to be Assistant Treasurer.

16 Copy, address of the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific to the King and chiefs of Tonga, 28 December 1904, Royal correspondence.

17 *Ibid.*

18 *Ibid.*

On Hunter's recommendation, Skeen was to be the Chief Justice and Crown Solicitor and was to be given a seat in Cabinet so that he could assist the Premier. Skeen was also to be the Minister in charge of the Custom House and Post Office. The actual work in these departments, however, was to be done by Robert Mitchell Denny and William Bagnall, the officers immediately under Lee and Macauley respectively. Vaea was to preside over the Tongan Court at Nuku'alofa and Polutele was to be the Chief of Police.

Among the administrative changes im Thurn proposed that the King should rule with the advice and approval of Privy Council and not independently of it. The Premier would never decide on important issues or authorize any expenditure without the consent of Cabinet. Government accounts would be audited by Europeans. These requirements, im Thurn, claimed, were in accordance with the Constitution of Tonga. The Tongan Government 'should work in harmony with the Chamber of Commerce'.¹⁹ Governments elsewhere, the High Commissioner claimed, listened to the representations of the traders and legislated 'for them in such a manner as to avoid disputes'.²⁰ Prisoners would work for the Government and no longer for the Ministers and the chiefs. Tupou I's speech in 1891, calling on the nobles to give more land to the people must be carried out and the laws must be printed in English for the benefit of the Europeans. Many bad laws had been enacted in the past, the High Commissioner claimed, and the King and Cabinet were to correct them.

19 *Ibid.*

20 *Ibid.*

On the presumption that Tongan landowners were free to lease their land as they liked, im Thurn told the meeting that Government must cease to interfere with this right. He also stated that the Government had wrongfully collected the rents on non-government lands and that this practice must cease. Owing to his dislike for Sipu, the High Commissioner continued, Sateki had deprived him of his island of Fafa which the Government had then used as a quarantine island. While Government had the right to take private land for public use, it was also obliged to compensate the owners for their loss. Thus im Thurn now required the new Government to give Sipu appropriate compensation for the loss of Fafa. Furthermore, Fotu and Sateki's two sons-in-law who were residing on government land must either pay rent or move elsewhere. The rents on Royal land which Tupou I had given to Government but which Sateki had recently returned to Tupou II must revert to Government. Finally, im Thurn proposed that since Government was very poor it should accept the offers of the European residents who desired to pay their remaining rental immediately in return for the immediate renewal of their leases.²¹

Referring briefly to his deportation of Sateki and Fotu, im Thurn said that the late Premier had advised the King badly and through him a foreign firm had ruled Tonga in its own interest.²² The late Minister of Finance through either 'wickedness or stupidity' had done exactly as his father and the Jews had wanted him to do and he would 'never be Treasurer' again.²³ The High Commissioner then turned to the changes he wanted Tupou to make. Firstly, His Majesty should give up the 'absolute power' he had 'unconstitutionally seized'.²⁴

21 *Ibid.*

22 *Ibid.*

23 *Ibid.*

24 *Ibid.*

Secondly, he should cease making 'irregular and indefinite drawings from the public revenue' in excess of his 'legitimate emoluments'.²⁵ These drawings, im Thurn said, sometimes amounted to totals His Majesty was hardly aware of. Thirdly, Tupou should abandon the two or three political associates of his own choice and work with the legitimate government officials.

On 2 January 1905, Tupou and about thirty chiefs called on im Thurn to give him their answers to his proposed changes.²⁶ Tupou began by discussing the land leases but it was soon clear that his object was to defer giving any final answer. The High Commissioner, however, was determined to extract from the King the answer he wanted. Thus he plainly told the meeting 'that the real choice before them all as Tongans was between, on the one hand, frank acceptance of the guidance which the British Government was offering, and, on the other hand, immediate loss of their King and eventually of their independence'.²⁷ At this ultimatum Tupou and his supporters were visibly shocked. In the words of the High Commissioner: 'His Majesty started; most of the chiefs smiled; Chief Justice Kaho looked grey; the King spoke to me in a low tone, but rapidly; Mr Watkin interpreted very deliberately and reluctantly; the King had said that he had not expected such a declaration from me, that he was sure that no chief wished that Tonga should lose its flag, and finally that he accepted my proposals'.²⁸

25 *Ibid.*

26 E. im Thurn to Colonial Office, 15 March 1905, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

27 *Ibid.*

28 *Ibid.*

Im Thurn then informed the meeting of the remaining appointments and reforms he wanted. Sipu and Finau 'Ulukalala were to be immediately appointed Governors of Vava'u and Ha'apai respectively. The number of Chief Justices and Magistrates as well as the rest of the civil service must be reduced. This would improve the work of civil service and reduce the greatest of Government's expenses, namely the payment of salaries - all taxes should now be paid to the Treasury and the position of the tax clerks abolished. Government should immediately declare that at the end of three months, the only coins to be used in Tonga would be the British ones. Furthermore, money should be voted for the maintenance of Vuna wharf and its two rotten piles should be replaced at once. £1,600 should be paid to de Lambert as settlement for his claims against the Tongan Government. Finally the High Commissioner said that he would present to Government what were to be Tonga's Estimates for 1905 before he returned to Fiji.

Four days after this meeting, Fatafehi published a Gazette announcing that Civil Service salaries would henceforth be paid monthly.²⁹ The practice common under Sateki's premiership of granting 'Treasury orders' with which civil servants purchased goods from the shops was terminated. The Gazette also announced that the Government would no longer be responsible for goods supplied or services rendered to it unless the orders for them had been signed by the Premier and countersigned by the Treasurer or the Minister of Finance. On the 17th, the appointments im Thurn finally decided on were gazetted.³⁰

²⁹ *Koe Kasete*, vol.19, no.1, 6 January 1905.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, no.2, 17 January 1905.

Most of the appointments he had already announced were confirmed, although some alterations were made. Thomas Roberts was given a stronger control of Tonga's finances by his appointment as Treasurer and Assistant Minister of Finance. No Customs and Post Office Ministers were established but Skeen was still given the dual offices of Chief Justice and Crown Solicitor. Denny became the Post Master and Collector of Customs and Bagnall his chief clerk.

At a meeting with Tupou and the chiefs on the 17th the High Commissioner presented His Majesty with a new Anglo-Tongan Agreement, which he wanted him to sign.³¹ A summary of the reforms im Thurn had persuaded the King to accept, the proposed agreement required the King to rule through the chiefs and never to receive or appropriate the leases on government lands. The hereditary titles and their associated estates were not to be interfered with and the nobles were again required to give more land to the people. The land leases of the foreigners were to be renewed according to a regulation to be issued. The advice of the British Consul in Tonga was to be sought and taken and his approval was to be required for the appointment or dismissal of all senior officials. A foreigner was to reorganize the Police Force, all laws were to be published in English and in Tongan, and the Estimates for 1905 were to be passed as drawn up by the High Commissioner.

The meaning of these proposals was clear but most distasteful to His Majesty. His political independence and the internal autonomy of his Government were to be severely reduced. Worse still it was the British Consul who now had the final say in Tonga's Government, and the fact that Hunter was to enjoy this power over him made Tupou more bitter.

31

E. im Thurn to Colonial Office, 15 March 1905, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

Trying to use the only method of escape he could really resort to at this stage, Tupou attempted to avoid giving any final answer. But the High Commissioner wanted no further procrastination and simply told Tupou to sign or prepare for deportation. On 18 January Tupou sadly signed the Supplementary Agreement with Great Britain.³² Three days later im Thurn returned to Fiji.

A KINGDOM ALMOST LOST

The humiliating reduction of the powers and privileges he had so long enjoyed with the assistance of Sateki was too severe for the proud Tupou to accept without a fight. Once im Thurn had departed and the threat of immediate deportation was removed, His Majesty began to seek the advice of his supporters on how to rescue himself from his present position. He now particularly needed the advice of Europeans who presumably were better informed on how to counter im Thurn's actions. Amongst those he turned to in Tonga were Frank Hutter, J.B. Watkin, Lee and George Scott. The last of these was a solicitor with shifty loyalties who, as late as October 1904 when he was still very friendly with Skeen and Hunter, had described Tupou as 'this Black Bastard of a King'.³³ Tupou also corresponded with Emil and Meyer Hutter, who were then in Auckland, and probably through their advice His Majesty sought the assistance of their friend, the Auckland lawyer Thomas Cotter.³⁴ Almost certainly acting on Cotter's advice Tupou, insisting that the only legitimate formal relationship between Tonga and Great Britain was the 1900 Treaty, sent a telegram of protest to King Edward on 6 March.

32 Copy, Anglo-Tongan Supplementary Agreement, 18 January 1905, Royal correspondence.

33 G. Scott to R.L. Skeen, 10 October 1904, W.P.H.C. Archives.

34 T. Cotter to Tupou, 7 February 1905, Royal correspondence.

In it Tupou implored His Britanic Majesty to see that his Government adhered strictly to the terms of this Treaty, which Tupou said im Thurn had grossly violated. Tupou also informed Sir Richard Seddon, Prime Minister of New Zealand, of his intention to visit New Zealand in the near future and sought his assistance in his fight against im Thurn.³⁵ Seizing this opportunity to further his own plans for Tonga but eager not to destroy the Imperial Government's willingness eventually to pass Tonga on to New Zealand, Seddon cautiously promised to give Tupou all the legitimate assistance he could.

On 13 March Cotter and Meyer Hutter arrived in Tonga personally to familiarize themselves with the recent happenings and the existing state of affairs and to advise Tupou on what to do next.³⁶ After closeting himself for a week with them and with J.B. Watkin, the King gave Cabinet its first definite indication that he intended to fight for his lost rights. In a letter to the Premier, Tupou demanded £460 from Government as rent for its use of Royal land for the Government College since 1886.³⁷ Mateialona's reply, however, forced Tupou to shelve this demand: Government was in great financial difficulties, said the Premier, and if forced to pay His Majesty the rent he demanded she would be compelled to close the college or hand it over to the Free Church.³⁸

35 Tupou to R.J. Seddon, 27 January and 24 February 1905, Royal correspondence.

36 Mateialona to E. im Thurn, 6 April 1905, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

37 Tupou to S. Mateialona, 20 March 1905, Royal correspondence; Mateialona to E. im Thurn, 6 April 1905, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

38 Mateialona to Tupou, 21 March 1905, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

On 22 March Tupou sent Hunter a copy of a letter of protest which he was just about to post to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. In this twenty-three page document (obviously the work of Cotter and based on correct accounts of im Thurn's actions in Tonga) Tupou rightly told the British Government that neither he, nor any King of Tonga, 'nor anyone else having the authority so to do'³⁹ had given Britain the right to violate his sovereignty or trespass upon the liberty of Tongan citizens on Tongan soil. His verbal and written endorsements of im Thurn's instructions had been forced out of him and were therefore legally invalid and morally wrong. The Supplementary Agreement, continued Tupou, had stripped Tonga of the 'substance of power and authority' and only the 'bare skeleton or shadow' was left to her.⁴⁰ The High Commissioner, Tupou emphasised, had deferred to the Constitution but violated it at his convenience.⁴¹ While im Thurn had justified his intervention in Tonga's internal affairs with the explanation that Tupou had violated the Constitution, he himself had committed the same crime by actions such as ignoring Parliament by not awaiting its decision on the Supplementary Agreement. Besides, the methods which im Thurn and Hunter had employed for forcing the King of Tonga to do what they wanted had been 'calculated to irritate and injure Government and its methods of administration in the eyes of the people'.⁴² Tupou also refuted much of what im Thurn had claimed to be wrong with the Government. There was no shortage in the Tongan Treasury, Tupou boldly but untruthfully stated, and certainly none for which Fotu or Sateki had been personally responsible.

³⁹ Tupou to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 24 March 1905, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

However, Tupou observed, in view of the fact that Tonga had borrowed £4,000 from the British Government, he found it hard to follow the logic of Mr Thurn's declaration that he had freed Tonga from debt. Had not Tonga simply changed creditors? And what country in the world, Tupou asked was free of debt?

Immediately after sending Hunter a copy of this letter Tupou instructed Mateialona to call a Cabinet meeting for that afternoon at which he was to inform its members that His Majesty would travel to New Zealand.⁴³ The S.S. *Hauroto* on which His Majesty was to travel was then probably in Nuku'alofa and was due to leave within the next few days. As the reason for this suddenly publicised visit Tupou, who had recently been suffering from an abscess on the left side of his head, said that Dr MacLennan had ordered him to have a change and not to return to Tonga until he was well. The same day Mateialona clearly conveyed Cabinet's displeasure with His Majesty's proposed visit by informing Tupou that the Cabinet was sorry that he had to go abroad when Government was in great difficulties but that they supposed His Majesty had to go because of his health. On the unanimous decision of Cabinet Mateialona then wrote to Seddon that 'His Majesty the King of Tonga had no authority or power to pledge the credit of, or in any way to arrange as to, the future government of Tonga'.⁴⁴ The Premier also sent similar letters to the Auckland and Sydney newspapers. In these ways Cabinet, which later learned that MacLennan had never ordered Tupou to go abroad at all demonstrated its distrust of Tupou and its members fears for their positions.

43 Tupou to Mateialona, 24 March 1905, Royal correspondence.

44 Mateialona to R.J. Seddon, 24 March 1905, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

More important still, Mateialona and his colleagues were the first officially and publicly to articulate the already growing feeling that, in practice, as well as in theory, the traditional ideas of kingship and Royal privileges, especially if they had been abused, did not have any place in the existing political system. No doubt im Thurn's recent emphasis on the function and powers of the Privy Councillors and the membership in Cabinet of men like Mateialona, Sipu and Polutele, were greatly responsible for the existing ministry's views.

On 25 March Tupou appointed Fatafehi Prince Regent until his return to Tonga. Fatafehi was to have the rights and powers of Regency as defined in Clause 46 of the Constitution; because these were not qualified, Mateialona insisted that Fatafehi's powers were technically equal to those of the King, but Tupou forbade Fatafehi to 'repeal any law or make any new law or add to or abridge any clause in the Law or Constitution',⁴⁵ or 'to sign any document' relating to anything which did 'not appear in the Law and Constitution'.⁴⁶ Tupou's deliberate and debatable restriction of the Government's activities during his absence was probably successful, for in his first report on these events to the High Commissioner, Mateialona complained that Tonga had been effectively without a King since Tupou's departure.⁴⁷

On the 26th, Tupou accompanied by his Secretary, Sione Filipe Tongilava, J.B. Watkin, Cotter and Meyer Hutter left for Auckland.⁴⁸

45 Letter of Appointment of Fatafehi Tu'ipelehake as Regent, 25 March 1905, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

46 *Ibid.*

47 Mateialona to E. im Thurn, 6 April 1905, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

48 *Ibid.*

The real purpose of this trip was to place Tupou in telegraphic communication with the Imperial Government and to give him easier access to people such as Seddon whose help he wanted. The Free Church, Hunter reported to im Thurn had paid for the trip and had in fact offered to pay for Tupou to go to England and fight his case. Two days after Tupou's departure a letter in the name of the Legislative Assembly and protesting against Britain's and im Thurn's recent interference in Tongan affairs was circulated by Siosuia Kaho and Ma'atu among the nobles and the People's Representatives for their signature.⁴⁹ In a legally and morally questionable move Cabinet and the Courts stopped the circulation of this document and in fact prosecuted the two men who had circulated it. And when the case was heard Siosuia Kaho and Ma'atu were released on the grounds that they had simply been acting under the King's orders.⁵⁰ That approximately ninety per cent of the Tongatapu members of Parliament (thirteen nobles and six Representatives of the people)⁵¹ had already signed the petition by then strongly suggests that, although the majority of the House, like most of the Tongans, may have disliked Tupou's rule, they still did not wish to see him completely humiliated by foreigners.

The discovery of the petition, however, was probably Cabinet's first concrete and definite evidence of the purpose of Tupou's visit to New Zealand. In their fear for their positions the Cabinet members personally and collectively complained to im Thurn about the King's latest behaviour. In a personal letter

49 *Ibid.*

50 *Ibid.*

51 Annex to Mateialona to E. im Thurn, 6 April 1905, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

he wrote to the High Commissioner Polutele said, that if Tupou regained his former powers he would immediately dismiss the officials im Thurn had appointed. Tupou, Polutele continued, had 'no thought for his people, Government, or country', and had he been removed from Tonga 'all would be well in the land'.⁵² Mateialona, in his official report to im Thurn told him that Tupou had gone to New Zealand in order to try to reverse what the High Commissioner had done in Tonga. To demonstrate their support of im Thurn's actions Mateialona and his supporters made up a petition deploring Tupou's efforts to change them.⁵³ This was signed by eight nobles and seven chiefs, among whom were the majority of the Privy Council except for Fatafehi, Maealiuaki and Fotofili. Fatafehi, who had secretly confided to Hunter that he did not wish to give his son a 'parting kick down hill', told his disappointed colleagues that his letter of appointment as Regent had clearly forbidden him to sign any documents such as the petition. Maealiuaki simply refused to be involved and Fotofili had already signed the petition condemning im Thurn's actions.⁵⁴

Soon after his arrival in Auckland Tupou sent a telegram to the Colonial Office protesting against the deportation of Sateki and Fotu and their retention in Fiji. At the same time, Cotter, who knew that no court in Fiji had the power to detain the two men in that colony, asked a Suva lawyer, Humphrey Berkeley, to get the Fijian Supreme Court to order im Thurn to release the two Tongans.⁵⁵

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- 52 T. Polutele Kaho to E. im Thurn, 4 April 1905, C.O.225
Colonial Office Papers.
- 53 Annex to Mateialona to E. im Thurn, 6 April 1905, C.O.225
Colonial Office Papers.
- 54 Mateialona to E. im Thurn, 6 April 1905, C.O.225,
Colonial Office Papers.
- 55 H. Berkeley to T. Cotter, 26 April 1905, Royal correspondence.

But im Thurn had foreseen this catch and had accordingly fortified his position. Using his powers as High Commissioner he had issued a special Order in Council declaring his detention of Sateki and Fotu an Act of State and empowering him to keep them in Fiji for as long as he thought it necessary.⁵⁶ To Tupou's bitter disappointment the Colonial Office, in its replies to his letter and telegrams of protest approved all that im Thurn had done in Tonga.⁵⁷ In a final bid at least to win the gratitude of the King, Lord Plunket (Governor of New Zealand), almost certainly at the request of Seddon, whom im Thurn had suspected all along of scheming to transfer at least the Consular control of Tonga to New Zealand, openly and officially intervened on behalf of Tupou. In a cable to the Colonial Office, Plunket said that New Zealand public opinion was antagonistic towards im Thurn for his detention of Sateki and Fotu in Fiji and that deportation to Fiji was in fact a disgrace in the eyes of the Tongans. This attempt, however, was already a failure.

Unknown to Tupou and his helpers, the British Government, after it had received im Thurn's telegram about Tupou, had approved the High Commissioner's request to deport the King if necessary and to replace him with Fatafehi.⁵⁸ Also at im Thurn's request the Colonial Office had written to Sir J. Anderson, Governor of the Straits Settlement (Singapore), to see if he would agree to keep Tupou there should his deportation take place.⁵⁹ Since im

56 *Ibid.*

57 Minutes Colonial Office, 10 May 1905, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

58 Minutes, Colonial Office, 20 April 1905, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

59 Colonial Office to Governor of Singapore, 10 May 1905, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

Thurn would not deport Tupou from New Zealand he was either to depose him in his absence and then deport him if he returned to Tonga or to await his return from New Zealand and then deport him.

Unknown to Tupou, 20 July 1905, when im Thurn arrived in Tonga,⁶⁰ was the most critical day in his reign and to Tonga's political future. Tupou learned of this the next day when im Thurn informed him of what he had been empowered to do.⁶¹ But Tupou and Tonga's independence were to escape once again. Im Thurn neither deposed nor deported Tupou. Instead he only issued Tupou with a stern warning to observe the terms of the Supplementary Agreement. Im Thurn then assured Tupou of his sincere desire to see the King and his descendants retain the throne and rule Tonga wisely and peacefully.⁶²

The High Commissioner's change of heart was sudden and surprising and in fact unrelated to the total background to his visit. Besides Tupou, although defeated in his efforts to invalidate im Thurn's recent actions, had not yet sufficiently demonstrated whether he would then co-operate with the High Commissioner. Furthermore, neither the Consul nor the ministers would have given im Thurn many favourable reports about the King.

What im Thurn probably found was that despite the animosities there were towards the King, the mere suggestion that the only constitutionally rightful monarch be removed was unacceptable.

60 E. im Thurn to A. Lyttelton, Colonial Office, 11 September 1905, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

61 E. im Thurn to Tupou, 21 July 1905, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

62 *Ibid.*

Tupou had seriously misused and mismanaged Tonga's affairs; others might not, but only Tupou was the rightful King. Also, probably satisfied that the Colonial Office had supported him, im Thurn then became genuinely sorry for Tupou. Besides, the High Commissioner had been hurt by the hostile criticisms he had received from the New Zealand and Australian press in 1904,⁶³ and he might not have wanted a repetition of that.

63

E. im Thurn to A. Lyttelton, Colonial Office, 4 April 1905, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

CHAPTER 10

THE KING TRIUMPHS

The participation of the High Commissioner and the Consul in the administration of domestic affairs was potentially beneficial to Tonga. The immediate task of the new ministry was to nurse the Government out of its recent financial and political maladies. Its next task was to carry out further reforms and developments. If able and discreet, the High Commissioner and the Consul, with their wider personal and longer historical experience of Western-style government, could lend valuable assistance to the new ministry. Thus important tasks, such as the collection of the poll-tax and the conduct of daily business, could be carried out more efficiently while proper guidance could be given to directing further reforms such as those necessary in education.

Their supervision of expenditure, however, was probably their most useful function. To the traditional theory that the monarch owned the whole land had been added the reality that modernized Tonga was the creation of Tupou I. This being so, government property was regarded as partly belonging to the House of Tupou. Thus the system had furnished the monarch, especially an extravagant one such as Tupou II, with a kind of right to government property and funds, while it imposed upon the Tongan civil servants, such as Sateki, a kind of obligation not to obstruct the monarch. Under these circumstances the High Commissioner and Consul, being non-Tongans and not employed by Tonga, were more likely to prevent the repetition of a Tupou-Sateki type of relationship. This, after all, more than any other reason, had been responsible for the recent depletion of

government funds.

The system established by im Thurn, however, was doomed to be an uneasy one. Its first defect was its vague definition of the British Government's role in domestic administration. Did the need for consular approval of the Estimates mean that any amendments he made must therefore be passed by Government? What was a senior government position? Was the Tongan Government obliged to accept candidates proposed by the British? Given these problems the new Anglo-Tonga Agreement needed a friendly relationship between the King, the Premier and the Consul. But this vital element was missing; Mateialona co-operated with the British authorities, but Tupou would not. He never accepted the Supplementary Agreement and his efforts to abrogate it never ceased.¹ (Even as late as 1917, he was still struggling to end British participation in the Government.) Besides, as well as his real grudge against im Thurn and Hunter, he also had a strong personal dislike for the latter. The chances of Tupou asking for or willingly accepting British advice were therefore remote.

The animosity between Tupou and the new ministry was also strong. This was especially true of his relationship with Mateialona; their conflicts affected all their behaviour towards each other. The Premier had had a long association with those opposed to the House of Tupou.² At the death of Tupou I, he had been named as a possible successor. After the succession of Tupou II, he had continued

¹ T. Cotter to Tupou, 27 January 1906; R.N. Moody to Tupou, 21 June 1911, Royal correspondence; Tupou to B. Thomson, 23 November 1912, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

² See pp.96-7.

associating with Tungi, with the British Consuls, with the European traders, and with the Wesleyans. These groups made up the core of the opposition to Tupou II. Before and during the recent crisis Mateialona had worked closely with Hunter against Tupou and Sateki. In 1902 Hunter had recommended him to replace Sateki.³ The situation in December 1904 was therefore an explosive one. Thus, given the problems inherent in the Anglo-Tonga Agreement and the tension between the men who ran the Government, the work of the new ministry promised to be full of controversies and conflicts.

Despite these drawbacks Tupou, Hunter and the new ministry showed some remarkable achievements. In 1906, Parliament carried out the first major improvement to the education system when it brought all schools under the authority of the Government.⁴ In 1906 and 1909 the House passed thirty-one laws, most of which were amendments to the unpopular laws initiated by Sateki in 1903.⁵ Thus the horse tax was removed and the regulation size of tax allotments increased from fifty by fifty fathoms to one hundred by one hundred fathoms. In 1908 the Government made the first efficient attempt to survey the kingdom correctly by employing more and better qualified surveyors from New Zealand and Australia. In January 1909 a mutually beneficial agreement was signed with the Union Steamship Company.⁶

³ H. Hunter to E. im Thurn, 14 January 1902, W.P.H.C. Archives.

⁴ Mateialona to Bishop Ollier, 31 July 1906, Palace Office collection.

⁵ R.L. Skeen to Government Printer, 30 January 1911, Royal correspondence.

⁶ Copy of 'Agreement between the Union Steamship Co. and the Government of Tonga', 12 January 1909, Premiers' correspondence.

The biggest ever public works programme was also carried out by the new Government. The longest road in Tonga, the Hahake Road, was begun in 1905 and completed by 1909; it linked Nuku'alofa to the most densely cultivated province on Tongatapu. Altogether, between 1906 and 1909, road building in Tongatapu and Vava'u cost nearly £9,000. During the same years, wharves costing approximately £17,000 were built at Nuku'alofa and Neiafu, and government offices to the value of £3,000 were built at Nuku'alofa. Also of great value to the people were the cement tanks built in the main villages. Altogether, the cost of public works between 1906 and 1909 was approximately £30,000.⁷

Despite these heavy expenses, Government met its other commitments. By the end of 1905 it had paid all Civil Service salaries and other debts except its recent loan from Britain. In the first quarter of 1907 it collected £1,226 more than it had done for the corresponding period in 1906.⁸ In fact by the end of 1908 Government had accumulated a surplus of £7,350.⁹ The loan from Britain was paid off in 1911¹⁰ and from then on the Government's investments did not drop below £4,000. In fact in 1912 it amounted to £10,000.¹¹

7 H. Watkin to Parliament, 10 May 1909, Premiers' correspondence.

8 H. Hunter to E. im Thurn, 4 May 1907, W.P.H.C. Archives.

9 Privy Council Minutes, 6 November 1908, Palace Office collection.

10 Mateialona to W.T. Campbell, 18 July 1911, Palace Office collection.

11 *Tonga Government Gazette*, no.1, January 1913.

The conflicts during Mateialona's premiership were as numerous as the achievements. Less than six months after the High Commissioner's departure in 1905,¹² Tupou clashed with Cabinet and the British Consul over the proposal that the Hahake Road should pass through his estate of Tufumahina. The King simply would not allow it. Mateialona, backed by a united Cabinet, insisted that the road must go through Tufumahina and that Cabinet and the Minister of Lands had the authority to take over land necessary for public works. In both these claims Mateialona was right. To this Hunter added further fuel by claiming, quite wrongly, that Tufumahina was formerly government land leased by Baker and later taken over by Tupou I.¹³ In short, he suggested, it was not Tupou's land.

Acknowledging the superior power the High Commissioner could now exercise over Tonga's domestic affairs, both sides appealed to him. Sir Everard im Thurn, sympathising with Tupou over his recent troubles and eager to see that the changes he had made should work smoothly, advised Hunter and Cabinet to try an alternative route that would reduce the inconvenience to the King. The compromise subsequently adopted in mid-1906 was to move the road as close as possible to the Fanga'uta lagoon thus minimizing the disturbance to Tufumahina.

The uneasy relationship between Tupou and the Cabinet and the Consul erupted into conflict again in November 1906. This time Tupou clashed with the Consul and Mateialona over the proposed Estimate for 1907.¹⁴ The first Draft Estimate was prepared by Howard

¹² Tupou to H. Hunter, 19 and 27 February 1906, Palace Office collection.

¹³ H. Hunter to Tupou, 16 February 1906, Palace Office collection.

¹⁴ Tupou to H. Hunter, 6 December 1906, W.P.H.C. Archives; Mateialona to Tupou, 27 December 1906, Palace Office collection; H. Hunter to E. im Thurn, 12 January 1907, W.P.H.C. Archives.

Watkin and Roberts. They submitted it to the Premier who, together with Hunter, made three amendments to it. These provided for a second English master for the Government College; amalgamated the offices of Treasurer and Collector of Customs (which were to be by Watkin); and amalgamated the duties of the Premier's Clerk and Auditor (which were to be held by Roberts) at an annual salary of £700. From there the proposed estimate went to the Privy Council which, after four meetings, passed it but in its original form. Skeen, the chief opponent to the Consul's Estimate, was given an increase of £200 per annum. The Auditor, who was not to be Roberts, was not to receive a fixed salary but only payment for the work actually done. The offices of Treasurer and Collector of Customs were not to be united and the latter was to be given to George Scott. When the Privy Council's Estimate was given to Hunter, he objected to all these changes. Mateialona, who had firstly accepted Hunter's amendments and then later the Privy Council's revision of it, was now caught in the middle. As he was to continue to do throughout his premiership he supported the British Agent. But on 15 December 1906 Tupou ordered him to publish the estimate as approved by the Privy Council. Mateialona did so and then complained to Hunter that this Estimate totally differed from what the Consul had decided. Once again both sides appealed to the High Commissioner, who then visited Tonga in 1907. He settled the conflict by making his own amendments.

The Tupou-Mateialona tension was also reflected in numerous petty arguments. In January 1908 they argued over the date for the opening of the new Government Administration Building in Nuku'alofa. Mateialona wanted it opened on a Saturday, Tupou wanted it on the preceding Friday or the following Monday.¹⁵ Nine months later,

¹⁵ Tupou to Mateialona, 21 June 1908; Mateialona to Tupou, 21 June 1908, Royal correspondence.

Tupou refused Mateialona's request to add his signature to a farewell letter to im Thurn, who was soon to leave his post in Fiji.¹⁶ In February 1910 the King and Premier exchanged insulting letters over the subject of the recently arrival royal flag, which Mateialona had ordered.¹⁷ The King complained that it did not correctly represent his flag. Mateialona, sarcastically hinting that the King did not know what he was talking about, answered that the royal standard was made by an authority on world flags. To this Tupou replied that, whereas the said person might be such an authority, he Tupou was an authority on his personal flag. Amongst other things, his standard had a red background and a green olive leaf in the mouth of a dove. The new flag had a black background and a white olive leaf in the mouth of a bird that had the body and the wings of an eagle, but a head whose appearance lay somewhere between that of a dove and an old hen.

Sateki's removal forced Tupou to depend solely on his estates and his annual salary of £2,000.¹⁸ His heavy drinking and expensive taste in clothing, footwear, ornaments and perfume, as well as his numerous social and kinship commitments, meant that his expenses were continuously in excess of his income. Even after his second marriage, in 1909, to 'Ana Seini Takipo, also a daughter of Tae and a niece of the old Tungi, the pattern was the same. Since Mateialona's

16 Tupou to Mateialona, 13 October 1908, Royal correspondence.

17 *Ibid.*

18 Cabinet Minutes, 25 February 1911.

signature was necessary before any legitimate government payments other than his salary were made to the King, such extra payments were now fewer and were not always easy to obtain. The Government's assistance towards his wedding expenses in 1909 was £400.¹⁹ The Treasurer, however, wanted to know how this money was to be spent before he would pay it to Tupou. In February 1911, Cabinet turned down his request for a salary for the Queen and enlarged Salote's education allowance by only £10.²⁰

Perhaps partly as a result of this Tupou, since 1905, had constantly applied pressure on Cabinet and the Consul for the return of all the rents on royal lands, which Tupou I had given to the Government, and for an official declaration of what he considered were his rightful estates.

The estates Tupou claimed in Tongatapu included Kanokupolu, Mataliku, Mata-ki-'Eua, Matatoa, Fanga, Ha'asini, Pangaimotu and from Kolisi Puleanga to Havelu. In Ha'apai his land claims included Lofanga, Fiehua, Faikakai, Houma Talangia to Velitoa, Nukunamo, Mata'aho, Faka'osikato, Tamata'epele and Talikava. The estates he claimed at Vava'u included Matamaka, Nuapapu, Lape, Vaka'eitu, Taunga'ulupoko, Feletoa, 'Ovava, Keitahi, and Fangaliki.²¹

In 1911 this story took another turn when Tupou claimed that during his recent absence in New Zealand Campbell had given away some of his land.²² The Mateialona Cabinet, however, defeated the King on both issues, by postponing discussion on them. Tupou also

¹⁹ Tupou to H. Watkin, 25 November 1909, Royal correspondence.

²⁰ Cabinet Minutes, 25 February 1911.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 20 May 1910.

²² Tupou to R. Moody, 3 October 1911, Royal correspondence.

wanted to appoint new nobles.²³ Those he had in mind were Ula Afuha'amango, Takipo's father, and the chiefs 'Alipate Tupou, 'Iki Lolohea, Tevita Tapueluelu, Siosuia Kaho, J.F. Tafolo, Sipu and Mateialona.²⁴ The Consul and the High Commissioner, however, successfully blocked the appointment of new nobles too; it was a perfect example of their manipulation of the Supplementary Agreement to justify their actions. By virtue of the Consul's right to approve appointments to important positions, which in fact meant positions in the Civil Service, he now interfered in the appointment of nobles. He argued that as the nobles were Members of Parliament they were holders of important government positions, and their appointments were thus subject to his approval.

1910 saw the beginning of the events that were to intensify and then remove some of the causes of these tensions. In May of 1909 Alistair Cameron, an Englishman married to a Tongan, together with several other Europeans and leading Ha'apai men such as Siaki Lolohea, had formed the Tonga Ma'a Tonga Kautaha, or Tonga for Tonga Trading Company.²⁵ Its main purpose was to sell its members' copra directly to overseas buyers, thereby collecting the full price for themselves. With its profits it also set up shops. By May 1910 it had spent fl,500²⁶ on its offices, copra sheds and wharves at Ha'apai, Vava'u and Tongatapu. It also owned a fifty ton vessel, the *Makamaila* and land leases at buying centres such as Mu'a and Manuka.

23 *Ibid.*; Privy Council Minutes, 12 July 1912, Premiers' correspondence.

24 W.T. Campbell to Tupou, 16 May 1910, W.P.H.C. Archives.

25 A.D. Cameron to Privy Council, 1 September 1910, Premiers' correspondence.

26 *Ibid.*

Such successful competition was greatly resented by the European traders, who then tried to destroy it. A. Cameron, who was the President of the Kautaha was soon suspected and then accused of embezzling from the Tongans. Among those who suspected him this way was Campbell.

In June Campbell received a petition from six members of the Kautaha asking that their books be audited.²⁷ Campbell sent this to Mateialona, together with the opinion that by not auditing their books annually, and by not furnishing the Kautaha members with a copy of this report, Cameron had violated Section 7 of the Law and Constitution. He then advised Mateialona to take prompt action against Cameron. On 27 August, Cabinet ordered a full-scale audit of the Kautaha's books. Cabinet, however, steered by Mateialona, had already assumed the worst of Cameron. Thus on 28 August, before the books of the Kautaha could have been thoroughly audited, Cabinet decided to invite the Sydney lawyer B. Humphreys who was also the Government's business representative in Australia, to be liquidator for the Kautaha. Several days later, Roberts reported that the Kautaha had incurred a loss in excess of £4,000.²⁸ This finding differed from the profit shown by Cameron in the Balance Sheet he had published in April.²⁹ Cabinet immediately assumed it was justified in interfering in the business of the Kautaha. Thus

27 H. Hunter to Mateialona, 28 June 1910, Premiers' correspondence.

28 Cabinet Minutes, 29 August 1910.

29 *Koe Kasete*, no.25, 1910.

Mateialona ordered the seizure of all the Kautaha's books, property and assets, and then published a gazette revealing Roberts' findings and accusing Cameron of embezzlement.³⁰

At the same time Privy Council passed an Ordinance making it illegal for Tongans to form trading companies.³¹ Campbell and Mateialona then sued Cameron for falsifying the Kautaha's Balance Sheet and for embezzling its funds.³²

Once again the old tensions came through in the Kautaha affair. Against Campbell, Mateialona and Roberts, trying to break up the Kautaha, was Tupou, who was quietly helping Cameron. In fact in the court cases that followed later the King's lawyer represented Cameron.³³ The King was supported by most of the other ministers, who had resented their domination by the united strength of Campbell and Mateialona. Besides Skeen and Polutele were active supporters of the Kautaha.

At this point the casualties from the Kautaha affair began. On 4 October Roberts resigned and shortly after left Tonga. The cause of his resignation was the unbearable political situation.³⁴ What might have been more unbearable, however, were Tupou's investigations into his department; the Balance Sheet showed a loss.³⁵ Campbell

30

Ibid.

31

Tupou to W.T. Campbell, 28 August 1911, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

32

Mateialona to A.D. Cameron, 6 August 1910, Premiers' correspondence.

33

A.D. Cameron to W. Cameron, 2 January 1911, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

34

C. Major to W.T. Campbell, 16 November 1910, W.P.H.C. Archives.

35

W.T. Campbell to Mateialona, 2 August 1910, Premier's Office collection; Tupou to A. Mahaffy, 8 December 1910, Royal correspondence.

exploited this situation to his advantage. As a result of his recommendations Sir Charles Major, then acting High Commissioner, forced Tupou on 29 November to withdraw Skeen from Cabinet³⁶ and to give his place to Campbell.³⁷ Major also made Tupou assign the power to appoint Tonga's Chief Justice to the British Government, thus preparing the way for the imminent removal of Skeen from that post.³⁸

In the next month, however, A. Erhardt, Chief Judicial Commissioner, cleared Cameron of the charges made by Campbell and Mateialona.³⁹ With the concurrence of Tupou,⁴⁰ Skeen then suspended Ordinance no.7 of 1910 and Ordinance no.4 of 1911, both of which had been approved by May. The first forbade the formation of Kautahas by Tongans, the second authorised the deportation of persons dangerous to the welfare of Tonga.⁴¹ The vendetta against Skeen again intensified. ~~In~~ May, on the advice of Campbell, then advised Tupou to suspend Skeen for exceeding his authority. Tupou insisted that the ordinances were retrospective and therefore in contravention of the Constitution. At their interview on 24 August 1911 Campbell again threatened the King with deportation and called His Majesty a child. But Tupou stuck to his argument.

Meanwhile, Cameron's case against Campbell had been heard on 9 August and the court had found in favour of the plaintiff.⁴² Campbell's

36 C. Major to A. Mahaffy, 15 November 1910; Tupou to C. Major, 9 December 1912, W.P.H.C. Archives.

37 Tupou to H. Hunter, 5 December 1910; Tupou to C. Major, 9 December 1910, W.P.H.C. Archives.

38 Record of interview between W.T. Campbell and Tupou, 24 August 1910, Royal correspondence.

39 A.D. Cameron to W. Cameron, 2 January 1911, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

40 R.N. Moody to Tupou, 27 March 1911, Royal correspondence.

41 *Ibid.*, 22 March 1911.

42 Telegram to Secretary of State, Colonial Office, 22 August 1911, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

time was now running out. When the Colonial Office received a full account of these incidents it reacted very strongly against its own official.⁴³ It concluded that Campbell had misunderstood the Supplementary Agreement, had interfered in Tonga's domestic affairs, and had been extremely rude towards Tupou. He had prompted Mateialona to dissolve the Kautaha, and his legal involvements had been expensive to the Government. Thus Campbell was ordered to apologise personally to Tupou for his behaviour at their interview on 24 August. Campbell was also to leave Cabinet; in fact he was to be moved from Tonga altogether.⁴⁴

The Kautaha incident also ended Mateialona's career. His illegal behaviour towards the Kautaha had been expensive to the Government. The Kautaha claimed and received £3604 from Cabinet. Owing to an oversight he made, Government had paid the lawyer H. Berkeley £2,000⁴⁵ for defending Mateialona against Cameron. Altogether his actions cost the Government almost £6,000 in 1912. Parliament met in May 1912; it voted overwhelmingly to impeach Mateialona.⁴⁶ To avoid the controversies this might give rise to, May and the Colonial Office finally yielded to Tupou's pressures. Mateialona's forced resignation took effect on 1 October.⁴⁷

43 Colonial Office Minutes, 17 January 1912, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

44 *Ibid.*

45 W.T. Campbell to F. May, 12 September 1911, W.P.H.C. Archives.

46 'Koe tohi fakamatalaahono honogofulu ma tolu oe falealea o Tonga'. [Report on the proceedings of the thirteenth Parliament of Tonga], 20 May 1912, typescript, p.119, Palace Office collection.

47 Privy Council Minutes, 1 October 1912, Premiers' correspondence.

CHAPTER 11

A NORMAL REIGN AT LAST

As it turned out, W.T. Campbell was Tupou's greatest asset. Because of his actions the British Government was forced to define more clearly, indeed to restrict, the role of the British Consul in the Tongan Government. Although the Colonial Office did not specify the government appointments for which Consular approval was necessary, it clearly indicated that it was only for top positions such as departmental heads and ministers.¹ The Consul's involvement in financial matters was limited to approving major expenditure. The Colonial Office also told Sir Francis May that excessive Consular interference was contrary to the intention and spirit of the Supplementary Agreement and that discourtesy towards Tupou was unacceptable. Thus, although the terms of the Supplementary Agreement remained the same, its impact on Tonga would be greatly reduced.

Tupou chose the former Tevita Polutele Kaho, now the noble Tu'ivakano, as the new Premier. During Sateki's premiership and the early years of Mateialona's this man had been Tupou's most fearless opponent.² Throughout the Kautaha incident, however, he had become increasingly alienated from Campbell and Mateialona, resenting both the Consul's high handed interference and Mateialona's concurrence. In the past two years especially he had also been impatient with Mateialona's ineptitude, so much so that he had frequently complained about it to Mateialona himself.³

¹ Colonial Office Minutes, 17 January 1912, C.O.225, Colonial Office Papers.

² E. im Thurn to Colonial Office, 15 March 1905, C.O.225, Colonial Office

³ Polutele Kaho to Mateialona, 10 October 1910, Premiers' correspondence. Papers.

His selection by Tupou, however, reflected something more important than their renewed friendship, not least Tupou's good judgement - that Tu'ivakano was unquestionably the most suitable man for the job. Once his youthful radicalism had subsided and his forceful personality had become more disciplined, his ability to display firm, mature and sensible leadership became more obvious. In his recent portfolio he had turned the Police Department into the most organised in the Government. In fact, through his speeches in Parliament, Privy Council and Cabinet, and because of his insistence on such matters as promptness in dealings with his Ministry of Police, his influence had already spread outside his own department.

Unlike Tuku'aho, Sateki and Mateialona, Tu'ivakano had never been consistently associated with any faction. His appointment as Premier did not, therefore, automatically signify the ascendancy of any one group and it did not, as in the past, lead to the mustering of anti-Premier forces. Not surprisingly, then, the High Commissioner, the Consul and the Privy Council promptly approved Tupou's choice. For the first time in the King's reign all the principal political figures were agreed on the incumbency of the premiership; they also agreed unanimously that Tu'ivakano should be Treasurer as well.⁴

Tupou's candidates for the other high positions were also approved. Tungī, son of the late Tuku'aho and later to be the husband of Tupou's eldest daughter Salote Mafile'o Pilolevu, became Governor of Vava'u.⁵ Siaosi Maeakafa, illegitimate son of the late Prince Uelingatoni Ngu, became Acting Governor of Ha'apai. Skeen remained Chief Justice and Harcourt the Solicitor-General, though his other post as Secretary to the Government was abolished. A new post, that of European Clerk

⁴ *Tonga Government Gazette*, nos.19 and 21, 16 and 22 October 1912.

⁵ Cabinet Minutes, 11 November 1913.

to the Premier, replaced the secretaryship and was filled by George Scott. Vaea became Acting Minister of Police.⁶

In the course of reprimanding Campbell and punishing Mateialona, the British Government and Tupou had produced not a new system, but a new understanding. Campbell had jolted the British Government out of its sloppy paternalism and forced it to develop a more considered attitude towards Tonga; this automatically reduced Tonga's political problems. A menacing Britain was politically disruptive; a neutral Britain was reassuring. Within Tonga, Tupou's current triumphs were winning him back the respect and face he had lost. The ministers saw that they and the Consul were more dispensable than the monarch. They therefore embarked with the Consul and the King on an unprecedented period of co-operation. The King was, not surprisingly, a different man - probably for the first time the political climate of Tonga was to his liking.

That Tupou was again in command of the Government was soon obvious. Firstly Tui'ivakano kept him informed of and consulted him on routine business. While visiting Vava'u and Ha'apai in November 1912, for example, Tu'ivakano sent the King a detailed report of his activities; he did the same in mid-1913 when he visited the two Niuas. In February 1913 he had asked Tupou's opinion on the proposal that the Government should pay £6 for the board of a civil servant then in Fiji on government business (the King supported the proposal and it was implemented). In May 1915 the Premier asked Tupou for his opinion on Scott's request for an increase in salary. As Tu'ivakano told Tupou, he believed that the monarch should be fully informed, especially on

⁶ *Tonga Government Gazette*, no.19, 16 October 1912.

financial matters.

Tupou also became more involved in policy making. This was because Tu'ivakano, who prepared the agendas for Privy Council and Cabinet, sent all policy matters as well as many administrative ones to the Privy Council. Previously Ordinances, for example, although they had always been finalized in Privy Council, had not always originated there; especially while the Consul attended Cabinet meetings many Ordinances had been suggested and rejected in Cabinet, the decisions being only formally taken in Privy Council. The same had been true of the annual and Supplementary Estimates, which had been effectively decided in Cabinet. Now all policy matters went first to the Privy Council and were ultimately settled there.⁷ Minutes of the Cabinet, which now dealt almost exclusively with requests for land leases, civil servants' leave applications, permits to drink alcohol and minor appeals, were now always sent to Tupou.⁸ Thus Tupou's suspicions against Cabinet as the place that bred opposition schemes against the King were dispelled. For all these reasons Tupou's relationship with the various government departments was very relaxed.

Tu'ivakano also knew how to handle the King. He was respectful and fair, but firm. In 1913, when Tupou again asked Cabinet to define his estates, the Premier pointed out to him that the issue was a controversial one and that it was not the time to raise it. In 1914 Tu'ivakano willingly approved the King's claim to have the fare of his daughter's chaperone paid when she escorted Salote back to Auckland.⁹ When Tupou claimed for himself the land and building

⁷ Cabinet Minute Books, 1911-18; Privy Council Minutes, 1910-17.

⁸ Cabinet Minute Books, 1911-18.

⁹ Tu'ivakano to Tupou, 24 March 1914, Royal correspondence.

at Pikula, on the other hand, Tu'ivakano objected, telling the King that the property belonged to the Government and was not therefore at the monarch's disposal. Tupou took the Premier's advice to assess what Fatafehi has spent on Pikula and approach the Government to pay him that.¹⁰ Similarly, when Tupou failed in 1915 to call a Privy Council meeting the Premier had requested, Tu'ivakano sent him an effective reminder of his 'humble wish' that the meeting should take place.¹¹

The first substantial evidence of a new British attitude was the marked reduction in the number of matters raised in Cabinet and Privy Council by the Consul. Representations on behalf of Europeans were fewer and matters that were raised were couched more in the form of suggestions and less of demands. Following a polite suggestion by I. McOwan, Campbell's successor as Acting Agent and Consul, the Privy Council passed in January 1913 an Ordinance requiring all tax allotment owners to plant 200 coconuts.¹² In 1917, at the prompting of Consul G.B. Smith-Rewse, the Privy Council passed an Ordinance requiring nationals of any country at war with Britain to remain within their registered residence between 7.00p.m. and 6.00a.m. and within a mile of such residences at other times.¹³ As a sign of their good relations, Tupou sent the Colonial Office a telegram assuring them of Tonga's loyalty during the war; the Tongan Government also donated £100 to the Kitchener Fund.¹⁴

¹⁰ Tupou to Tu'ivakano, 28 April 1914, Royal correspondence; Cabinet Minute Book, 6 May 1914.

¹¹ Tu'ivakano to Tupou, 11 January 1915, Royal correspondence.

¹² *Tonga Government Gazette*, no.3, 28 January 1913.

¹³ *Ibid.*, no.1, 13 January 1917.

¹⁴ Sir Ernest Bickham Sweet-Escott to H.E.W. Grant, 16 October 1914, Premiers' correspondence.

On the relatively few occasions that the Tongan and British Governments clashed, the differences were quickly resolved and without much argument. In October 1912, for example, W.G. Bagnall, with the approval of Consul McOwan, was appointed Assistant Treasurer.¹⁵ A month later, Sir Ernest Sweet-Escott, then High Commissioner, objected to the appointment. Tu'ivakano replied that the Consul's approval was binding on the British authorities and the question was thus settled.¹⁶ On another occasion in 1917, the High Commissioner asked the King to cancel Tonga's Treaty of Friendship with the United States of America. Tupou demanded the reasons for this request, but in reply received from the British a statement from the American Government that it had no objections to dissolving the Treaty. The Tongan Government therefore cancelled it.

Only on a very few occasions did the Consul step outside the terms of the Agreement. One was in April 1917, when Smith-Rewse brought pressure to bear upon Tupou to name the date for the wedding of Tungi and Salote. Failing to receive a satisfactory reply, he called on Tupou, but without success.¹⁷ He reported the delay to Sweet-Escott, claiming that Bishop J.F. Blanc, Wesleyan Church President Roger Page and Mateialona had urged him to get Tupou to settle the date. He was reprimanded by the High Commissioner for interfering in what was plainly a domestic matter.¹⁸

15 *Tonga Government Gazette*, no.23, 12 November 1912.

16 Tu'ivakano to I. McOwen, 23 December 1912, Premiers' correspondence.

17 Tupou to G.B. Smith-Rewse, 3 July 1917, Royal correspondence; G.B. Smith-Rewse to E.B. Sweet-Escott, 14 April 1917, W.P.H.C. Archives.

18 E.B. Sweet-Escott to G.B. Smith-Rewse, 28 May 1917, W.P.H.C. Archives.

Tupou did not publicly announce the date of the wedding until 17 September, two days before the ceremony.¹⁹

In the same year the Consul and High Commissioner, assisted by the Colonial Office, began to prepare the ground for what could have been a major confrontation with Tonga. In 1917, shortly before the wedding, Tupou was ill and Smith-Rewse arranged with the Colonial Office and the High Commissioner that, after Tupou's death, Tungi would be made King and would rule on behalf of Salote.²⁰ When the occasion arose, however, the Consul does not seem to have taken any steps to implement the arrangement.

In 1916, Skeen had died while on leave in New Zealand. Bonar Law, at the time Secretary of State for the Colonies, decided to make his successor as Chief Justice a Judicial Commissioner as well. The salary, payable by the Tongan Government, was to be raised from £500 to £700 and the appointee was to be eligible for a government pension. Law decided that his office would make the selection.²¹ The King, Premier and Cabinet had already, in fact, decided on Scott, whom they had appointed Acting Chief Justice on Skeen's departure for New Zealand.²² In the negotiations that followed, Britain insisted that the Agreements of 1900 and 1905 empowered her to select the Chief Justice; Tupou and the Cabinet insisted that these Agreements had confirmed their constitutional right to make the appointment. They

19 Tupou to 'Ulukalala and Tupou to Nuku, 15 September 1917, Royal correspondence.

20 E. Sweet-Escott to G.B. Smith-Rewse, 7 May 1917, W.P.H.C. Archives.

21 Tu'ivakano to H.E.W. Grant, 27 January 1916, Premiers' correspondence; H.E.W. Grant to Tupou, 8 June 1916, Royal correspondence.

22 *Ibid.*

conceded the right of the British authorities to *veto* the choice, but not to *make* it. The only reason they had asked the British to secure officers for them in the past, they said, was that they had no qualified candidates in Tonga - this time they did.²³ To Smith-Rewse's objection that Scott was not a barrister, they retorted that the Acting Chief Justice knew the law as well as any Tongan and better than anyone outside Tonga.²⁴ This conflict, the only serious one in this last period of Tupou II's reign, was resolved when Scott withdrew his candidacy.²⁵

In the course of the negotiations, Tupou's leadership in the Government was again reinforced. Most of the Consul's representations had been dealt with in the Privy Council, and most of the Tongan Government's communications were made by the King. On most of the few occasions when the Consul and Premier negotiated directly with each other, copies of their communications were sent to the King (as, for example, when it was suggested that the drinking of *kava* on government premises should be stopped).²⁶ Tupou was thus always up to date with and in control of Tonga's relations with Great Britain.

The resulting political stability was not accompanied by any great public works programme; the economy was at a low ebb. The Kautaha incident had in all cost the Government some £8,000. In the same year a violent hurricane had destroyed about 60,000 coconut trees throughout the kingdom.²⁸ In 1915, only eighteen months later, another

23 G.B. Smith-Rewse to Tupou, 12 October 1916; Tu'ivakano to Tupou, 17 June 1916, Royal correspondence.

24 *Ibid.*

25 G. Scott to Tupou, 17 October 1916, Royal correspondence.

26 Mateialona to I. McOwan, 8 August 1912, W.P.H.C. Archives.

27 Tupou to W.T. Campbell, 11 September 1913, Royal correspondence.

28 W.T. Campbell to High Commissioner, 19 February 1912, W.P.H.C. Archives.

hurricane devastated Vava'u and the two Niuas.²⁹ A drought that hit these islands soon after was so serious that food had to be sent from the southern islands.³⁰ The outbreak of World War I in 1914 worsened the situation by drastically reducing the market for what little copra Tonga had. The Government's assets for the months ending 30 November 1912 amounted to £31,521; for December 1913, the figure was £4,000 lower; ten months after that, it was only £20,682 and in June 1916 it was down to £13,675.³¹ The Government could meet little more than routine running costs.

Nevertheless, the stable political atmosphere did favour major administrative and legislative reforms, and these were carried out in the latter part of Tupou's reign. The Education Ordinance no.13 of 1913, for example, is the base on which the present education system was built. It established a Board of Education and divided the public schools into primary, middle and secondary. It made school attendance compulsory between the ages of seven and fourteen and provided for annual examinations for teachers.³² In 1914 Civil Service positions were classified in accordance with Court procedures and the functions and relationship with the Premier of town mayors and officers were clearly defined.³³

The greatest reform during Tupou II's reign was the Amendment Act of 1914.³⁴ Owing to the continuing financial problems, Tupou,

29 G. Fletcher to H.E.W. Grant, 18 January 1915, W.P.H.C. Archives.

30 Tupou to H.E.W. Grant, 14 May 1915, W.P.H.C. Archives.

31 *Tonga Government Gazette*, no.5, 3 February 1913; no.4, 20 January 1914; no.1, 14 January 1915; no.2, 25 January 1917.

32 *Ibid.*, no.2, 17 January 1914.

33 *Ibid.*, no.6, 2 August 1914; no.18, 10 October 1913.

34 *Ibid.*, no.2, 15 January 1915.

with the support of Tu'ivakano, decided that Parliament should be reduced in size. Moreover, as the war had made obvious, triennial sessions were not adequate to meet emergencies and Parliament would have to meet more often. At the beginning of December 1914 Tupou and Tu'ivakano visited the northern islands to persuade the nobles and People's Representatives to agree to reforms.³⁵ They also summoned a special meeting of Parliament in Nuku'alofa on 17 December 1914. It was attended by the ministers and governors and twenty-one nobles and twenty-seven People's Representatives. After the King's speech and departure, the Premier introduced the Constitutional Amendment Bill, which proposed that the people and the nobles should have each have seven representatives in Parliament and that Parliament should meet annually.³⁶

During the emotional debate that followed, the few that spoke against the Bill were mainly People's Representatives. Manase Lavaki argued that the sacred Constitution of Tonga should not be altered - in his wisdom Tupou I had decided on the numbers in Parliament and this had served Tonga well since 1875. Why change it? Tavita Tapueluelu and Mosese Vakasiuola complained that the Government was overspending in other areas, so why economise on the Legislative Assembly's budget? They added, however, that whatever the *hou'eiki* wanted would be passed anyway. All ministers supported the Bill. After it had been formally seconded by Tungi and Vaea, the House voted:

35 Copy, Speeches by Tupou and Tu'ivakano, Vava'u, 3 December 1914, Royal correspondence.

36 Minutes of special session of Parliament, 17 December 1914, Royal correspondence.

twenty-four nobles and twenty People's Representatives were in favour and two nobles and four People's Representatives against.³⁷ Thus a major constitutional amendment was easily carried: the majority bore testimony to the King's influence.

Since the beginning of 1917, however, his health had been failing rapidly (his reluctance to name the date for his daughter's wedding had been partly due to ill health). Three months later he was unable to close Parliament.³⁸ In September he left the island of Fafa only long enough to organise Salote's wedding. By December he had returned to Fafa, having appointed 'Ulukalala to represent him at Privy Council meetings.³⁹ On the morning of 5 April 1918, His Majesty Tupou II died.⁴⁰

37 *Ibid.*

38 Tupou to Tu'ivakano, 17 July 1917, Royal correspondence.

39 *Tonga Government Gazette*, no.5. 4 February 1918.

40 *Ibid.*, no.10, 5 April 1918.

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

As a person, Tupou II was vain, proud, somewhat impetuous and often inconsistent. He was also warm, loyal, generous and extremely charming. He was thoroughly conversant with Tongan custom, and he was rarely criticised for failing to fulfill his social and kinship obligations.

As a King, Tupou II was a conservative. He believed that the monarch was the source of political power and the supreme director of all Government affairs. He often behaved as though the monarch personally owned the whole Kingdom. These attitudes were reinforced by a feeling, which he shared with the rest of the nation, that Tonga owed its political modernization and the subsequent survival of her sovereignty to Tupou I, and therefore to the House of Tupou. Consequently Tupou II, as the heir and successor to Tupou I, had both a hereditary and hard earned right to dominate the Kingdom and its Government. Tupou II never lost these feelings

The political system which he inherited, however, was destined to clash with these ideas. The pre-European orthodox ideas of a basically absolute monarch had been sufficiently transformed by Tupou I, not into a benevolent "tyrant", but into a constitutional monarch. Inevitably, many of the monarch's powers derived from tradition still remained, but the concept that he was below the law had been widely accepted before 1893. So, too were the routine procedures of the bureaucracy, which the often unorganized Tupou II found irksome. The conflict between Tupou II's ideas of kingship and the political realities at the time was at the root of many of the controversies during his reign.

Many other factors affected Tupou II's relationship with Government. He had the unenvied task of following Tupou I. He often erred in his judgement of people, tending to resent constructive critics and to favour those who flattered him.

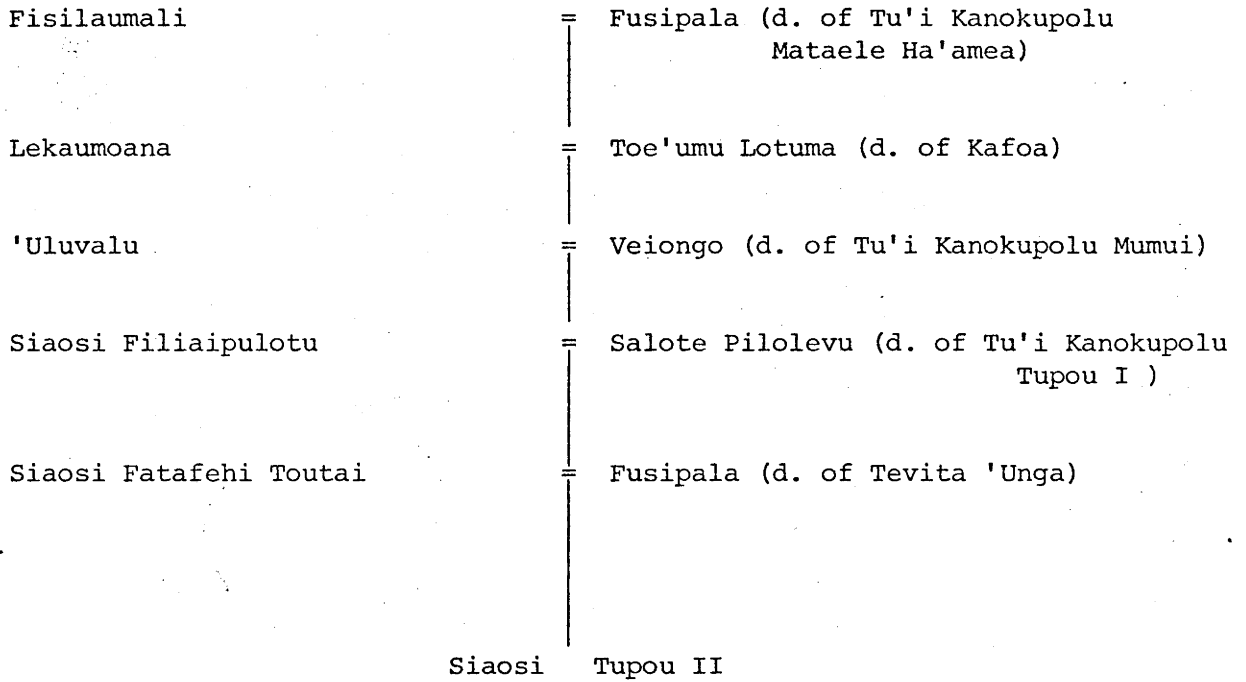
His efforts to make Government finance his extravagance aroused strong resentment. His basic lack of confidence was a source of agony to himself and to Government.

Yet Tupou II had great strengths. As in his negotiations with Basil Thomson in 1900 he proved himself competent and capable of pursuing a goal in the face of great difficulties. He survived and triumphed over the numerous confrontations which he had with many of the Ministers and nobles. He was able to hold together a Cabinet which was often divided by conflicts between the Ministers. He significantly reduced the religious rift which had divided Tonga since the late 1880s. And, especially after Mateialona's resignation in 1912 (and therefore the removal of "Britain's Premier"), Tupou II demonstrated then the kind of constructive and mutually respecting relationship which he could have with Government.

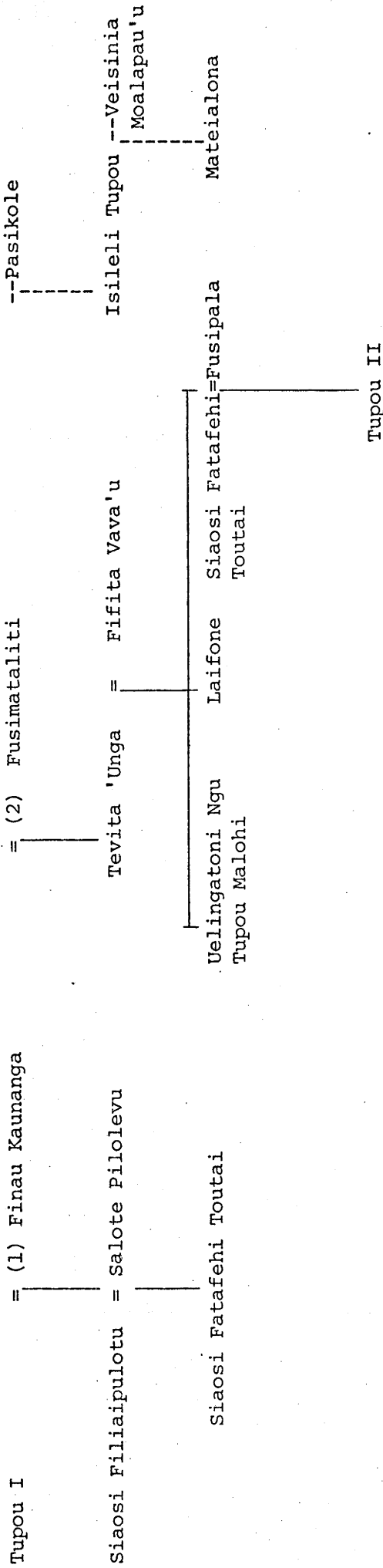
The greatest tribute to Tupou II, however, ought to be for his persistent fight to save Tonga's independence. He had contributed to, but was not entirely responsible for the troubles which had made Britain interfere more aggressively in Tonga's affairs during his reign. The imperialistic struggle between the European powers, especially Britain and Germany, would have forced a "Pacific settlement" in the early 1900s anyway. From Sateki's deportation in 1904, to Mateialona's resignation in 1912, very few Ministers in Tonga were willing to risk their careers by standing up to the British Consul. Virtually on his own, Tupou II fought against Britain's interference in Tonga's affairs. He was not completely successful, in fact he very nearly lost his crown, but the sincerity of his struggle and his correct insistence that Tonga had the right to full political independence, eventually persuaded Britain at least not to give Tonga to another country. The effect of this decision was to preserve Tonga's independence.

APPENDIX

GENEALOGY OF THE TUIPELEHAKE LINE



RELEVANT DESCENDANTS OF TUPOU I



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