EVAEVA A SAMOA:
ASSERTION OF SAMOAN AUTONOMY 1920-1936

Kilifoti Sisilia Eteuati

Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Australian National University

Canberra February 1982
This thesis represents the original research of the author, except where otherwise acknowledged.

[Signature]
ABSTRACT

This study examines Samoan opposition to New Zealand's rule in Western Samoa over the period 1920-1936. During the first five years of this period, opposition was expressed mainly through the imposition of boycotts on stores and bans on copra-cutting as well as petitions to the British government - New Zealand's authority to administer Samoa came through Britain - to remove New Zealand and to let the Samoans run their own country. In late 1926 however, a group of Samoans, in combination with local residents, launched a public campaign demanding changes to government policies and practices which had been introduced to speed up the development of the country in all spheres - political, social, economic - and which they argued would in fact damage Samoan society.

When government rejected these demands, the Samoan group, attracting a great deal of support from Samoans, quickly took control of the opposition movement - now called the Mau - and soon after, made Samoan self-government its principal objective. Between 1926 and 1936, the majority of the Samoans in the villages supported this call for self-government and demonstrated it by totally ignoring government authority and conducting their affairs their own way. During this ten year period, the Mau and its supporters virtually controlled Samoan affairs while government was reduced to making ill-judged and therefore futile attempts to bring about a settlement. It was not until the election of the first New Zealand Labour government in 1935 that an end to the confrontation was effected.

A central theme which runs through the thesis is that although Samoans were affected by government measures which brought immediate anger and frustration, the fundamental motivation behind their opposition was
the belief that they had an inviolate right to control their own lives. The thesis is concluded with the observation that while Samoan opposition during these sixteen years, and particularly during the Mau period, did not bring about self-government, it did force the New Zealanders to abandon their 'progressive schemes', and more important it kept alive and burning in the Samoans the attitude that it was their right to control their own lives.
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>(i)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maps</td>
<td>(iv)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviations</td>
<td>(iv)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>(v)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 1 - Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 2 - Fragile Foundations: 1920-1925</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 3 - Open Conflict: 1926/1927</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 4 - The Assertive Years: 1928/1929</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 5 - Breaking Point - Mau put to the Test: 1930/1931</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAPTER 6 - Resurgence, Decline and Settlement: 1931-1936</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glossary</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MAPS

Page

1. Map of Western Samoa ................ (xi)

2. Sketch plan of Apia waterfront ........... 231

ABBREVIATIONS

EA : External Affairs Department, Wellington

Minister : Minister of External Affairs, New Zealand

P.M. : Prime Minister of New Zealand

Sec. to Admin. : Secretary to Administration, Apia

SNA : Secretary of Native Affairs, Apia
PREFACE

In June 1927, a District Inspector on Savai'i reported that when he arrived at a village called Lano to inspect the village and its plantations, the chiefs of the village held a meeting which brought down the decision that; 'they would not obey any Government instructions or laws, and that it was of no use ... to give any orders because they would not obey them - they would please themselves what they did'.¹ He went on to say that the same thing was happening throughout his whole district, which covered half of Savai'i. Since late 1926, open rejection of government authority by the Samoans had developed rapidly, and this state of affairs continued until 1936.

New Zealand established her civil administration in Western Samoa in May 1920, and in the following five years it had to contend with Samoan opposition expressed mainly through trade bans and petitions requesting New Zealand's departure from the Territory. In 1924, government introduced 'progressive schemes' to boost the development of the country, particularly in the economic sphere. These schemes however contained elements which constituted a direct challenge to certain fundamental principles on which Samoan society was based, such as the sanctity of chiefly control in specified areas, and the autonomy of village communities. Although warned of the consequences if it proceeded with its development programmes, government persisted and quickly sparked off Samoan opposition which soon reached the stage where the Samoans conducted their affairs their own way without bothering about government.

¹ District Inspector Henry Buse to Resident Commissioner, 19 June 1927, A.O. 25/1-2.
This thesis focuses on this confrontation between the Samoans and the New Zealand authorities during the first sixteen years of New Zealand's civil administration. The study attempts to do two things: provide a more detailed account of Samoan involvement in this conflict; and offer a view on the Samoan character which could assist in understanding their attitude and actions during this period. This view is given in the introductory chapter, while the following five chapters carry an account of the developing confrontation in chronological sequence. Two themes which run through the thesis are first, that Samoan opposition to New Zealand's rule was basically motivated by their belief that it was their birthright to exercise control over their own lives; and secondly that Samoan attitudes and behaviour during the confrontation were principally determined by Samoan considerations rather than by government policies and practices.

This thesis came to be produced almost by accident. The author arrived in Canberra in March 1974 to start research on a topic on contemporary legal and political developments in the newly independent Pacific island nations of Western Samoa, Fiji and Tonga. For the rest of that year he pursued that subject both in Canberra and in the field. Difficulties encountered on fieldwork with access to official documents which were considered vital for the study, placed the project in jeopardy. Towards the end of 1974, he was kindly shown some remnants of O.F. Nelson's private correspondence by Tupuola Efi (later Prime Minister of Western

2 The three main works on the Mau: Davidson, J.W., Samoa mo Samoa, (Melbourne, 1967); Mary Boyd, 'The Record in Western Samoa to 1945' in Angus Ross (ed.), New Zealand's Record in the Pacific Islands in the Twentieth Century, (Auckland, 1969); and Felix Keesing, Modern Samoa, (London, 1934), do not attempt either of these tasks.
and a lucky discovery of more of Nelson's papers in a steel filing cabinet encased in an old sea chest which had been lying in a shed at the family home at Tuaefu, prompted serious consideration of Nelson and his role in the political upheavals of the 1920s and 1930s in Samoa as a likely research topic, to replace the legal/political one.

Although he did not have any academic background in history, his Department at A.N.U. agreed to the suggested change in topic. Back in the field again in 1975, he was given permission to use government material on the Mau, but then in response to a suggestion from the Samoan Prime Minister at the time, Tupua Tamasese Lealofi, for assistance with the work of the department, the author, himself needing facilitation of his access to government Mau documents - all held in the Prime Minister's Department - accepted provisional appointment in the Samoan Public Service as External Affairs Officer in the Prime Minister's Department with special responsibilities in legal and political matters. That appointment was subsequently substantiated in January 1976 when he took up full time employment with government until early 1978 when he took leave to continue his studies.

Towards the end of 1975, the twelve files which contained all the documents on the first six years of the Mau - between October 1926 to March 1932 - were discovered in a desk which had been consigned to the incinerator by the Attorney-General's Department. No researcher had seen these files and yet they were the most crucial ones not only because they dealt with the critical early years of the conflict, but also because they contained a great deal of material, mostly in Samoan, which dealt with specific local occurrences, but which had not been used.

---

in reports to New Zealand, and were not available elsewhere. The accounts given in Chapters 3, 4 and 5, particularly concerning Samoan activities during the Mau period, depended heavily on material contained in these twelve files. Those accounts also benefitted from information and knowledge the author gained from many hours spent listening and learning from the old matai either in Apia or in the villages.

Of the many Samoans who assisted the author with information, instruction and advice, four had been chosen to represent their accounts of the events during the Mau and their instructions and advice on things Samoan. They are Toluono Lama of Palauli, Savai'i; Taulealea Taulauiniu of Safune, Savai'i; Taito of Manase-Safotu, Savai'i and Vaï of Manono. Toluono and Taulealea participated in the Mau mainly as messengers so that they were in a good position to know the decisions made in Apia as well as those taken in the districts; messages were normally relayed by word of mouth. Their accounts of what happened during the Mau - or those parts in which they were involved - were more uniformly verifiable, both through accounts by other Samoans and also through documentary records, than the versions given by others. Of the other two, Taito flirted with the Mau while Vaï was a nominal Malo supporter in that Manono did not join the Mau. But these two provided not only a great deal of sound instruction and advice on Samoan customs and traditions, they also gave very balanced overviews of the whole conflict.

Finally on sources; a great deal of use is made of police reports - they normally appeared as 'Braisby to ...', Braisby being the Chief of Police during the whole Mau period - and it should be noted that they were often 'raw' reports direct from the field, and that
invariably, events bore them out. Also where Mau documents on an episode were available, they confirmed the police information. The reports which were often misleading were those written by Administrators who obviously made use of only certain sections of police reports. Unfortunately most of the material in the files in New Zealand are in fact Administrators' reports, and this was one of the main reasons behind the decision to base this thesis principally on material found in Samoa.

There are several individuals and institutions whom I would like to thank personally. For financial assistance, I would like to thank the Australian National University, and the governments of Australia and Western Samoa. For assistance with source material, I would like to thank the Samoan government; Tupuola Efi and the Nelson family; staff of the Nelson library in Apia, as well as staff of the National Archives of New Zealand and the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington. And to all the Samoans who helped me, let me say: Fa'afetai le fesoasoani.

In Dr Deryck Scarr, I had an intellect who stimulated and guided my thoughts, and also a person who was sensitive to the forces which shaped my identity and determined my responses to life. In the last two years I had repeatedly changed this thesis - substantially written in 1979 - to bring it within the word-limit for a Ph.D. thesis, but mainly to present it in a way which was sensitive and responsible as far as the Samoan people were concerned. Deryck Scarr had appreciated my concern and had supported me. I would also like to thank Dr Neil Gunson and Dr David Marr for their comments and suggestions on earlier drafts. Mrs Wendy Adcock patiently typed this thesis, often from my handwriting, and I thank her for a job well done.
Lynne-Marie, Tigi-i-lagi and Sisilia all spent a most enjoyable four years in Canberra, and this was due in no small measure to the friendship we received from Colleen and Kelvin Enright and the children; Josephine and Richard Head and their children; Gloria and Gordon Carmichael and their children; and Hank Driessen and Deryck Scarr. I would like to thank the Enrights especially for putting up with me during the last weeks of typing and Kelvin for drawing the sketch of the Apia waterfront which appears on page 213a.

To my parents who worked hard to give myself as well as my brothers and sisters a happy start in life and the opportunity to obtain a useful education, let me simply say: Malo le tapua'i. Ua talia a oulua talosaga. Ua a'e manuia le faiva. To Tim and Val Dillon and the boys in New Zealand, we want to say thank you for your support. Lynne-Marie suspended her own academic career to care for our family while I worked on this thesis, and it is to her and our children that I owe the greatest debt. But for what it is worth, I would like to dedicate this study to some very special people - Malae and Mose Tai and my family in New Zealand.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In an article which appeared in a Wellington daily newspaper in 1921 and which dealt with the difficulties New Zealand was experiencing in administering Western Samoa, the writer argued that the Dominion could not be blamed for those troubles because for one thing, 'no form of government would satisfy the Samoans who for long had been a peculiar people'.  

A somewhat unusual choice of words perhaps, but as a one-line summary of what Samoa and her affairs must have looked to the outside world up to that time, it was altogether pertinent, especially given that for the previous ninety years at any rate, the situation in Samoa had been one of seemingly endless conflict regardless of whether the Samoans conducted their affairs on their own, or with the interference and assistance of outsiders, or with the formal involvement of major powers such as Britain, Germany and the United States through treaties and a combined administrative Commission in Samoa. And the situation continued much the same after Germany took control of the country in 1900, followed by New Zealand in 1914.

This state of affairs resulted from a host of diverse factors,

---

1 Evening Post (Wellington), 6 Sept., 1921.

2 J.W. Davidson, Samoa mo Samoa (Melbourne, 1967) gives a good general picture of these developments; R.P. Gilson, Samoa 1830-1900 the politics of a multi-cultural community (Melbourne, 1970) provides a detailed study of the pre-1900 period; P.M. Kennedy, The Samoan Tangle (Dublin, 1974) describes in detail the involvement of the major powers in Samoa; and P.J. Hempenstall, Pacific Islanders under German Rule - a study in the meaning of colonial resistance (Canberra, 1978) looks at the German administration of Samoa 1900-1914 in detail.
principal amongst which were disruptive forces inherent in the fa'a Samoa (Samoan way of life), new demands brought by the papalagi (white man), and the inevitable strains caused by two cultures undergoing the process of adjustment as they struggled to co-exist. As we shall see, Samoan existence at all levels revolved around the issues of protecting one's position by exercising its prerogatives diligently and by demanding that all others recognise and respect those prerogatives, while at the same time seeking to improve the influence - and therefore the status and if possible the rank - of that position; a recipe for conflict, particularly in the confined space of an isolated, ocean-bound group of small islands. On the other hand, the Europeans were primarily concerned with the promotion of productive economic activity, and towards that end, their involvement in the affairs of Samoa - at least up to 1900 - was largely aimed at inducing more order and harmony into society than the Samoan institutions were providing. Because the Samoans did not share this concern for economic success, they neglected to try and safeguard the conditions required for the enhancement of white interests and that meant trouble from the papalagi. At the same time the Samoans who viewed the overwhelming material culture of the papalagi with awe, were nonetheless intimidated neither by this technological attainment nor by the papalagi themselves; instead they saw the products of this advanced technology as tools to be utilised and exploited to their own advantage, while the papalagi were rendered allies or opponents, at least as new participants, in the all-consuming contest for status. Thus did Samoan objectives gather in their wake not only fa'a Samoa forces but also European ones, and these influences in flux combined to produce the turbulence which dominated life in Samoa during the second half of last century.
After Germany took control of the country in 1900, the interests of the papalagi, and particularly those engaged in large-scale plantation agriculture, were given top priority by Government, so that European demands which had contributed to the unstable situation were largely removed. On the other hand, fa'a Samoa considerations remained and were in fact fuelled by official action in creating new institutions, positions and areas of influence where the struggle for prominence was extended. At the same time, this assumption of control gave Germany and her Administration in Samoa a position and a role which Samoans previously held, and which in the normal operation of their lifestyle, they were bound to try and regain. The conflicts therefore continued, and when New Zealand entered the scene in 1914 with the takeover of German Samoa at the outset of World War I, and stayed on as colonising power, she inherited a country with a history of turbulence, a people who would conduct their lives their own way, and a control which the Samoans were obliged to regain.

A closer look now at certain aspects of the fa'a Samoa will help first to clarify the attitude of Samoans to the phenomenon of assumption of authority by parties who lacked the appropriate traditional qualifications, and secondly to understand their behaviour in conflict situations.

I

'Ua tau le gafa ole Tuiaana'³ (the lineage of the Tuiaana has succeeded) Samoans say when a person who was not a suli moni (heir by

descent), such as an adopted member of a family, succeeded to the matai (chiefly) title of that family. The proverb expresses recognition of succession to matai titles by such persons, and illustrates the application of a more general principle of recognition within fa'a Samoa of succession to positions of authority by parties who lacked the usual credentials expected of successors. Thus, although Germany (1900-1914) and New Zealand (1914-1961) lacked the appropriate credentials to control Samoa because they were foreigners and they had, in Samoan eyes, unjustly usurped control of their country - ultimately by virtue of possessing superior force - the fact of that foreign control was recognised by the Samoans.

The principle is clearly one born of realism, tailored to accommodate irresistible demands resulting from uncomfortable situations caused by wars, force-backed actions and other somewhat irregular phenomena. Yet it is far from being a negative, submissive approach to such situations: central to it is the understanding that those with the appropriate connections - e tau iai as the Samoans say - retain their right to the usurped position or role, which right and its exercise these parties are entitled, indeed are obliged, to try and regain. Thus, while recognising the fact of German and New Zealand rule, the Samoans continuously strove to regain exercise of control over their own affairs - they had a right to it. On the other hand, the dominant party was expected to protect its position.

Germany and New Zealand plainly did not see their respective positions in Samoa, particularly in their relationship to the indigenous population, in this light. The deeds from which they derived their authority to rule Samoa were based firmly on colonial assumptions and practices and gave no recognition to the Samoans in the matter of who
should have control in their country, much less envisaged any rights being retained by the Samoans to the control of their affairs.

Germany obtained her 'mandate' to rule in an Agreement concluded in December 1899 between herself, Great Britain and the United States. That Agreement formalised, papalagi style, the partition of the Samoa Islands, with the United States taking control of the eastern islands of the group. New Zealand in her turn depended on the Treaty of Versailles (The Peace Treaty of 1919) for her authority to administer the group, so that she held Western Samoa by title of conquest from Germany.

While these big-power Agreements denied the Samoans, in general terms, a say in who should control their country, the application of the papalagi conventions which governed the operation of the principle of constituted authority rendered illegal under domestic law any Samoan claims to a right to control; such claims amounted to sedition, the criminal offense of undermining constituted authority which was vested in and exercised solely by the government of the day. This authority could be legitimately challenged only through so-called constitutional channels - ballot box, parliamentary measures and the courts being the main avenues - all of which were virtually beyond the reach of colonised peoples, so that in practice, the authority of the colonising power was absolute.

---

4 See P.M. Kennedy, *The Samoan Tangle* (Dublin, 1974) for a detailed description of these transactions.

5 See IT 67/12/1 and IT 67/12/2 for the official correspondence on this issue; see also Mary Boyd, 'New Zealand's Attitude to Dominion Status 1919-1921. The Procedure for enacting a constitution in her Samoan Mandate' in *Journal of Commonwealth Studies III* (1965), pp. 64-70.
There was, therefore, no room in the colonial mentality and practice for the operation of the principles which determined Samoan behaviour in situations such as those created by forcible takeovers; and therein lay the fundamental cause of the conflict which characterised the relations between the Samoans and the two foreign administrations. The papalagi powers, following their own conventions and usages of the day, presumed they held absolute control and behaved accordingly. On the other hand, the Samoans, being conditioned by their own conventions and traditions, saw themselves as retaining their right to control their own affairs, and therefore contended to regain that role. Unavoidable conflict resulted.

Insensitive attitudes and short-sighted actions on the part of the foreign administrations, caused resentment and dissatisfaction amongst the Samoans. Under certain circumstances these assumed critical significance as they themselves became causes which provoked Samoan retaliation. They presented visible grounds of grievance and the reaction they incited was therefore immediate and urgent. In situations created by such factors, 'resistance' properly describes the Samoan response. At the same time, it was within such situations that the emphasis on the racial brown-white aspect of the conflict became more pronounced. However, notwithstanding these considerations, the fact remained that such provocative attitudes and actions, together with the resentment and bitterness they occasioned, still constituted but transitory causes in the total context of the Samoan response to an assumption of power backed by force, as the German and later New Zealand takeovers in fact were. As indicated above, that Samoan response was fundamentally determined on one hand by the belief that Samoans retained a right to the control which the foreign powers were exercising in Samoa,
and on the other, by the obligation to regain that control. As can be appreciated, a response based on such grounds was essentially contingent neither on how the Samoans were treated nor on how the country was administered; nor yet on who, or which racial group, was in control. From the Samoan viewpoint, therefore, the nature of the conflict was basically one of contest for control rather than one of resistance. The same fundamental considerations had been behind the continuous struggles between themselves, and the constant conflicts and confrontations at the national level during the 19th century.

To most Samoans, the foregoing was obvious; to the query 'Why the Mau?' the response was invariably either an immediate and often bristling 'Auá e tau iai' — we have a right to it [Samoa] — or a homily conveying the message that the enquirer, the writer in this case, being a Samoan should know, and that he could ask such a silly question showed just how corrupted he had been by foreign ways of thinking. These homilies were therefore attempts to re-educate a wayward son and, more often than not, they were accompanied initially by a blank look, which soon changed to one of pity and ended up one of superiority as the unique virtues of the fa'a Samoa were driven home. During this re-education process though, emphasis was repeatedly placed on certain aspects of the fa'a Samoa which have subsequently come to constitute the principal points that follow.

While the Samoans thought that the reason for their attitude to foreign control was obvious, outsiders did not find it so simple. During the active period of the Mau movement, 1926-1936, the most repeated statement from the authorities, ranging from New Zealand Prime Ministers to minor officials in Samoa, was that the Samoans in the Mau
did not know what they wanted and had little if any idea of what the Mau was for. Writers on this subject did little better. F.M. Keesing, for example, who attempted the most ambitious analysis of the Mau, took the official view mentioned above as one of the basic premises on which he built his analysis.6

II

Today, as in the past, in Samoa ... the underlying motivation is pride - pride of self, of family, of race. It is an easy-sitting pride which looks unselfconsciously at other people. Inherently a proud people see value in dignity, and they expect recognition, both from strangers and among themselves.7

In a few lines, McKay who was the most experienced New Zealand official on Samoan affairs, captured something of the essence of the Samoan character and made the point obvious that in order to possess some grasp of Samoan attitudes and behaviour, one needs to look at the foundations on which that pride is based. Rather than seek those foundations in an exhaustive discussion of the highly complex socio-political structure of Samoa8 - a brief description of the basic

elements will be given to provide background - it is more productive to look at the issues of the definition and identity of the Samoan individual.

The aiga (family or local kin group) is the basic unit in the social structure of Samoa. It consists of people who are related by descent, adoption or marriage and who lay claim to a matai title which they serve and through which their place in the community is defined. The head of the aiga is a person whom the local family members, together with relatives who live elsewhere - and serve other matai titles - but who have maintained aiga connections by assisting with major family functions, choose from amongst themselves to hold the family matai title. Once chosen, the titleholder assumes control over the aiga assets - the nature of this control is largely custodial as family assets are vested in the matai title itself, not the holder - the activities of its members, and represents the family in outside affairs. On their part, the untitled family members render him tautua (service). Although the matai has wide powers of control over the members of his aiga, the application of these powers is circumscribed by the freedom of the family members to move to another of their aiga if dissatisfied - a matai without tautua loses the respect of his fellow villagers and has to toil hard in the plantation to meet the aiga obligations to the village and church - and by the existence of the rarely used right of those same members to remove the title. By the same token, the untitled people are restrained from an arbitrary exercise of their rights by the inconvenience of starting anew in unfamiliar surroundings, and by the fact that one is more likely to succeed to a matai title in their aiga and village of origin than elsewhere.

Matai titles are of two orders, the ali'i (chief) and the tulafale
(orator); a distinction which is of little relevance in the aiga context where all matai perform the same tasks, but of crucial importance outside the aiga circle. The difference between the two may best be seen in the division of chiefly functions; the ali'i, the source of authority, is a titular chief to whose title and person were attached, in Samoan tradition, a sanctity which placed him above involvement in 'profane' tasks - such as speaking on his own behalf or distributing goods and wealth - which were performed by the tulafale whose role resembled that of executive and administrator. The distribution of political power however does not necessarily follow this division, the relative standing of ali'i and tulafale vary from village to village and district to district and in many places individual tulafale or groups of them possess and wield all the power while the ali'i play strictly a figurehead role. Within the categories of ali'i and tulafale there exist rank orders of all variations according to context and use.

The basic and most stable unit of political organisation is the nu'u (village) which is made up of a number of local aiga, constituted in a formal structure by the village fa'alupega. This is a fixed set of honorific greetings for the matai titles in the village and takes the form of allusions to the historical and genealogical origins as well as the functions, rights and duties of those titles not only in the village but also in the wider context of sub-district, district and country. Through those references, the various titles are defined and located in the village hierarchy, thereby providing a framework for interaction between the different aiga, while at the same time, the identity of the village is established in the wider extra-village context. In providing the village with a formal framework for its internal
operation as well as a separate identity in the community of villages, the fa'alupega\(^9\) establishes the autonomy of that village - a status jealously guarded.

Control of village affairs lies with the fono a matai (council of chiefs), the highest body constituted in the village fa'alupega. The fono possesses extensive powers so that it is able, for example, to make village regulations, administer them and punish those who break them. It is not answerable to a higher authority for its conduct of village affairs, and the greatest moderating factor on the use of its powers lies in the close attention paid by each matai to the protection of the interests of his aiga.

Apart from the matai grouping, three other village institutions which are important in the everyday lives of the people, cut across aiga relationships: the aumaga or taulelea (untitled young men), Faletua ma Tausi (wives of the matai), and the aualuma (unattached women of the village). The matai on the male side and the aualuma on the female side are traditionally the more important, status wise, in their respective areas. Nowadays though, the demarcation between the aualuma and the Faletua ma Tausi has narrowed significantly and the women deal with their responsibilities in the combined komiti a tamaitai (women's committee) in which older wives are often the more influential.

Villages are grouped into sub-districts and districts on the basis of historical and genealogical ties, with locality an important influence.

---

\(^9\) Although most used in connection with the village, the term fa'alupega is similarly applied to the highly compressed socio-political-ceremonial definition of either individual, aiga, sub-district, district or country in historical/genealogical terms. In this context, fa'alupega includes the gafa which is specifically the genealogy of a title or of an aiga.
As in the case of villages, the political and ceremonial hierarchy within these larger groupings are defined and fixed by the fa'alupega of each district, but whereas in villages the focus of cohesion is the village fono, here that focus is provided by the particular paramount title acknowledged by the respective sub-districts and districts. In consequence, the political-ceremonial structure of each district is based largely on the traditional ties between the various entities within it - for instance individual titles and individual villages or groupings of titles and combinations of villages - and their paramount title.

The island of Upolu is divided into three districts - Atua, Aana and Tuamasaga - which are further sub-divided into eleven main sub-districts. In Savaii, there are six districts - Fa'asaleleaga, Gaga'emauga, Gagaifomauga, Vaisigano, Satupa'itea and Palauli - with seven notable sub-districts. Each of these districts has a political centre which is usually the traditional residential village of the relevant paramount chief. In Upolu these centres are Lufilufi in Atua, Leulumoega in Aana and the adjacent villages of Malie and Afega in Tuamasaga, while in Savaii, Safotulafai in Fa'asaleleaga is the traditional residence of the Malietoa titleholder on that island and although the other districts insist on their independence and primacy in the politico-ceremonial hierarchy of Savaii, Safotulafai is the senior traditional capital and reference to it generally suffices for the whole of Savaii. The political centres in the other Savaii districts are Palauli village in Palauli district, Satupaitea village in Satupaitea district, Saleaula in Gagaemauga, Safotu in Gagaifomauga and Asau in Vaisigano.
District fono meet infrequently and deal largely with ceremonial and ritual matters; and issues of warfare in the old days. In these fono and indeed in all district affairs, tulafale groups from the political centres dominate, but they are always careful to obtain the views of the leading matai from the constituent villages in their districts before acting. Just as it is the duty of the senior matai, particularly the tulafale, of a village to protect the interests of their village in district affairs, so it is the duty of the tulafale from the traditional centre in each district to uphold the interests of their district in national affairs. And at the national level in Samoan tradition, the main issues of contention were in fact largely concerned with the struggle between these orator groups for ascendancy on behalf of their respective districts. The orator groups from the traditional political centres in Upolu are individually and collectively known as Tumua, while those in Savaii are called Pule, so that it may be correctly said that the national affairs of Samoa were in the hands of Tumua and Pule.

Since the politico-ceremonial hierarchies at district level were primarily based on relationships with paramount titles, the struggle between the traditional centres was manifested principally and most dramatically in their tussle to assert the ascendancy of the paramount title acknowledged by their respective districts. At this top level, four such titles are recognised: Malietoa, Tupua, Mata'afa and Tuimaleali'ifano. These titles belong to the two major lineages of Sa Malietoa and Sa Tupua, the former being headed by the Malietoa title and the latter by the other three with Tupua the senior title. Holders of these titles are referred to as tama-aiga (sons of the family), reflecting the fact that behind each is a great series of kin and locality
alignments, and indicating also the interdependent nature of the relationship between these titles and their Aiga. Although alliances between major groupings were not stable, in general the district of Tuamasaga in Upolu, Aiga-ile-Tai, and the whole of Savai'i were traditionally aligned with the Sa Malietoa lineage, while Atua and Aana were behind the Sa Tupua.

To establish paramountcy over the whole country, it was necessary for the holder of any of the tama-aiga titles to be bestowed the four highest ceremonial titles in Samoa; Tui Atua, Tui Aana, Gatoaitele and Tamasoalii. The holder of these four titles was called the Tafa'ifa (holder of four) and only a person who had achieved this honour could rightfully be called the king of Samoa. It was the traditional right of the tulafale groups of the Tumua centres to bestow these titles - Lufilufi with the Tui Atua, Leulumoega with the Tui Aana, and the Tuamasaga orators with the Gatoaitele and the Tamasoalii - but because of their intense rivalry for ascendancy, it was almost impossible for any one person to be bestowed all four. However since the Tafa'ifa was the ultimate symbol of status in Samoan society, the orators of Tumua and Pule in the old days continually intrigued and committed their districts to war in their efforts to win that honour for their tama-aiga and hence their district.

III

Samoans see their own identification in two basic dimensions: that determined by inherited positions and values on one hand, and on the

Aiga is the term for major kin and district groupings.
other, that determined by personal effort and achievement. The first
is characterised by properties which are fixed, basic and to be
protected, while the latter is characterised by variables which move
according to competition and personal achievement. These two spheres
are of course inter-related and often overlap, but Samoans never
confuse them. The division is retained in the following analysis.

The enquiry 'Who are you?' from a Samoan, of another Samoan,
seeks not to discover a name but rather to obtain information on the
aiga and village connections of the other person. Without that information
the enquirer, in Samoan terms, would in fact not know who the other person
is, notwithstanding that he might be familiar with the other's name,
and he would therefore be unable to relate properly to the other.
This situation exists because first and foremost the Samoan is defined
and identified in terms of the genealogical constitution of the
different aiga to which he is related through both his parents, as well
as in terms of the internal hierarchy and the standing of the villages -
and on a wider scale, sub-districts and districts - to which those aiga
belong. Thus in the numerous villages visited by the writer either as
a researcher or government official, his name, although known to his
hosts, was never mentioned in the countless formal and semi-formal
addresses made. Instead he was addressed always in terms of the gafa
(genealogy of a title or an aiga) and the fa'alupega of his various aiga
and of the corresponding villages; each speaker utilising one or more
of these relationships as he saw fit. Sometimes his occupation and
profession were added to his identification.

This procedure is normal, and a Samoan would be insulted if it
were not observed, particularly amongst his own people. A Samoan, even
as a child, learns by conscious instruction and by everyday experiences
his place and role within his aiga, the place and role of his aiga within the village, his village within the sub-district and so on. He learns the gafa of his aiga, the fa'alupega of the family title and the fa'alupega of his village; and he learns too the fa'alupega, the places and roles of the other aiga in his village, so that he knows the relationships between the different entities within his village and understands how the whole community functions. The importance of his aiga and village in their respective context is constantly impressed on him by word and deed, so that he is positively encouraged to take pride in those things and thus in himself. The same applies on the wider scale of sub-district, district and country. Part of the identity of the Samoan is defined in terms of his relationship to these larger divisions and the institutions therein. At every available opportunity, the uniqueness and the virtues of the relevant entities within these divisions are emphasised and the individual is thereby positively reinforced in his view of those matters. In this way, a Samoan can identify personally with the interests of his village, his sub-district, district and country, so that the pride he feels for these things is personal and intense.

For all practical purposes, the fa'alupega of each aiga, village and so forth is constant in the context in which each operates. This in turn means that the rank, status and roles pertaining to each of these entities, and indicated and enshrined in the fa'alupega, are fixed. Therefore, the identity of the Samoan in terms of these factors is safe and secure: he knows with certainty who he is and what he is particularly in relation to others in the village as well as those outside his village. Thus at the basic level of his existence he has this definitive awareness of his identity, and on that is founded the
confidence and the self-assurance of the Samoan individual.

The question arises though, particularly from an outside viewpoint, as to the operation of those factors in Samoan society, given its traditional nature and its hierarchical structure. Put in another and more blunt way, is one's regard for his aiga and village based simply on blind faith in tradition? On the other hand, do the factors discussed above in fact apply throughout the whole society as, for example, with individuals from minor families whose matai title may not rate a regular seat in the village fono?

The answers to both queries lie largely in the principles and the practices expressed in the Samoan proverb 'O Samoa ole atunuu tofi' (Samoa is an apportioned country) meaning each individual, each title or aiga, each village, sub-district and so on, each institution and organisation has a defined place and role in society; each possesses inherent dignity derived from being an integral part of the total society, and each therefore commands recognition and respect. On the other hand, the obligations and privileges devolving on each are bounded and these boundaries should be observed. In common usage, this proverb is most often employed to put another person in his place - 'know your place, keep to it' - and to assert one's own position.

Inherited rank, status, roles and rights which are enshrined and indicated in gafa and fa'alupega as well as in other traditions and practices are regarded by each group as constituting a sacred trust or heritage, held in the aiga title or the collective entity of the village fono. These inheritances had been earned or had resulted from traditionally-sanctioned tofiga (allocations) down the years and those who succeeded to them by birth and descent or by other recognised means -
adoption or mavaega (dying wish of a matai) for example - hold inextinguishable rights to them. As matters vested in the aiga title and the village fono they belong to members of the respective groups past, present and future; the incumbents at any period being but custodians for the time being. In this role they exercise the prerogatives and enjoy the benefits flowing from their heritage. At the same time though, they have a duty to themselves as well as to their aiga or village - in the widest sense of past, present and future generations - to protect the standing and the honour of that heritage. If it is usurped as a result of, say, a mavaega or wrested away by force, then that duty demands that they try to regain it. Samoan existence indeed revolves around the protection of one's inherited position and on the other hand the promotion of that position through achieved influence, as will be seen later.

The task of protecting one's heritage was tackled in a positive and dynamic manner by actively exercising the prerogatives pertaining to one's own inheritance and demanding that it be accorded due recognition and respect at all times - a positive approach which embodied the very essence of a living and vital culture. As can be appreciated, though, the operation of this approach, constructive as it is, creates an atmosphere of tension at all levels of society, touching and affecting everyone, including children. This was inevitable, given the fierce pride of each Samoan in his aiga, village and so on. Formal observances of rank, status and roles is part of everyday life, so that whenever Samoans meet for example - particularly the matai - whether in a fono or on an informal visit to the next door fale (Samoan house) formal greetings including respectful references to the gafa and the fa'alupega of the other are always made, the form being determined by
the occasion and the personal preferences of the individuals involved. R.L. Stevenson, watching this lifestyle but obviously uncomprehending as to the forces behind it, somewhat irreverently described it thus: 'An elaborate courtliness marks the race alone among Polynesians; terms of ceremony fly thick as oaths on board a ship; commoners mylord each other when they meet - and urchins as they play marbles'.

This principle of protection through exercising prerogatives and demanding dues applied even when a position had been usurped, so that a party deprived of its position would continue, or attempt to continue, performing the roles pertinent to the usurped position as a means of keeping its rights to that position alive and vital. It would also take other measures to keep reminding its own members - even perhaps those yet to be born - as well as others of their rights to the usurped position. This is indicative of two significant strains in Samoan perception. First is the belief that without this active reminder, particularly to the community at large, that community will in time accept the rights of the usurper as full and complete, thus clothing his claims to the disputed position with untainted legitimacy and thereby effectively eliminating the original possessors with regard to that particular position. The second is the fatalistic belief of Samoans that in the normal evolution of things, the relative strength between the parties will change, and one day the deprived party will be strong enough to make an effective bid to regain its full rights. 'E sau aso, ae alu aso' (days come and days go) Samoans say, indulging in a sentiment similar to that conveyed by the papa\-
lagi expression 'our day will come'.

The measures which are calculated to keep the rights of a party alive are, if susceptible to public demonstration, given that treatment - a provocative act in itself - and such demonstration is invariably carried out in an aggressive manner. The public display is essential since it is the members of the community at large who must be kept impressed of one's rights, while the aggressiveness is a necessary ingredient in the strategy of testing the dominant party in the constant probe for weaknesses. At the same time, both parties would engage in promoting their respective cases by intrigue - manipulating and exploiting genealogical, traditional, religious and any other ties that may appear favourable to their interests. Immediately on conflicts developing, attitudes and behavioural patterns elicited by such situations are assumed easily and naturally by Samoans as part of their everyday lives. The conflict thus becomes a personal matter and finds expression in the wide range of the experiences of the individual, rendering it more susceptible to bitterness which is very difficult to diffuse, let alone remove completely. In short, conflict situations are characterised by constant probing, particularly by the weaker party testing the defences of the other, by continuous intrigue on both sides, and by personal identification and involvement.

On the other side of the coin, the party in control is expected to protect its position and measures it takes to ensure that objective are understood even if they are deeply resented. Germany during its period of fourteen years of rule in Samoa took very strong measures to protect its position from the continuous attempts by the Samoans to contest control of their affairs, particularly at the national level where German control was most obvious. The German response did not
give the Samoans any encouragement, which attitude the Samoans expected and understood in such a situation. By the same token they had the duty to regain full control of their heritage and so they worked away at it. This duty was of particular importance to the orators of the Tumua and Pule centres, whose role was to protect the mamalu (dignity) and therefore the well-being of national institutions. The prominence of Safotulafai, the senior Pule centre, in the clashes during the German regime has to be seen in this context for proper appreciation of that conflict. As the most influential orator of that centre at the time Lauaki Mamoe was simply playing the role allotted him and his district by the fa'a Samoa. He had no choice. Similarly in the confrontation during the New Zealand period, specifically the Mau of 1926-1936, it was the orators from the Pule and Tumua centres who controlled the Mau affairs.

During this latter struggle, the Samoans discovered soon after New Zealand took over from Germany that the newcomers were not as particular as the Germans in protecting their position. The lapses created by this relaxed attitude were exploited for all they were worth, as was proper under such circumstances. To place this matter in a proper perspective though, it must be said that the Samoan judgement of the two foreign administrations on this score was very much in terms of one being more vigilant than the other in protecting their respective interests, rather than in terms of respect for German force and contempt for New Zealand's less stringent approach.

But while the operation of this protectionist attitude towards one's heritage was responsible for much of the strife within Samoan society, it also played a very important part in preventing any one individual or group from being autocratic and domineering. Sensitivity
over the issue of inherited rights is such that mere suspicion by a group that it was being treated disrespectfully by others would often constitute sufficient reason for it either to wage war on its detractors or to change alliances or to withdraw recognition. This aspect of the fa'a Samoa was doubtless one of the major factors which prevented the establishment last century of a Samoan central government under one dominant group as happened in Fiji, Tonga and elsewhere in the Pacific. The success of the Samoans at the time in avoiding such a system safeguarded, for themselves and their descendants, each his/her respected place and role in society and guaranteed their freedom of choice and movement in the interests of their respective rights, without being restricted and compromised by the fact of one particular group or family exercising permanent superiority within their society.

At the same time though, these protectionist tendencies can also persuade individuals and groups to remain aloof or to join an alliance or organisation. This applies especially to groups whose positions in the fa'a Samoa are not secure, in the sense that there are competing claims from others to the prerogatives they are exercising. The six Pule districts of Savai'i fit into this situation. They all claim the same privileges and prominence, so that the struggle as to who in fact exercises these Pule rights, particularly at the national level, is continuous and intense. Doubtless this factor accounted to a large extent for the overwhelming numerical support given the Mau movement by all the districts of Savai'i; a support though, which when broken down to matters of financial contributions and ceremonial largesse - the real test with Samoans - showed that apart from one or two districts the support was in fact lukewarm.
Until the final quarter of last century there were only two Pule - Safotulafai and Saleaula - in Savai'i, while the other four main groups were designated Itu. Pule status ranks the highest politically in Savai'i and the four Itu had contended for Pule status for generations without success. In the aftermath of the Steinberger experiment of the 1870s to form a stable Samoan central government, the Upolu Tumua centres of Lufilufi and Leulomoega siezed on the unsettled conditions to make a bid to extend their political authority to Savai'i. Under the guise of visiting Savai'i to negotiate a settlement of the conflict that had been in progress, Tumua offered certain Itu districts of Savai'i Tumua status. Safotulafai, the senior Pule, immediately went to war against the Tumua and Itu forces. It won. However, rather than returning to the status quo Safotulafai, conscious of the need to guarantee that Savai'i political control remained in Savai'i, forced Tumua to withdraw their offer of Tumua status to Savai'i districts, and Lauaki Mamoe, speaking on behalf of Safotulafai, conferred Pule status on the four Itu. That action defeated Tumua designs on political control of Savai'i but now the struggle moved on to the next plane of contention - that for the leading Pule amongst the six.

Village institutions too such as the matai, aumaga, aualuma and Faletua ma Tausi are most protective of their standing. Every Samoan in the village, apart from those in their early teens and younger, belongs to one or the other of these groups by convention and compulsion if necessary. It is through these groups that they serve the interests of the village as an entity in its own right rather than merely a combination of families. As such, membership, obligations and loyalties attached to these groups cut across family ties and sometimes conflict with aiga interests. It is difficult to generalise on which interests are
paramount to the individual Samoan, for in practice there does not appear to be too much difficulty in choosing which way to go, the response being largely contingent on the importance of the issues involved, the personalities concerned and the relevant context obtaining.

The taulelea hold a place and a role which from an outside viewpoint would appear servile and unrewarding; serving the matai in their own aiga and carrying out the orders and decisions of the village fono. Yet their position is not altogether lacking in honour and worth. Their relationship with the fono as well as with the matai of their own aiga is one of consultation rather than one of orders and blind obedience. If the matai fail to accord the position of the taulelea due recognition and respect, the taulelea may well refuse to respond favourably to fono requests. But if the requirements of respect are observed, then the taulelea would sacrifice himself at the word of the matai and the fono, because that is his role and that constituted part of his identity at that period of his life.

It is in this context too that another aspect of Samoan behaviour - that of politeness - can be best appreciated. The show of humility and deference by a Samoan is never an expression of inferiority but rather an expression of confidence in one's own position and the knowledge that others involved in the relationship recognise and respect the relative significance of all the relevant factors pertinent to the relationship. With that background, a taulealea feels it an honour to jump without question to an order of a matai, while the highest ranking matai in a village would sit slightly away from his proper place of honour in the fono, and after being identified in the formal terms of the gafa and fa'alupega would refer to himself in ordinary terms.
Even in the performance of the *ifoga*, the highest form of Samoan apology and a most humbling one, where the leading member(s) of the guilty or defeated party would sit with head bowed and covered by an *ie toga* (fine mat) literally offering himself up to the injured or victorious party as a sacrifice, those offering the *ifoga* are only apologising for some particular event but in no way conceding anything else; they would most likely be planning how to exercise their prerogatives better next time even as they apologised. A defeated party in the old days engaged in an *ifoga*, for example, was simply saying to the victorious party, 'this time you win and I am paying you respect for it, but my rights could not be extinguished and when I am able I will contest with you again'. And the victorious party understood and accepted that situation - it was up to it to protect its position of dominance.

Within this dimension of Samoan life which revolves around ascriptive principles, direct challenges to rank, status and roles are uncommon though not unknown. Depending on circumstances, direct challenges in this area constitute the most explosive issues within Samoan society. If not arrested quickly, such challenges would invariably drive bitter and deep divisions between sections of a family, different families within a village, villages within a sub-district, and so on. Divisions created in this manner are extremely difficult to heal and it might take generations if ever before a reconciliation is effected. Permanent new groups often result. Notwithstanding this situation, the contest for enhanced rank and status is very much a feature of Samoan life, but that struggle takes place in another sphere and assumes a more subtle form of challenging inherited positions.
In contrast with the sphere of life dominated by inherited rank, status and roles, and stifled by the obsession to protect them, the dimension of Samoan life where one is defined and identified in terms of efforts and achievement is characterised by competition and contest. The factors which operate here are variable. One of the major ones is influence, and the extent to which it applies is determined by the personalities, the efforts and the attainments of the incumbent members of aiga, villages and so forth at any particular period. A high rating in these qualities and means would enable a family, village, sub-district or district to assume dominant influence and therefore effective control over the affairs of the group within which each operates.

Dominant influence does not mean autocratic or domineering posturing, it means rather that one's opinion carries a decisive amount of weight. In the case of a village for example, the gafa and the fa'alupega, and therefore the respective ranks, status and roles, remain constant; the conventions and practices which provide the framework of village organisation are observed as before; all remain normal. Within the village fono though, the trend and nature of its decisions - and therefore the direction and control of village affairs - would largely reflect the views of the matai enjoying dominant influence at the time, rather than the views of other matai, including the holder of the highest-ranking title. Often such influence is wielded behind the scenes but most people in a village would know who was in ascendancy at a time because his efforts, talents and success would be public matters, which were often adopted by members of the village as objects of pride.
Essentially the fa'a Samoa places no restrictions either on the nature or the extent of the achievement, or on the individual involved; these are determined by ability, opportunity and effort. Individuals who demonstrate ability are encouraged regardless of their antecedents. Thus a taulealea from a minor family who has shown exceptional ability in dealing with ancient chants would be preferred by a fono to perform such a chant on an important occasion over the heads of taulealea from the highest-ranking aiga; and a student who did well in academic studies would perhaps receive a special mention in the village church or be invited by the matai fono into its midst to be congratulated. On the other hand, the highly competitive nature of Samoan society — resulting from and sustained by their fierce personal pride — often leads to others exerting greater efforts to match or to better the attainment of another individual, and sometimes to detract deliberately from such attainment; the Samoans themselves frequently saying that they must be unique in this practice.

Such an attitude, however, normally applies only in certain specific contexts, so that while within a village one family would be reluctant to admit the success of an individual in a rival aiga, members of the same family would boast of that very success as if it were their own — as indeed it is on the village level — to people from outside their village. The ramifications of this attitude therefore hardly affect adversely — they may even heighten the effect — the applicability of the general principle of according due recognition and respect to those who achieved through their own efforts and talents, in right of those achievements. With such recognition comes rank and status, and therefore privileges and obligations. Such achieved attributes however are never confused by Samoans with rank, status and privileges derived
from gafa, fa'alupega and other Samoan conventions and practices. There has of course always been a category within the fa'a Samoa in which such people are accommodated. Within that category were those who qualified - through their skill - for example to the tufuga (craftsman) group, which includes the tufuga fau fale (house builder), tufuga ta tatau (tattooer) and the tufuga fau va'a (boat builder). Around this craftsman group and similarly for others such as tautai (masters of the sea arts) there exists a complicated ritual and ceremony, which above all else demonstrates the prominent position they occupy within Samoan society.

Important as it is, the identification of a Samoan derived from achievement is generally taken as appendant to that determined by birth and descent. Thus a Faifeau (Samoan church minister) may be satisfactorily identified in terms of his vocation by members of his congregation who may drop in for a chat, but on semi-formal and formal occasions, the gafa and fa'alupega of his aiga and corresponding villages - and if applicable sub-districts and districts - always constitute the major part of his identification.

Similar considerations place restrictions on the extent to which one can exercise any influence he may have obtained through achieved success. Therefore while there are no limits to what one can achieve, influence resulting from such achievement can only be properly exercised within a sphere where the individual concerned is entitled by fa'a Samoa requirements to operate. Thus while a successful Samoan entrepreneur in a village may be powerful and influential by viture of his material wealth, if he is a non-matai then his influence must remain peripheral in matters of village control. If he wants to play a more effective
part in village affairs it is necessary for him to be a matai. And thus does the fa'a Samoa perpetuate and protect itself.

However to wield effective influence within the matai fono, he needs to hold a title which qualifies for what shall be termed here contending equality status, at the highest level of the fono. In simple terms, contending equality status describes a standing which a title must have to qualify to exercise certain privileges and roles within a particular context. For example, before the four Itu districts of Savai'i achieved Pule status in 1880, the leading orators from those districts, regardless of whether they were the most powerful personalities on the scene, could not exercise influence at the highest political councils of Savai'i and Samoa; they did not have contending equality status at that top level.

The term is also intended to convey the fact that in most situations several titles or groups which have the right to exercise a particular privilege would in fact hold varying ranks and command differing status. Thus in the case of the Pule groupings in Savai'i, they are regarded as having different ranks with Safotulafai the most senior, but each possessed contending equality status at the highest political level in the country, which allowed a tulafale of ability and achievement from any of the six Pule centres to exercise dominant influence in Savai'i or national affairs. This was what in fact happened during the Mau when Autagavaia of Palauli and Lavea of Safotu dominated Mau affairs. The reality within Samoan society is therefore one where in general terms, rank and status are of the highest importance but in practical terms, possession or attainment of contending equality status at the controlling level within each sphere of organisation is
the crucial requirement. By and large then, the principal concern with Samoans is not so much achieving equality in status *per se* but rather attaining contending equality status.

It is probably due largely to this reality that the ranks of titles in villages or wherever are not as a rule ever specifically stated. People of course know which are the high-ranking titles from knowledge of *gafa* and *fa'alupega* and from ceremonial observances and other conventions and practices, but there is a great reluctance to put a specific and definite ranking on titles, particularly in public. The concern is more that one should have contending equality status, a more general and rather obscure definition of rank, but one which gives the *fa'a Samoa* that variety of options which Samoans are so fond of and so adept at maintaining.

With several titles and groups of different ranks possessing contending equality status within each sphere of Samoan life, the contest for dominant influence is always present, always intense and often bitter; and a great deal of importance became attached to personalities and achievement. Sometimes two or more *matai* at the top sphere would be exerting comparable influence and often they would end up adopting different causes such as the Mau or the Malo (government) or different religious denominations, even if it meant traumatic conversions. If conflict situations existed, then the normal Samoan response would be for each side to withdraw all forms of recognition from the other, conducting its affairs as if it constituted the whole and the other party did not exist. In confined villages environments though, the two parties would soon meet up and then during the initial period, physical and verbal clashes would be likely to occur if a conciliation was not
effected. As time passed however, people who have always lived together in the same community would inevitably drift back to peaceful existence, although the cause of the split such as the Mau or religious denominations might well remain and even become a permanent part of the life of the village.

It is on an understanding of the situation where contending equality status rather than equality per se is the operational principle that the often-mentioned dualism in Samoan life can best be appreciated. The concept should probably be best termed multi-ism, because it is rare indeed for any sphere of the fa'a Samoa to contain only two titles or parties with contending equality status. And the multiplicity of such titles or groups within any one area is probably a major factor in contest and conflicts being a way of life in Samoan society.

But while this principle of contending equality status means that titles or parties of lesser rank can exercise effective control in their respective spheres, there are limitations on the extent of their control. There is of course the need to retain support, which mitigates against being overbearing, but there is another and more compelling restriction, which is to do with the standing of the community in which the relevant action takes place. In a village situation, for example, a matai of lesser rank exercising dominant influence must always take care that he did not undermine the standing of the other important titles in the village to the extent that it would leave the village open to ridicule, particularly from outside, and thereby compromise the position of everyone in the village, as well as that of the village itself in outside affairs. Thus on occasions where outsiders are involved the holder of the highest ranked title is given all due honour and respect even if in actuality he wields very little influence in the village matai fono...
This practice of presenting a face of unanimity and tranquillity finds expression in the Samoan saying 'malu i fale' (safe within the house) meaning, that squabbles should be confined to the immediate parties concerned and should not be broadcast. The rationale behind this attitude is basically self-protection; the fear is that the exposure of changes disagreements and divisions would be exploited by others to improve their own position. The same reason largely explains why members of an aiga follow their matai to a new religion or in an unusual course of action, and similarly why a village takes the lead of its highest ranking chief. It is not an act of blindly following an autocratic leader, it is a necessary act of self-protection, so that one is in a position to protect the dignity and honour of the matai, and therefore protect one's own identity.

V

New Zealand's entry into Samoa occurred on 29 August 1914 when a 1400-strong New Zealand military force under the command of Colonel Robert Logan landed in Apia and took control of the town; the following day, Logan formally proclaimed the occupation of German Samoa by the forces of His Britannic Majesty King George Fifth. As it turned out, New Zealand remained in the territory until 1962 when Samoa attained her independence.

The occupation of Samoa had resulted from a request by the British government for the seizure of the German wireless station in Samoa.

12 Logan to Liverpool, 2 Sept. 1914, G 1279/14.
13 Harcourt to Liverpool, 6 Aug. 1914, IT 39/2.
Nine days after receipt of that request, two New Zealand troopships left Wellington and escorted by three British warships, proceeded to Noumea, New Caledonia where they teamed up with three more warships - two Australian and one French. The fleet, under the command of Rear-Admiral Sir George E. Patey of the Australian Navy, called at Suva and picked up fifteen Samoans who lived there, 'to be dispersed throughout the islands in order to explain our intentions', and then headed for Apia where on the morning of 29 August, Patey demanded from the Governor of Samoa surrender of the territory. An assurance that there would be no opposition was received and the occupation forces disembarked and established themselves in Apia without incident.

Perhaps because the occupation was a military one and the whole operation was launched hurriedly, Logan was not given directions on how to administer the group once it was secured; being instructed only to 'take such measures as you may consider necessary to hold them and to control the inhabitants'. Relying on the provisions of the Hague Convention 1907 and his own knowledge of laws and practices of war, he tried to administer the country along the lines established by the Germans, utilising incumbent German officials. Insistence by these officials to continue administering Samoa in the name of the Kaiser however forced Logan to replace them with members of his force and a few local residents in a move which saw him take charge of the whole civil administration in three days. The changeover apparently did not cause

---

14 Logan to Liverpool, 2 Sept. 1914, G 1279/14.

15 On the seizure of German Samoa see, European War: (correspondence relating to) Occupation of German Samoa by an expeditionary force from New Zealand (Govt. pamphlet, Wellington, 1915); see also G series 21-1 and IT 39/2.

16 Colonel W.G. Braithwaite to Logan, 13 Aug. 1914, IT 39/2.

17 Memorandum by Logan (5 Sept. 1914), encl. in Logan to Liverpool, 5 Sept. 1914, G 1280/14.
any problems, perhaps because the existing administrative structures
and procedures were retained, except for the Education Department which
was temporarily disbanded because the buildings in the Department's
compound were being used to billet the troops.\textsuperscript{18} Logan also distributed
copies of Colonial Office Regulations to departments with instructions
'to carry on as nearly as possible in conformity with them';\textsuperscript{19} his
main objective though appeared not so much the introduction of new
procedures as the familiarisation of his officials with British practice,
anticipating that the Colonial Office would eventually take over control
of Samoa.

In dealing with the local population, Logan adopted the policy
of putting Samoan interests first.\textsuperscript{20} Thus on the issue of the
availability of Samoan land for European use, he would only consider
leaseholds in Upolu and rejected proposals concerning Savai'i: 'I am
strongly of opinion that the island of Savai'i should be retained
absolutely for the Samoans and that no European occupation should be
encouraged there'.\textsuperscript{21} On the other hand, his resolve to lower the
Chinese coolie population in spite of protests from whites, particularly
planters, was partly justified by Samoans' objections to the imported
labourers, 'who were brought in without their consent and remain against
their wishes'.\textsuperscript{22} Consequently when some villages declared that they would
punish any Chinese who cohabited with any of their women, Logan did not
interfere: 'I consider it my duty to give them [Samoans] all assistance

\textsuperscript{18} Logan to Liverpool, 27 Oct. 1914, G 1968/14.
\textsuperscript{19} Report by Logan (8 Jul. 1919), encl. in Logan to Liverpool, 8 Jul. 1919,
IT 1/10.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{21} Logan to Liverpool, 23 Oct. 1916, G 3396/16.
\textsuperscript{22} Logan to Liverpool, 19 Nov. 1917, G. 3197/17.
I can to keep their race a pure one'. When the Faipule requested tangible support, Logan responded with a Proclamation forbidding coolies from entering fale (Samoan houses).

Logan continued with the German practice of the head of government being directly involved in the administration of Samoan affairs. He discovered that the Germans had largely left the Samoans to run their affairs according to their customs and traditions, and had built a simple hierarchy of Samoan officials on the traditional structure to provide a formal link between government and the Samoans. At the top of this hierarchy were the two Fautua; normally the Malietoa titleholder and one of the tama-aiga from the Sa Tupua major lineage. Malietoa Tanumafili and Tupua Tamasese Lealofi were the Fautua at the time; the latter died in 1916 and was replaced by Tuimalealiifano. This office was one of high honour without real power created by the Germans to accommodate the heads of the two great lineages in the attempt to remove them from being the focus of district and kin rivalry which had caused so much upheaval during the previous century. Their role was to advise the Governor on Samoan affairs when consulted. Next came the Faipule—37 at the time—who were representatives appointed by the Governor from districts; they were the main channel of communication between the districts and the Governor whom they met twice yearly at Mulinu'u. The Faipule institution was established by the Germans in their efforts to destroy the power of the orators of Tumua and Pule, many of whom had continuously plotted against the German Administration and had caused two major confrontations in 1904/5 and 1908/9 between government and the

23 Ibid.
24 Logan to Liverpool, 17 Apr. 1917, G 1121/17.
Samoans. The latter clash resulted in the deportation of nine leading matai with members of their aiga to Saipan, in the Marianas.  

Fumasino Samoa or Native judges - 25 positions - operated at the district level too. Their jurisdiction extended only to Samoans and covered those cases where they could either order restitution in kind or a fine of up to 40 marks. The Komisi - 16 positions - were Lands and Titles Commissioners while the Pule fa'atoaga - 8 in number - were the plantation inspectors. These officials were appointed by government. At the village level the Pulenu'u or 'village mayor' operated. When Logan took over there were 155 Pulenu'u - 96 in Upolu and 59 in Savai'i - and these officials were chosen by their respective villages according to their own practices. The Pulenu'u had authority to order compensation in kind or to impose a fine of no more than 6 marks for minor offences. His other duties included collecting the village taxes - a poll tax of 24 marks per matai and 20 marks each for other adult males - ensuring that the village and adjacent roads were clean and repaired, seeing that copra was properly made before sale, supervising the weekly search for rhinoceros beetles, recording births, deaths and saofai (title bestowal ceremony), and generally overseeing the welfare of the community.

Together with the Native Department providing direction and co-ordination, this hierarchy of officials constituted the system of Samoan administration which Logan adopted and which the New Zealanders used during their time in the territory. Logan however was more indulgent

25 See P.J. Hempenstall, Pacific Islanders Under German Rule (Canberra, 1978), pp. 25-72 for a detailed examination of the Samoan response to German control.

26 All figures given on Samoan officials were taken from: Logan to Liverpool, 27 Oct. 1914, G 1968/14.
towards the Samoans than the Germans. He allowed the Faipule to choose replacements to vacancies in their ranks as well as appoint Native judges, Komisi and Pule fa'atoaga, and he permitted the establishment of the Samoa Toeaina Club, 'a political and commercial club ... most of the chiefs are interested in it', despite being warned of the danger of the club being used for political intrigue as happened during the political upheavals in the German period. He had allowed formation of the club 'to encourage Samoans to be progressive and because failure to give such permission might lead them to believe that the Administration was antagonistic to their interests'.

Logan therefore not only allowed the Samoans a great deal of freedom, but he also gave them positive support, to do virtually as they wished. Add to this his quick response to a Samoan request which saw the exiles on Saipan returned home in 1915 and we have a man and an administration whom the Samoans held in very high regard. Consequently the first four years of Logan's term was almost free of Samoan opposition and his standing was marred only by the fatal influenza epidemic which struck the country in late 1918.

Generally too, the white residents, with the exception of one H.J. Moors, learned to live with the military occupation; partly because they accepted war conditions and partly because export earnings were in a healthy state, and influential local residents such as O.F. Nelson and S.H. Meredith were making huge profits as a result of conditions.

27 Logan to Liverpool, 27 Dec. 1918, G 30/19.

28 Report by Logan (8 Jul. 1919) encl. in Logan to Liverpool, 8 Jul. 1919, IT 1/10.

29 Ibid.
created by the war. Moors who was born in Detroit Michigan in 1854 had been a resident for about 40 years when the New Zealanders occupied Samoa. Although he had sometimes assisted the occupation forces, the rest of his time was seemingly taken up with efforts - including visits to Washington and Wellington where he saw the Secretary of State and the Prime Minister respectively - to discredit Logan and have him removed from Samoa. To some extent Moors was supported in his efforts by Mason Mitchell, the American Consul in Apia. Both men were implicated in some questionable deals involving cash payments by certain German firms, and involving also contacting German interests in Hamburg against military regulations. Their efforts to have Logan removed totally failed, mainly because he had done nothing to justify such action while at the same time he had put together a very sound case against both Moors and Mitchell. Also the threats and allegations proffered by Moors against Logan were so outrageous that they could not be taken seriously.

Logan's time in Samoa however was decided by a disaster which befell the country, just as war hostilities ceased with the Allies victorious. On 7 November 1918, the ship Talune from New Zealand arrived in Apia and as a result of mismanagement, incompetence and negligence on the part of officials outside and within Samoa, as well as the ship's crew, passengers who suffered from pneumonic influenza were allowed to disembark and disperse. Seven days later an epidemic broke out and within two weeks, about 20% of the population had died; an estimated 20% of Samoans, 33% of half-castes and 2% of whites perished.

30 See G 1857/16, G 558/17 and G 2222/18 for material on the clashes between Moors, Mitchell and Logan.

Amongst the Samoan survivors, grief quickly turned into bitterness when they discovered that the fatal disease had been brought to the country by passengers on the Talune and worse still, that its introduction could have been prevented if proper precautions were taken as done in American Samoa which had been kept free of the visitation. In what turned out to be his last report from Samoa, Logan wrote, "I regret to report that at present there is considerable unrest and passive resistance amongst the Samoans and bitter resentment due to the feeling that proper precautions were not taken to prevent the introduction of the influenza epidemic into Samoa'.

Two weeks earlier the surviving Faipule had seen Logan, put their complaints and asked for an enquiry by a Royal Commission into the circumstances surrounding the epidemic. Logan, under a great deal of pressure, had chastised the Faipule telling them that 'they showed not the slightest interest in their people while the plague was raging and gave [him] not the slightest assistance in feeding the sick or burying the dead, that half the deaths were due not to influenza but to the neglect of their families by the Heads, and that they themselves were deeply to blame for failing to assist'. But after saying that Logan, a fair, sensitive and balanced man judging by his correspondence at this most trying time, admitted to his political superiors that the Samoans 'are entitled to know who is responsible for the introduction of the disease into Samoa' and recommended the institution of a Royal Commission. The Commission subsequently found that deficiencies in port procedures at Auckland, Suva and Apia, together with inadequate

---

32 Logan to Liverpool, 20 Jan. 1919, G 308/19.

33 Ibid.
requirements for notification of dangerous diseases, as well as
carelessness on the part of the captain of the Talune, had resulted
in the introduction of the fatal disease into the country. On the
other hand, the high death rate was blamed in part on the failure of
Logan to obtain medical assistance from American Samoa - only a few
hours away by boat - and on deficiencies in the administrative procedures
of the Health Department.  

On 20 January 1919, Colonel R.W. Tate arrived to relieve Logan
who left the same day for New Zealand on leave. Eight days after his
arrival, Tate was confronted by a petition requesting the dismissal of
Logan as Administrator; an investigation into the circumstances
surrounding the epidemic and provision for orphans, and finally the
handing over of Samoa to the United States or to be administered by
the Colonial Office and for New Zealand to cease its involvement in
Samoa completely. Immediate disagreement amongst the matai present
over the requests saw the deletion of the last one, but more important
demonstrated that the petition was the work of only a few people who
might not necessarily be Samoans. Between this internal disagreement
and Tate's sympathetic response, the petition failed to obtain Samoan
support and two weeks later it was withdrawn.  

In October, Tate formally replaced Logan as Administrator.
Between this date and May 1920 when civil administration was formally
established with Tate as the first civil Administrator, there was little
outward opposition from the Samoans. Yet Tate had taken several measures

---


35 Tate to Liverpool, 8 Mar. 1919 and encls. G 751/19.
in connection with the appointment of Samoan officials which although they
drew no objection at the time they were made, were nonetheless bound
to bring Samoan opposition, now that the political future of the country
had been determined. In the long term too, the end of the military
occupation meant that the normal determinants of Samoan behaviour - as
discussed above - in situations where they were confronted by usurpers
of authority and position, came into full play. As we have seen Samoan
behaviour in such situations was dominated by the belief that one
retained a right to a usurped position, and by the obligation to try and
regain that position. The following chapters will show how the Samoans
exercised their prerogatives during the next sixteen years and how the
New Zealanders responded to that challenge.
CHAPTER 2

FRAGILE FOUNDATIONS: 1920-1925

The first six years of civil administration fell naturally into two contrasting periods: May 1920 to March 1923 when Tate was Administrator and progress on all fronts was rather tortuous; and March 1923 to the end of 1925 when Major-General G.S. Richardson who replaced Tate pushed the country along at a rapid pace. This contrast could be explained partly in terms of the way the Samoans responded to New Zealand civilian rule over these two periods. During the first two years, the Samoans put a great deal of pressure on government as they demonstrated the attitude, as Tate saw it, 'that they should themselves govern the country, and there is a strong inclination for them to interfere in various phases of government'. Towards the end of his term however, this pressure, applied largely through the Faipule, eased off as he began to understand a little of the local considerations behind the Samoan attitude and adapted his approach to try and accommodate them.

When Richardson arrived the situation as far as the Samoans were concerned was relatively calm. Inevitably though, Samoan pressure built up again - the Faipule were a main target this time - but rather than approach this challenge in a flexible frame of mind as Tate did, Richardson adopted a dogmatic and paternalistic attitude which resulted in Samoan opposition developing much deeper, towards the end of his first term, than it did during Tate's time.

1 Administrator to Minister, 3 Jan. 1921, IT 1/27.
Tate was born in Wellington in 1864 and was educated in New Zealand; his predecessor and two immediate successors were born in England where they also received most of their education. For almost thirty years, he practised as a lawyer in the small country centre of Greytown in the South Island, and then as a volunteer officer he commanded the Wellington infantry brigade and later the Wellington military district. In 1916 he became adjutant-general of the New Zealand forces; the post he held at the time he went to Samoa. He described himself as 'a solitary kind of a beast', who found 'infinite delight' in the natural beauty of Samoa - his hobbies were gardening and the study of insects - but he lamented that the beauty of the country and one's enjoyment of it were spoiled by the morally inferior 'whites', both officials and residents, who lived in the place. He was not a man of imposing physical stature but he possessed a pleasant personality and a sharp, enquiring mind. He was keen to learn and was receptive of new ideas and constructive advice.

Tate's civil administration was instituted by the Samoa Constitution Order 1920 which itself was authorised by the Western Samoa Order-in-Council 1920 made under the name of the British Monarch in accordance with the provisions of an Imperial Act, the Foreign Jurisdiction Act 1890. This formal transfer of authority to the New Zealand government to administer Western Samoa came about because the

2 See G.H. Scholefield, A Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, (Wellington, 1940).

3 Tate to Gray, 3 Mar. 1919, Tate Papers, Ms 264 Turnbull Library, Wellington.

4 Ibid.
Allied Powers to which Germany had surrendered her former territories had decided that Western Samoa should be administered by His Majesty in his government of the Dominion of New Zealand. Under the Mandates system established by the League of Nations, New Zealand had full powers to administer Western Samoa as if it were part of the Dominion, subject only to the terms of the mandate.

Apart from formally replacing German with British law in Samoa, the Constitution Order left the territory much as it was under the previous regime. All powers were concentrated in the Administrator. In legislative matters he had the assistance of a Legislative Council. This body however was to be dominated by officials, and although there was a provision for unofficial members, the inclusion of such members in the Council was not mandatory and only a person who was a natural-born British subject, or a Samoan or one born in Samoa could qualify for appointment.

Two categories of persons were recognised: Samoans and Europeans. A 'Samoan' was a person who belonged to the 'Polynesian' race — it included Melanesians and Micronesians — including those of mixed descent, but not those registered as Europeans or whose fathers were European either by birth or registration. Largely because the racial attitudes which prevailed amongst the white people in that period placed a strong emphasis on their racial superiority, a vast majority of

5 See IT 67/12/1, IT 67/12/2 and IT 67/12/3 for records of the negotiations over this transfer of power and the formulation of a constitution for Samoa. See also Mary Boyd, 'The Record in Western Samoa to 1945' in Angus Ross (ed.), New Zealand's Record in the Pacific Islands in the Twentieth Century, (Auckland, 1969), pp. 125-129.

6 On the Mandates system see, Quincy Wright, Mandates under the League of Nations, (Chicago, 1930).
people of mixed descent sought to identify with their white blood, so that 'Europeans' in Samoa included a large number of half-castes.\textsuperscript{7}

According to Sir John Salmond, the New Zealand Solicitor-General and one of the most eminent lawyers in the Commonwealth in his time, 'due consideration of the interests of the native inhabitants',\textsuperscript{8} was a major factor in the final form which the Samoa Constitution Order took. He listed the following as the chief provisions specifically included for the protection of the Samoans: total prohibition of manufacture, importation or sale of liquor; ownership of Samoan land to remain subject only to Samoan customs and usages; succession to real and personal property of Samoans to be controlled exclusively by Samoan custom; alienation of Samoan land prohibited except by lease for limited periods approved by the Administrator; forced labour of Samoans prohibited; contracts with Samoans unenforceable against them except in cases where the court decided otherwise; and the opportunity for Samoans to be appointed on to the Legislative Council.\textsuperscript{9}

It is likely that the low key approach adopted in the Samoa Constitution Order, and followed in the Samoa Act 1921 which replaced it, was largely a result of the advice tendered by R.M. Watson who had served under Logan in Samoa and who was subsequently enlisted by Salmond - he himself had not been to Samoa - to assist him with legislation on Samoa. In June 1919 Watson wrote to Salmond that in providing a code of law for Samoa, 'changes other than those specifically enjoined by the terms of the mandate are to be avoided as much as possible, particularly

\textsuperscript{7} In this thesis the people who belonged to this category are referred to as Europeans or 'whites' or \textit{papalagi}.
\textsuperscript{8} Salmond to Gray, 19 Dec. 1919, IT 67/12/1.
\textsuperscript{9} Ibid.
at the outset ... I cannot emphasise too strongly the importance of what the Germans called "self-government" of the Natives. It is the breath of Native existence'. Watson later became the first Chief Judge in Samoa under New Zealand's civil administration.

Although Watson's advice was sound, and its reflection in the Constitution Order indicated a desire on the part of the New Zealand government to be sensitive to local considerations, it did not account for a host of complications in the situation in Samoa. As a result, this Order added to the growing discontent in Samoa rather than helped reduce it. Two official measures taken the previous year were particularly important with regard to the opposition to government at this time. The first was Tate's appointment of new Faipule and other Samoan officials to replace those who died in the epidemic, and the second was the imposition of prohibition on the territory.

II

Tate's action in appointing the new Faipule and other Samoan officials, robbed the Pono a Faipule of the only source of real power it had gained since it was established by Solf in 1905. Not unexpectedly, the Faipule were in the forefront of Samoan opposition to government.

In December 1920, Tate was deliberately insulted at Lufilufi

---

10 R.M. Watson to Sir John Salmond, 12 June 1919, IT 67/12/3.
11 Tate to Liverpool, 3 Sept. 1919, G 2695/19.
12 Tate to Liverpool, 27 Nov. 1919, G 3132/19 with encls.
while on his official malaga. The ta'alolo (ceremonial food presentation) to welcome his party was a farcical affair: the food presented was made up of only a few fowls and coconuts, while the presentation itself, was conducted quietly by a small group of people. Singing and dancing through the village by a great many people were in fact an integral part of a ta'alolo, as were large pigs, specially prepared taro, and big quantities of fowl and coconuts. During the formal exchange of speeches, a Lufilufi tulafale said to Tate; 'You must know that you are ruling Samoa by the authority of the Samoans but you have not ruled these islands with love ... you have been overbearing'. The principal reason given to back up this allegation of 'being overbearing' was the complaint that Tate had acted in many areas of government, including the appointment of papalagi staff, and the 'imposition of tax' - the Administrator in fact had no powers over taxation matters - without consulting the Fautua and the Faipule. It should be noted in this connection that the Faipule of each district had the specific responsibility of ensuring that the Administrator was properly received while on malaga.

This episode at Lufilufi occurred at a time when government was already under pressure from a sä (prohibition) placed by a large number of villages on the buying of European goods, as well as on the cutting of copra. An increase in the cost of goods accompanied by a drop in the price paid by traders for Samoan copra had triggered these measures. There was also suspicion on the part of officials, that the rejection of government authority by Samoans in American Samoa, had given encouragement

---

13 Tate to Minister, 31 Dec. 1920 and 3 Jan. 1921: IT 1/27. The Lufilufi orator was apparently in possession of a written set of complaints against government, which indicated outside involvement in this insult.
to the Samoans in the western islands to defy their own government. This suspicion was not really justified because Tutuila was but a minor part of Atua in the traditional hierarchy of Samoa, and it was not done to follow the lead of a minor sub-district.

Instead of simply punishing those breaking the law, Tate decided to tackle the sä and the Lufilufi insult in a more positive way. He invited matai from throughout the country to a fono at Mulinu'u so that he could explain and discuss with them matters of government. During the meeting he recounted his experiences at Lufilufi - matai from other districts immediately reprimanded the Lufilufi matai present who offered an apology - and then he explained where his authority to govern Samoa came from: 'Let there be no misunderstanding about the system of government. I am not ruling Samoa by the authority of the Samoans. The Allied Nations which won the war gave the control of Samoa to New Zealand under King George of Great Britain and I am governing for New Zealand'.

He pointed out though that for him to govern the country properly, he needed the assistance and advice of the Fautua, Faipule and the other Samoan officials and he also needed the support of the Samoans. As far as the sä was concerned, he wanted an end to it and he also pointed out that the Samoan practice of punishing people for breaking such a sä was illegal. At the same time, he promised to hold

---

14 Administrator to Minister, 3 Jan. 1921, IT 1/27. The confrontation in American Samoa resulted in the Governor of the Territory shooting himself; the deportation of a few 'white agitators', the dismissal of a senior naval officer and the imprisonment of about 20 matai.

15 Speech by Tate at Mulinu'u fono (29 Dec. 1920); Administrator to Minister, 3 Jan. 1921: IT 1/27.
an enquiry into the high prices of goods, and to support the authority of the matai in their villages and districts. The matai present at this fono expressed a great deal of satisfaction with Tate for calling the meeting and for explaining and discussing with them the system of government under which Samoa was administered. They were also happy with the action Tate intended to take with regard to the high prices of goods. They pledged to obey the law and agreed with Tate that the Administrator should command sufficient powers to deal with persons who defied the law and fomented disaffection against government.16

A few days after this meeting, Tate followed it up with three Proclamations: the first notified the institution of a Prices Commission of Enquiry; the second confirmed that government had 'a high regard for government officials [Samoan] and has no intention of breaking down their authority or governing without their assistance';17 and the third repeated the assurance by the matai that they wanted to obey the law, and it also offered the reminder that interference with the freedom of an individual to buy or sell was an illegal act.

A week after these Proclamations were issued, matai from all over the country held a fono at Mulinu'u to which they invited Tate. Again they assured him that they would obey the laws and would support him in administering the country. As a result of the goodwill expressed during these two meetings - 29 December 1920 and 13 January 1921 - and a noticeable improvement in the attitude of the ordinary Samoans, Tate told the Minister that he believed the 'Native unrest ... is practically

16 Tate to Minister, 31 Dec. 1920 and 3 Jan. 1921: IT 1/27.

17 Proclamation No. 3 (7 January 1921), IT 1/27. See same file for the texts of the other two Proclamations.
Tate had good reasons to feel that the situation was under control. From a Samoan viewpoint his decision to hold a *fono* at Mulinu'u open to all *matai* and allowing for explanations, discussion and a frank exchange of views was tactically brilliant. It met the crucial Samoan demand for consultation and it also fulfilled the need for recognition. On the other hand, following up with Proclamations demonstrating that he had kept his promises while at the same time tying the *matai* to their word, showed excellent political judgement and a sound understanding of human nature.

The Faipule however were far from happy with the situation. Not only had Tate deprived them of their power of appointment, but he had now gone directly to the people in the villages and districts. Their opposition therefore intensified and when the Minister of External Affairs, Hon. E.P. Lee visited the territory in July 1921, they presented him with a petition addressed to King George V requesting that Western Samoa be taken directly under Britain's wing because there was 'increasing dissatisfaction' with New Zealand's rule. They wanted the administration of the country to be left to them and the 'British subjects who have been amongst us for a great many years and are thoroughly acquainted with our customs'. As far as Britain's involvement in Samoan affairs was concerned, they requested that it be limited to the appointment of a Governor to Samoa.

European influence, clearly indicated in this petition, was even

18 Administrator to Minister, 31 Jan. 1921, IT 1/27.

19 Petition to His Majesty King George V from the Government Councillors of British Samoa (16 July 1921), IT 88/6.
more obvious in the separate list of grievances which the Faipule provided to support their claim of dissatisfaction. These grievances all revolved around the allegation that New Zealand had gone about establishing its administration in Samoa, and had been administering the territory, without consulting the Samoans; in so doing it had infringed on the 'sacred rights' of the Samoans as guaranteed by the Berlin Treaty of 1889. The fact of the matter was, Samoans did not base their claim to a right of control within Samoa on some treaty; they based it on the fact that it was their country.

European opposition to New Zealand's administration in this period was very strong, and much of it could be traced to dissatisfaction with prohibition and lack of elective representation. During February and March 1920, a delegation from the papalagi community had met a large party of parliamentarians and senior officials from New Zealand - led by Sir James Allen Minister of External Affairs, and J.D. Gray Secretary of External Affairs - and presented them with a list of requests. The principal requests were for more indentured labourers to work on the plantations; cancellation of prohibitionary measures which were imposed in October 1919; and provision in the Samoa Constitution Order, then impending, for elected unofficial members. Recruitment of more indentured labourers from China had provided some relief in the plantations, but when the Constitution Order was issued, not only did it consolidate prohibition, it also carried no provision for elective representation. In 1923 the Samoa Act 1921 was amended to allow for elected members and in 1924 O.F. Nelson, A. Williams and G.E. Westbrook were elected as members of the Legislative Council (MLCs).

20 See IT 88/6 for a copy of this list of grievances.

21 See IT 64/1 for a copy of the pamphlet containing the Europeans' requests entitled 'Samoa's Problems'. This file also contains all relevant material on issues connected with this visit.
When the Faipule presented their petition to Lee in July, Malietoa advised them to withdraw it and reconsider their position. They listened to Malietoa's advice, but a few days later - after Lee had departed from Samoa - it was presented again, apparently after the Faipule had had discussions with O.F. Nelson. This development brought strong protests from several districts - for example Safotulafai in Savai'i and Siumu in Upolu - which alleged that the petition was not representative of the wishes of the Samoans, and declared their loyalty for Malietoa and government.

In September, two months after the Faipule presented their petition, Norman Macdonald - he was a local resident - Secretary of Native Affairs advised Tate that a substitution of the Fono a Faipule by the Council of Tumua ma Pule 'would be an immense aid in establishing confidence and loyalty towards the present Administration'. He said that the Council of Tumua ma Pule was 'a representative body of the highest importance and [it] carried much more weight than our present Council of Faipule who are not representative and many of whom have no hereditary rank to entitle them to their appointment or the respect of the people, and moreover are nominees of government and not of the natives'.

---

22 Norman Macdonald to Tate, 23 Sept. 1921; PM to Governor-General, 3 Nov. 1921: IT 88/6.
23 Ali'i and Faipule of Siumu to Administrator, 28 Jul. 1921; Safotulafai Chiefs to SNA, 9 Aug. 1921; Malietoa to Tate, 28 Jul. 1921: IT 88/6.
24 Macdonald to Tate, 23 Sept. 1921, IT 88/6.
25 Ibid.
The Faipule were now faced with a most serious challenge to their position. The interest of Tumua ma Pule, clearly shown in Macdonald's advice, had given the Administrator an alternative to the Fono, and continued opposition on their part could persuade Tate to dismiss them, abolish the Fono and bring Tumua ma Pule into government. Such an eventuality would be a disaster not only for them as individuals but for their respective districts as well. They were left with no alternative but to ease up on their opposition. Accordingly when the reply to their petition came informing them that King George could not undo the mandate and that New Zealand was in Samoa to stay, they accepted it readily while at the same time they discarded a petition which had been prepared for submission to the League of Nations if their requests were not satisfied. The change in attitude amongst the Faipule completely mystified Tate who could not understand why the Faipule seemed happy to accept a reply which merely repeated what he had been telling them all along.

He did not understand what Tumua ma Pule was, and so he told the Minister that he was rather cautious of accepting Macdonald's advice. He was fortunate though at this time to have the services and advice of H.S. Griffin who had been a printer with the L.M.S. church for about 20 years and who possessed a good command of the Samoan language as well as a deep understanding of Samoan culture.

---

26 Administrator to EA, 19 Dec. 1921, IT 88/6.
27 Tate to Gray, 11 Dec. 1921, Tate Papers Ms.264 Turnbull Library, Wellington.
28 Administrator to Minister, 27 Sept. 1921, IT 88/6.
29 Tate to Gray, 11 Dec. 1921 and 16 Dec. 1921: Tate Papers Ms. 264 Turnbull Library, Wellington.
his knowledge of fa'a Samoa Griffin doubtless appreciated the dangers inherent in the interest shown by Tumua ma Pule in participating in central government. Their involvement would mean conflict amongst the Samoans as the Faipule districts would not be expected to accept quietly their inevitable relegation in the government hierarchy. The Samoans had by now accepted the Faipule system and the Faipule districts. In their own dealings the traditional rankings had remained unchanged, supreme and universally recognised. They had not allowed the introduction of the Faipule system by the Germans to affect the traditional structure of their society. They had accommodated it, but no section of the Samoan community had lost its position in the traditional political structure as a result of its introduction, and certainly not that of Tumua ma Pule as the Germans had believed. The Faipule districts however would lose a place in the councils of government if Tumua ma Pule became part of government, and there would be a great deal of trouble.

Griffin, who quickly took over as Secretary of Native Affairs, probably also appreciated that the Faipule would be much easier for government to handle than Tumua ma Pule. Whatever the reasons, Griffin moved to strengthen the position of the Faipule. With the help of Rev. John Shinkfield of the Methodist mission, he persuaded Tate to introduce a new procedure in the Fono involving more consultation between the Administrator and the Faipule. The new procedure gave the Faipule a great deal of satisfaction and brought them behind Tate and the Administration. 30 It also removed the threat from Tumua ma Pule and took the Faipule largely beyond the influence of the 'whites'. Moreover

30 Ibid; Administrator to Minister, 22 Oct. 1921, IT 88/5.
it brought Tate for the very first time into close contact with a section of the Samoan leadership and he discovered that his earlier unfavourable impressions of them were wrong. In May 1922 for example, he decided to take the Faipule through the Samoa Act 1921 - it came into force the previous month - clause by clause. During three long days of examining the Act, the Faipule displayed a keen intelligence he 'did not suspect' and a capacity to apply themselves to a tedious task.  

Another important factor which assisted materially in improving the situation between the Samoans and the Administration was the completion of Health and Educational facilities in the outer districts. The first Health sub-station was opened in July 1921 at Tuasivi, Savai'i, and the Samoans had voluntarily built houses for staff and patients and had prepared the grounds. A government school which would offer higher education for Samoan children built at Vaipouli also on Savai'i was completed early in 1922. It too received enthusiastic practical support from the Samoans. An indication of the people's satisfaction with these efforts to improve their welfare was given when their leaders suggested imposing taxes that would enable the construction of more such facilities.  

With the improvement in government's relations with the Samoans, 1922 was a much happier year for Tate. His frequent contact with the Faipule had given him an appreciation of the Samoan and his customs. He wanted to stay on but for his wife who had not been happy in Samoa and had been living in New Zealand. He now had time to enjoy his garden at Vailima, study the local butterflies, and as well, the relaxed

31 Administrator to Minister, 12 Mar. 1923, IT 88/5.  
32 Tate to Gray, 15 Jan. 1922 and 5 June 1922, Tate Papers, Ms. 264 Turnbull Library, Wellington.
atmosphere enabled him to drink in the natural beauty of the
countryside.  

In August 1922 though, government's power to appoint Samoan
officials was challenged. A Pulefa'atoaga appointed to the Pule
centre of Palauli, Savai'i, was rejected because he came from a village
of lower rank in the district. All efforts to conciliate the dispute
failed. The matai of Palauli refused to back down even at a meeting
with Tate who ordered them to cease their opposition. Tate was on the
verge of charging the ringleaders with sedition when Griffin advised
him to impose banishment and to remove their titles. He followed this
advice in spite of his doubts concerning the legality of his action.  
The situation improved and stabilised when the Administration appointed
a second Pulefa'atoaga for the district from the offended village. As
a result of this episode the Samoa Offenders Ordinance 1922 which gave
the Administrator powers of banishment and removal of titles was
brought in. It was to become the most controversial law in Samoa
during the following years.

When Tate left in March 1923, he was given a very warm farewell
by the whole community, Europeans and Samoans alike. Although
problematic areas still existed he had succeeded through patience and
quiet determination in setting Samoa on a steady course for the future.

33 Ibid.  

34 Administrator to Minister, 24 Aug. 1922, IT 88/5; Tate to Gray,
22 Aug. 1922, Tate Papers Ms. 264, Turnbull Library, Wellington.
'E sau le fuata ma lona lou' (each breadfruit crop brings with it, its own harvesting pole) is a Samoan proverb which gives expression to the fact of inevitable change. On a more specific level, it conveys the belief that when a situation demands it, the appropriate person will come along, while on the other hand, it carries the view that changes are to be expected from new personalities when they take over fresh responsibilities. Between 1923-1926, these attitudes to life were exercised to the limit as the new Administrator, Major-General G.S. Richardson embarked on a most comprehensive programme of change which extended to almost every sphere of the life of the people of Samoa. In many cases, as for example in the fields of health and education, the changes lay largely in the increased pace with which policies, set in earlier periods, were implemented. But in other instances, as with attempts to compel the Samoans to adopt a new system of land holding, and to follow new procedures in conducting their affairs in their villages and districts, Richardson's programme required fundamental change to Samoan institutions which had evolved down through many generations.

While Samoans recognised the fact of change, there was little doubt that they would reject changes which they saw as posing a serious threat to their way of life; something of which Richardson himself was well aware. During his first three years in Samoa though, little discontent surfaced until towards the end of 1925, as his powerful

personality, coupled with his indulgent attitude towards the Samoans, and the quick visible success of his progressive schemes, particularly in the fields of health and agriculture, generated an atmosphere of enthusiastic support for his government.

The people of Samoa awaited the arrival of Richardson with much anticipation. Preceding him to Samoa had been stories proclaiming him a distinguished soldier - 'It is known to us that you conducted the military forces at the great war in which you triumphed' - and a man of influence within the ruling circles in New Zealand. Being people who valued rank and status very highly, the Samoans were proud to have such a man of distinction as their Administrator. They regarded the appointment as due recognition by the government of New Zealand of the importance of Samoa and its people. It was little wonder they greeted him with 'extraordinary enthusiasm and expressions of loyalty'.

Richardson was indeed a soldier, and one of note. The post in Samoa was the first position he had held outside the armed forces. Born in England in 1868 to a lower middle-class family, he had entered the army there as a private at 19 after turning down a career in commerce, progressed rapidly up the ranks to become a master gunner - equivalent rank to Sergeant - and in 1891 he was loaned to the New Zealand forces as a gunnery instructor. He impressed the New Zealand military leaders with his energy and drive, and they retained and later commissioned him as a Captain. During World War I, he saw action at Gallipoli, obtained promotion to Brigadier-General in 1916 and became

―

36 Faipule speech, Proceedings of Fono a Faipule, 6-13 June, 1923, IT 88/3-1.

37 Administrator to Minister, 10 May 1923, AJHR, A-4, 1923.
General Officer Commanding New Zealand Forces in Britain. In that post, he demonstrated ability at administrative work, and that led to his appointment as General Officer in charge of Administration at Army Headquarters in Wellington during demobilisation. He made himself available for the Samoa post as retrenchment policies rendered future prospects in the armed forces somewhat limited and unattractive.

The Samoans quickly discovered that their new Administrator measured up to their image of one with his military background and reputation: impressive bearing, commanding presence particularly in the immaculate uniform which he invariably wore, confident and self-assured, a competent public speaker who appeared comfortable amongst people of rank such as matai, and a man who clearly enjoyed ceremony and formality. On the personal level, he was pleasant and friendly, easily approached and mixed freely although retaining that touch of aloofness expected of a person of stature.

In April, barely a month after his arrival, Richardson imposed a medical tax of £1 per annum to be paid by all Samoan males 17 years and over. It was the first such tax imposed on the Samoans. Tate had enacted the medical tax legislation the previous year but had desisted from putting it into effect following representations from the Faipule claiming poverty amongst the Samoans. The Faipule had also advised the Administrator at the time that it would be in the interest

---


39 See F.D. Baxter, 'Collection of material relating to the Mau disturbances in Western Samoa, 1926-1935', Ms. Auckland University Law Library; Information from Taito of Safotu, Savai'i, and Vai of Manono.
of harmonious relations between government and the Samoans if the latter were consulted before the legislation was invoked at some future date. Whether Richardson was aware of these matters is unclear, but in any event, after visiting a few villages and deciding that health conditions amongst the Samoans needed urgent and dramatic improvement, he immediately imposed the tax to help finance improvements which he proposed without canvassing the views of the Samoans.  

The action encountered 'a considerable amount of opposition in certain villages' and the Faipule 'Aiono 'Aipovi - a leading member of the Fono - representing some of these villages spoke 'most strongly' to Richardson over this matter following the adoption of a resolution by the Fono of his district that their people would not pay the tax and would go without medical treatment. 41 To the Minister, Richardson admitted his ignorance of the probable opposition to the measure, but a little later commented - rather unconvincingly since the Samoan opposition was probably a result largely of not being consulted - that the rejection of the tax was natural since it doubled the tax obligations of the Samoans in one swoop. 42

Notwithstanding these problems, withdrawing or altering his decision appeared not to have been considered by Richardson who felt he had to put a stop to the opposition or it might lead to more serious trouble; while on the other hand, he was convinced that his

40 Interim Report on Native Affairs, 17 Sept. 1923, IT 88/5; Notes for the information of the Minister of External Affairs from the personal diary of Richardson, 30 June 1923, IT 1/33.

41 Interim Report on Native Affairs, 13 Feb. 1924, IT 88/3; Notes ... from the personal diary of Richardson, 30 June 1923, IT 1/33.

42 Ibid.
decision was the right one in the interests of the Samoans, even if they did not know it. Behind these rationalisations though, one is left with the irresistible impression that Richardson's response to the situation was dictated primarily by the attitude that he had made a decision and it would stand: orders were orders.

'Aiono was summoned and Richardson, after hearing from 'Aiono the views of his district on the matter, told him that the tax was a just one, in the interests of the Samoans, and the opposition by his district was mistaken and wrong. The benefits which Samoans would derive from the measure were explained to the Faipule who was then instructed to carry the same message to the people of his district and to persuade them to accept the decision. Should he fail, Richardson threatened to disrate him, probably by replacing him as Faipule. The people of Aana accepted 'Aiono's message - 'Aiono in all probability emphasised the Administrator's action of discussing the matter with him, thereby in effect, consulting the district - and he continued in his post.  

From this brief confrontation, the Samoans discovered that Richardson was a decisive man who was quick to make up his own mind and who followed his decisions through. At the same time, taking the trouble to explain to 'Aiono the grounds for his action, even in the form of a reprimand, was seen as an indication that he was not altogether insensitive to Samoan requirements. As it happened, reinforcement for this latter impression was soon forthcoming.

Partly in response to his call for greater economic activity,

---

43 Interim Report on Native Affairs, 13 Feb. 1924, IT 88/3.
matai from a number of villages along the north coast of Upolu informed Richardson that they had insufficient lands to meet their needs, let alone increase their production, because the lands surrounding their villages belonged to the Crown Estates: could they be given some of the adjoining Government land? In his direct way, Richardson responded by immediately allocating to some of these villages areas of undeveloped Crown land. The account of this transaction spread quickly and requests for government land flooded in. Although he was not able to meet these requests and although the areas of land involved were apparently small, the action made a deep impression on the Samoans who regarded the giving of land as the ultimate expression of concern.

This episode also reinforced the stories circulating amongst the Samoans about Richardson's being an influential man; to them, only a man of high standing could immediately allocate a sacred commodity like land, clearly without first referring to the New Zealand government. Richardson indeed had not consulted the New Zealand government over this matter and when he formally reported it some months later, he justified his action by saying that 'I acted as I felt sure the New Zealand government would desire me, by considering the true interests of the Natives rather than the future of the Crown Estates'.

All these things: his military reputation and bearing; apparent comfort in the Samoan setting; pleasant personality; firmness as shown over the medical tax issue; power and influence tempered by indulgence towards the Samoans as demonstrated over the land allocation; but above all the impartation to the Samoans of a

44 Notes ... from the personal diary of Richardson, 30 June 1923, IT 1/33; Interim Report on Native Affairs, 17 Sept. 1923, IT 88/5.
45 Interim Report on Native Affairs, 17 Sept. 1923, IT 88/5.
sense of genuine concern for their welfare, all combined to gain him much popularity and a great deal of respect amongst the Samoans, and formed the basis of their loyalty and support for him and his programmes. And it was a regard which was exceedingly hard to shake because it was based on Richardson's possession of qualities which were considered by Samoans as necessary and desirable in a strong and considerate leader. Even when his demands for reform became outrageous, their support held until they saw that he would not learn and respect them as they did him, and that as a result he would seriously damage their fa'a Samoa.

For members of the local white community, the advent of Richardson was also welcomed. Soon after his arrival, a group of their representatives informed him that they would like to be consulted on local matters, something which they alleged had not been done in the past. He readily took this group into his confidence and immediately utilised their assistance over such matters as official entertainment, raising of funds for the beautification of the waterfront, and the promotion of the proposed electric lighting scheme for Apia. Like the Samoans, they found him pleasant and outgoing, full of ideas on how to promote the economic and social welfare of the Territory including proposals to assist the private sector by withdrawing government involvement in commercial enterprises and by releasing Crown land for development by private concerns.

These early encounters however contained certain negative features which although submerged by the overwhelming acceptance of Richardson, nevertheless harboured a potential for future disagreements.

46 Notes ... from the personal diary of Richardson, 30 June 1923, IT 1/33.
In the first place, Richardson's obvious propensity for unilateral action was bound to lead to conflict with the Samoans. With a person of Richardson's status, their requirements for consultation would be relaxed, but even here, that concession would apply only up to a certain point and no further. Secondly, the Administrator's directness of action, particularly as demonstrated by the immediate granting of requests over land, stamped him in Samoan eyes as a simple, straightforward man, rather naive and unsophisticated in the ways of the world. Land was an asset of the highest importance and in accordance with that status, the Samoans believed that matters pertaining to land should be handled with appropriate restraint and a certain amount of decorum. One should give such matters due deliberation, thereby subtly indicating that all the parties concerned recognised the significance of the transaction and thus upholding their dignity.\(^{47}\) It was a weakness which at times exposed him to ridicule unbecoming of his position.

Richardson himself saw the Samoans in terms of the racial stereotypes of the time. The Samoans, he reported a few weeks after his arrival were 'a splendid but backward race ...', a people who had 'no thought for tomorrow and no vision as to the future of [their] islands'.\(^{48}\) He considered them lacking pride in themselves and their country and also without a worthwhile purpose in life. In his judgement, hope for the Samoans lay in changing their psychology through the education of their youth, and the 'inculcation of a true, loyal and national spirit into the minds of the young Natives and promoting aims and ideals to guide them in their future lives'.\(^{49}\)

---

47 Information from Vai of Manono.

48 Administrator to Minister, 10 May 1923, AJHR, A-4, 1923.

49 Ibid.
As shown above though, the Samoans in fact held much pride in themselves and their fa'a Samoa, the concept in which their national unity subsists and the focus of their intense national pride. Richardson's mistaken notions about the Samoans and their society meant that notwithstanding the benefits that his programmes brought to the Territory, he was on the wrong track from the start. The real tragedy however lay in his inability to learn from the people of Samoa and to alter his basic assumptions accordingly. Due to this serious defect, his good intentions ultimately became patronising gestures exactly because he was trying to achieve objectives that were unnecessary and superfluous to the Samoans. Had he made the achievement of better health standards, improved educational services and reasonable economic progress his principal ends rather than means to creating virtually a new race of Samoans, he would have done infinitely better for himself as well as for the people of Samoa.

V

In June, Richardson held his first fono with the Fono a Faipule and brought down a programme of development which was less notable for the policies that were put forward than for the methods adopted to implement them. In the social field, he saw health as the first priority and the initiatives he proposed here, together with the methods he used to implement them, would serve as an example of the energy, enthusiasm and novelty which he brought to the pursuit of his objectives.

In December the previous year a dysentery epidemic had hit the Territory and many deaths had resulted, especially amongst the children.
The medical authorities advised that the occurrence of the epidemic itself as well as its fatal effects on the population were due primarily to the lack of proper sanitation in the villages, and the ignorance of the Samoans about matters of health. When the health programme was discussed by the Fono, Richardson brought in the Chief Medical Office (CMO) Dr H. Ritchie who explained these matters to the Faipule and then instructed them on simple measures to improve sanitary conditions and to care for those who became ill. Each Faipule was given a sanitation plan for use in the villages, and they were then told by Richardson to instruct the people of their respective districts as Dr Ritchie had instructed them, and to try and persuade them to adopt the sanitation plan. They were also told that an organisation was being set up to assist the Health Department in fighting disease and in improving health conditions, and were also asked to encourage Samoan youths to come forward to be trained for medical work. And all this during a session of the so-called Samoan parliament, and a fono of high-ranking matai from throughout the country.

But this was not all: propaganda on the 'laws of health and importance of sanitation' were carried regularly in the Savali, the Samoan-language official monthly pamphlet; cards carrying simple instructions on 'Rules for good health and simple remedies in case of sickness' were printed and distributed to each household; and certain villages near Apia were installed with sanitary arrangements as models. Beetle Inspectors were given wider powers - and a change of title - to deal with all matters concerning the welfare of the Samoans including general health conditions and sanitation thereby providing for the

---

50 See: Proceedings of Fono a Faipule, 4-13 June 1923, IT 88/3-1.
regular inspection of villages. Also Richardson enrolled the assistance of the local residents who had formed a Sanitary Committee which had helped the Health Department previously during the dysentery epidemic in late 1922. On top of all this, Richardson personally addressed the Samoans on these matters and 'endeavoured to frighten them into taking action in their own interests'.

In education, it was proposed that school attendance should be compulsory for the children, that mission schools should adopt the same teaching methods as those used in government schools, that the training of Samoan teachers be speeded up and that Samoan boys be encouraged to obtain higher education - through training in New Zealand under a scholarship scheme - to fit them for positions in government service. On the economic side, a scheme to improve copra production involving the use of copra dryers to improve quality, and village/district competitions to increase quantities, was explained to the Faipule who were asked to urge their districts to adopt the scheme while the Faipule from districts near Apia were asked to encourage their people to grow vegetables for the Apia market.

Politically, the Faipule were told that from then on they would be playing a major role as government agents in their districts, instead of being principally district representatives. They would spearhead the government efforts to improve the condition of the Samoans in their districts. At the same time Richardson moved to strengthen their representative status by requiring that all communications between the Samoans and government must come through the Faipule who would add

51 Interim Report on Native Affairs, 17 Sept. 1923, IT 88/5.
52 See: Proceedings of Fono a Faipule, 4-13 June 1923, IT 88/3-1.
their comments and recommendations before passing the matter over to the appropriate official. As to the Legislative Council, it would be reconstituted to include three elected members from the local white community as well as two representatives to be chosen from the Fono a Faipule - a move apparently not supported by the Faipule whose Fono became legally recognised in 1923 in the amended Samoa Act 1921.

Among other proposals agreed to in this fono were: malaga for the exchange of fine mats to be forbidden - seven months being given to fulfil existing obligations; restrictions on co-habitation between Samoan women and coolies to be more strongly enforced and a museum for Samoan artifacts to be built at Mulinu'u.\(^5^3\)

To the Samoans, the proceedings of this fono together with the practical measures to implement them served further proof of the genuine concern their Administrator had for their welfare. There were one or two proposals, such as contacting government through the Faipule and the restriction on malaga for fine mat exchanges which they could do without, but they had their ways of by-passing these and at most they presented but minor inconveniences. Fine mat exchanges for example took place most often in the context of deaths, weddings, faletese or church dedication, saofai (title bestowal) and so forth, and exchanges on such occasions could not be stopped. On the other hand, the simple ploy of matai turning up, individually or as a group at the doorstep of an official - including the Administrator - they wanted to see, was often sufficient to ensure an audience. As for the other measures, they knew that notwithstanding the Administrator's commands and the Faipule rhetoric they had the final

\(^5^3\) Ibid.
say in whether these were adopted in their villages and districts, and they also knew that the success or failure of these proposals depended entirely on their response.  

Although obviously keen to advance Samoa's commercial progress quickly, Richardson during 1923 recognised the constraints placed on that progress by the operation of the fa'a Samoa as well as by New Zealand's duty to protect the interests of the Samoans, and indicated his sensitivity to these factors by accepting that Samoan attitudes should be respected. On the important area of land for example, he wrote:

If the Samoans would agree to discontinue their communistic mode of living, and allow the land to be cut up into small sections for individual ownership, more rapid development of the uncultivated lands would result, but there is no immediate prospect of the Natives agreeing to such a radical change in their social life. In the distant future the younger generations will probably desire to own land and develop it, as a very few probably do now, but it can be taken for granted that the Natives generally, are in favour of communal lands ... I have been advised by influential merchants in Samoa that the first thing to do for the benefit of Samoa is to break down the Communal System, but those persons know too well that this cannot be done at present without disturbing the peace and happiness of the Natives. Such a change must come gradually and be made on their own volition.

On the matter of commercial development, he also reported little progress because despite his exhortations, the Samoans continued to limit their copra production according to their needs which were few and consisting largely of food items, clothing material, oil for their lamps and cash to pay their church contributions and their taxes of £1 per annum per male 17 years and over. After meeting these needs, he calculated that 50% of the nuts from their existing plantations remained on the

---

54 Information from Toluono Lama of Palauli and Taito of Safotu.
55 Interim Report on Native Affairs, 17 Sept. 1923, IT 88/5.
ground wasted. He concluded that 'To get the Natives to fully utilise their resources and to further promote the commercial development of Samoa, can only be done by increasing the population and by creating new needs which should be of such nature as will be in the Natives' true interests. For those reasons the commercial development of Samoa will be a slow process'. The new medical tax and the promotion of a plan to rebuild villages to a model prepared by Richardson the following year were seen as two new needs that would assist in boosting the economic production of the Territory. On the other hand, he did not favour launching any new enterprises for the Samoans while so much of their copra was allowed to go to waste.

Richardson admitted that the development of Samoa's economy could be quickened by the introduction of fresh capital into the local commercial and European community for the utilisation of unused land on a large scale. For such ventures to be successful though, large numbers of Asiatic coolies would need to be imported and he was against such an influx occurring because he felt it would 'prejudice the welfare of the Samoans' and he wanted to keep 'Samoa for the Samoans'. The comparatively small contingent of Chinese coolies already in the Territory, he believed, did not pose a similar threat.

VI

Three months after presenting these views, Richardson appeared to have forgotten them. Between 22-31 January 1924 the Fono a Faipule

---

56 Ibid.
57 Interim Report on Native Affairs, 17 Sept. 1923, IT 88/5.
met and amongst the large number of matters brought before it by the Administrator was a proposal for changing the land-holding system of the Samoans. Essentially the change involved Samoan land being divided up and vested in individuals by registered title instead of being vested, through customary recognition and practice, in family matai titles as had evolved down from the past. Given his own acknowledgement that such a change must come from the Samoans themselves who would however not be ready for it for a long time yet and whose peace and harmony would be threatened if such a change was forced on them, his proposal - more like a command in the circumstances of the Fono a Faipule - was as radical as it was foolhardy if not downright provocative.

Another notable proposal he made was for the country to be divided up into districts, each with a population of about 1200 and with a Council of Chiefs, controlled by the Faipule, to administer local affairs under regulations made by government. He saw the benefits of this proposal mainly in two ways: it would quicken progress through the districts taking their own decisions and implementing them on such matters as water supplies, roads, sanitation and so forth instead of everything being dealt with by the Native Affairs Department; and it would teach the Samoans to control their own affairs. In the context of Samoa, both these arguments were defective. In the first place water supplies, roads, sanitation, village remodelling, schools and indeed all the matters which would be given over to the local councils were matters on which they knew little and needed a great deal of government advice,

---


59 Interim Report on Native Affairs (no. 2), 13 Feb. 1924; IT 88/3-1.
technical expertise and finance: the work required from the Native Affairs Department would not decrease with the new creation. On the other hand, Samaons enjoyed discussing government schemes and plans with government officials, and if they could possibly manage it, with the Administrator himself. Working on a project, any project, involved not just physical work but discussions, oratory, food presentations; it became part of the social and political life of the people. As for teaching them to control their own affairs, that was just what they had been doing in their villages for a very long time indeed and their insistence on involving the officials in developments within their communities, which he had taken as proof that they could not manage their own affairs, was in fact a demonstration of a totally different aspect of their lives. At the same time he was well aware that Samoans did not take kindly to radical changes to their institutions and practices, and was therefore risking the peace of the Territory with a measure that would detract from the authority and autonomy of the traditional matai councils in their villages and districts.

Apart from such measures with wide-ranging implications, there were a number of others which, although appeared insignificant, were a matter of nuisance and annoyance to individuals at the grassroots level. Amongst these were fines on individuals - the onus was removed deliberately from aiga and villages - for playing cricket, for allowing pigs to roam in the village, and a proposed law making it compulsory to report cases of yaws.60 These were just the kind of matters which village matai councils were eminently suited to deal with on their own with proper encouragement from government. Dealing with them from Apia was

60 See: Proceedings of Fono a Faipule, 22-31 Jan. 1924, IT 88/3-1.
not only insulting to the matai councils but it also created discontent amongst the people at the grassroots level of Samoan society.

As far as administering the affairs of the Samoans went, the proposals raised in this session of the Fono a Faipule constituted the policies and plans which were pursued for the next few years. There was no return to the sensitive consideration of the previous year; the furthest Richardson went was to let the Faipule take his proposals to their respective districts and try and persuade their people to accept them. Of this procedure he remarked,

This may seem a strange and unusual procedure but with the Samoan Native it is unwise to force him to adopt any new custom but on the other hand, to first remove any suspicion that he is being exploited and show him that the change is for his benefit. By working the Faipule it is anticipated that there will be little difficulty in getting the Natives to carry out new instructions.61

This was a long way from his view expressed only a few months earlier that 'changes must come gradually and be made on their [Samoans'] own volition' or disturb the 'peace and happiness of the Natives'. And what happened if these beneficial measures were rejected by the Samoans even after understanding the Faipule's message? Most of the measures were backed up with fines but on the critical land tenure issue, Richardson was adamant that there was neither compulsion nor pressure on Samoans to adopt the new system if they were against it. In his statement to the Royal Commission on the Administration of Samoa which sat in September and October 1927, he said of this measure,

Those districts that do not wish to do this are not compelled to do so ... No pressure whatever has been used by the Administrator in this matter. The proposal

---

61 Interim Report on Native Affairs (no. 2), 13 Feb. 1924, IT 88/3-1.
is merely an exhortation to the Natives to carry out if they so desire, and the policy in this, as in all other matters, is to educate them to help themselves, and to guide and direct reforms which must necessarily be made very gradually.\textsuperscript{62}

In fact there was enforcement of this measure when it met opposition right at the beginning as Richardson himself mentioned in his Report on Native Affairs in August 1925: 'Up to the present I have had the land in one District surveyed without trouble; in another District the Natives would not assist the Surveyor, but prompt action in dealing with the Chiefs who opposed the Survey overcame their resistance. I am glad that this incident arose as the firm action taken by the Administration to enforce the decision of the Faipule Fono has been made known all over Samoa with the result that I anticipate less trouble in future'.\textsuperscript{63} It was the matai of Faleapuna village who, led by their paramount orator chief Molio'o, created this particular difficulty for government not only because they were against the principle of individualising title to Samoan land, but also because the government plan proposed sharing some of their traditional village land with Falefa village which although their physical neighbour was a distant acquaintance in Samoan political terms. And the 'prompt' and 'firm' action Richardson boasted about was charging Molio'o with 'undermining the authority of the district officials; and a general nuisance in opposing all village progress and proposals',\textsuperscript{64} having him examined by a Board of Inquiry of four Faipule - the main complainant was Faipule Fonoti of the Va'a-o-Fonoti district comprising Fagaloa and

\textsuperscript{62} Richardson's testimony in 'Report of Royal Commission concerning the administration of Western Samoa, 1927', AJHR A-4B, 1928, p. 383.

\textsuperscript{63} Interim Report on Native Affairs (no. 4), 21 Aug. 1925, IT 88/3-1.

\textsuperscript{64} See: 'Report of Royal Commission ..., p. 479.
Faleapuna - which recommended that he be dismissed from his position as Plantation Inspector and ordered to leave Faleapuna and live in Aleipata for a period of a year. Richardson's decision went further than this recommendation; he also removed the title of Molio'o and demanded that the man stay at Aleipata 'until he has changed his character and can be trusted to do his duty to those in authority over him'.

In late 1925, Richardson consolidated his plans by procuring from the New Zealand government the Native Regulations (Samoa) Order 1925, which provided, inter alia, for changes in the administration of villages and districts as well as for individualisation of Samoan land. Under this law, each Faipule district was to be administered by a district council, consisting of representatives from constituent villages and Samoan officials with the Faipule as president. These councils were to 'control all local matters' - from roadmaking to taro planting - in accordance with instructions from government, resolutions passed by the Fono a Faipule, and their own decisions in areas not covered by the first two. In villages, committees consisting of all village matai or a selected number of them and chaired by the Pulenu'u were established to conduct village affairs; which again had to be done according to directions from Apia as well as instructions from the district councils.

With land, the authority over cultivated land remained with individual matai, but they were compelled - as demonstrated by the Molio'o case above - to have these lands surveyed for use by individuals holding title by law rather than by Samoan custom. Uncultivated village land was to be transferred to district councils which would have them subdivided and allocated to Samoan taxpayers - males 17 years and over - without land. Councils were empowered to grant such occupants leasehold title for life,

65 Ibid.
charge rental and decide which immediate descendant of the leaseholder should succeed to the land after he died.

As can be seen from the discussion above on the socio-political organisation of the Samoans, Richardson's reforms constituted a most serious challenge to two fundamental principles of Samoan existence: the vesting of all aiga assets - land is obviously a major one - in the family title; and the autonomy of each village as constituted by its fa'alupega and embodied in the fono a matai and its pre-eminent role in the conduct of village affairs. Apart from these major difficulties, there was the problem that under the new system Samoan officials, especially the Faipule, had been given positions and roles to which they were not entitled in Samoan tradition.

With the promulgation of this law, therefore, Samoan discontent developed deep but taking time to show so that the predominant atmosphere throughout the Territory was still one of support and enthusiasm for the Administrator and his government. To a great extent, this attitude reflected the depth of Samoan satisfaction with Richardson and what he did during the early months of his term. In part though it was also a consequence of the Samoan attitude towards unpalatable situations: ignore them as far as possible and those responsible might get the message and mend their ways. In this case, they rationalised that even if Richardson showed no signs of relenting in his reforms, he would be leaving after his three-year term and then they would expect changes. In the event Richardson stayed on for a further two years, stretching their tolerance beyond limit, and he experienced in full the truth of his own view that the peace and happiness of the Samoans would be disturbed if drastic changes were forced on them.

---

66 Information from Toluono Lama of Palauli and Va'i of Manono.
CHAPTER 3

OPEN CONFLICT: 1926/1927

Towards the end of 1926, the image which had been projected to the outside world of contentment and support amongst the people of Samoa for Richardson's administration received a severe jolt. Two public meetings - 15 October and 12 November - in which 'whites' and Samoans actively participated did the damage, both with their composition and their proceedings which in the main consisted of criticisms of government policies and activities. The conduct of these meetings directly challenged some of Richardson's fundamental policies, particularly that of non-involvement by 'whites' in the political affairs of the Samoans and vice-versa; yet he did not appear overly disturbed by them at the time. He was firmly convinced that the Samoans were contented with his administration and as for the papalagi, he thought that 'the matter would adjust itself owing to the strong opposition in Apia amongst Europeans to any concerted action of this kind'. In any case, as he informed the Minister, there was no cause for alarm because these activities constituted but 'a small agitation' designed to promote the sitting Members in the elections for the Legislative Council scheduled for November 1926. He accordingly assured the New Zealand authorities that the dissent in Samoa was a temporary phenomenon which he could handle without difficulty.

---

1 For details of these meetings see 'Report of Royal Commission concerning the administration of Western Samoa, 1927', AJHR A-4B, 1928, pp. lix-lxiii and 448-457. See also A.O. 25/1-1.


3 Administrator to Minister, 19 Sept. 1926, A.O. 25/1-1.

The situation, however, did not develop as he had predicted. The elections - won resoundingly by the incumbent members - came and went but the activities of the dissident group multiplied rather than decreased. Several incidents of anti-Administration behaviour amongst Samoans in the outer villages at the time, some involving Richardson personally, indicated that they had been quick to use the Apia initiative for their own ends. The officials however blamed the Samoan protest on invidious propaganda from the Citizens' Committee, the 15 man combined committee of Samoans and 'whites' which was dominated by Nelson and chosen during the first public meeting to co-ordinate the dissidents' activities. Richardson overreacted. He assumed a self-righteous attitude on behalf of the Administration and condemned the dissidents as 'self-seeking agitators'. Because of his belief that there was no dissatisfaction with government, he concluded that the active promotion of the agitation could only be motivated by a desire for more power on the part of Nelson and those 'few' associated with him. He felt that in their greed for power these men were unscrupulously exploiting the Samoans, risking the peace of the territory and posing a threat to the 'progress' he had worked so hard to achieve.5

As a consequence of these views, an attitude of contempt and resentment towards Nelson and those seen as his associates developed amongst the Administrator and his officials. This attitude tended to obscure reason and objectivity so that anything which the Citizens' Committee did was construed in the worst possible way, with the result that the dissidents' activities were invariably treated as suspicious and even seditious acts which had to be frustrated. On their part,

the dissidents viewed the obstructionist tactics and the resentful attitude of Richardson and his officials as being motivated by fear of their shortcomings in administering the Territory being exposed. They were confident that if an impartial investigation was conducted, their criticisms would be fully vindicated. On the other hand they resented what they felt were attempts by Richardson to interfere with their freedom of expression, particularly as they believed he was trying to intimidate them to save himself. And so the attitude of personal bitterness was returned as the dissidents themselves treated the actions of the authorities with suspicion and distrust.

This mutual feeling of suspicion, distrust and personal animosity thus generated between the authorities and the dissidents, and more particularly between Richardson and Nelson, came to dominate their dealings almost from the day their differences emerged publicly. It coloured the initiatives and the responses of both sides; each reacting negatively to the other, creating an increasingly immovable barrier of personal feeling, and each successive act aggravating the situation further. The tactlessness and the provocation which characterised the actions of both groups during this early period indicated rather clearly that the antagonists were motivated less by a desire to protect and promote the wellbeing of the country than by a desire to discredit the other. To add to the difficulties, the New Zealand government decided to take its directions on this issue from Richardson without question, thereby allowing itself to be drawn into this undignified clash and effectively barring it from initiating a constructive approach to the problem. As a result, an otherwise normal

---

6 Nelson to Minister, 30 Dec. 1926; A.O. 25/1-1.
situation containing manageable differences largely involving the *papalagi* population was transformed to one of confrontation and crisis, as the Samoans became involved.\(^7\)

For several reasons Samoan involvement in this confrontation seemed inevitable from the beginning. In the first place, the bitterness between the officials and the dissident 'whites' forced them to commit actions which, in spite of themselves, encouraged increasing Samoan participation. Secondly, Samoans made up 95% of the population and, given the mesmerising attraction political conflict has on them and their readiness to exploit any conflict to their advantage, it was most difficult to keep them isolated from any major confrontation within the country. Finally, the dissidents were committed to Samoan involvement of some kind following Nelson's success in drawing a favourable response from three New Zealand political leaders over 'Samoan grievances' during a meeting held in Wellington in early September 1926. It was indeed during these discussions that the New Zealand Prime Minister, perhaps unwittingly, committed a political blunder that was to spark off a chain of events which culminated in the establishment of an organised protest movement, which was taken over by the Samoans soon after - and called the Mau - and used as a vehicle through which they asserted their autonomy to control their own affairs. The ensuing conflict embroiled the country during the following ten years.

\(^7\) See A.O. 25/1-1 for material on the clashes between the authorities and the dissidents over this crucial period. See also F.D. Baxter, 'Collection of material relating to the Mau disturbances in Western Samoa 1926-1935' Ms. Auckland University Law Library; Baxter's account dramatically conveys the tense atmosphere which prevailed in Apia at this period. Baxter practised law in Apia and acted for the Mau on several occasions.
In late August 1926 O.F. Nelson, en route to Samoa from Sydney where he had been since early February seeing his daughters to school and seeking medical advice, called into Wellington and met the Prime Minister Rt. Hon. J.G. Coates together with the Minister of External Affairs Hon. William Noesworthy and Hon. Maui Pomare, Minister for the Cook Islands and a personal friend of Nelson's. During the meeting Nelson apparently gave a comprehensive statement on the different aspects of the Samoa Administration which he believed were creating a great deal of discontent amongst the people of Samoa; a discontent which, he warned the New Zealand leaders, threatened an 'impending upheaval' unless some effective remedial action was taken. Although he covered a wide area of Administration policies and activities, he concentrated on Samoan grievances emphasising in particular the banishment of individuals, mostly matai, from their villages, and the removal of matai titles by official decree without reference to the courts or regard for fa'a Samoa conventions. He told the New Zealand leaders that within Samoan society such measures resulted in degradation and caused hardships which he alleged were producing a rapidly growing dissatisfaction and anger amongst the Samoans. The New Zealand leaders apparently gave Nelson's representations sympathetic consideration with the result that when he returned to Samoa he openly pursued those complaints he had raised in Wellington, thereby bringing to the surface the discontent which the inhabitants of Samoa had increasingly felt against Richardson's administration.  

---

Olaf Frederick Nelson was born on 24 February 1883 in Safune, Savai'i. His father was Augustus Nelson, a trader of Swedish nationality who came to Samoa in 1868, and his mother was Sina Masoe a Samoan lady of high rank whose aiga had connections with the Sa Tupua lineage from which the matai title Taisi originated. He was the fourth of five children, the other four being girls and the eldest an adopted child. He grew up in Safune, later attended the Marist Brothers school in Apia and in 1896 at the age of 13, he started an apprenticeship with the German trading firm of Deutsche Handels und Plantagen Gesellschaft (D.H. and P.G.) which was the dominating force in the business life of the country. In 1900 he joined his father's trading business in Safune and after his father retired in 1903, he rapidly expanded the business operations so that when D.H. and P.G. was liquidated by the military authorities during the war, he was well placed - stores and trading contacts in various parts of the country; small fleet of inter-island motor boats; management experience - to take advantage of the extra trade. In 1928 Nelson's company had 40 trading stores scattered throughout Western Samoa and a paid up capital of £150,000. His home, 'Tuaefu', reflected his success.

In 1909 Nelson married Rosabel Moors - daughter of H.J. Moors - who had been educated in the United States. They had 6 children, 5 girls

9 For information on members of Augustus Nelson's family, see: formal note from the American Consul in Apia (Mason Mitchell) dated 14 Sept. 1917; Nelson to Tate 14 June 1919: A.O. 34/8/1.

10 The petition of O.F. Nelson to the League of Nations (Sydney, 1928); see also Samoa Times, 29 Nov. 1968 for information on the Nelson family and firm.
and a boy who died in 1919, aged 5, as a result of the after effects of the influenza epidemic. Nelson also had a daughter - Luse - whose mother was a high ranking Samoan lady from the village of Safotu, Savai'i.

Nelson was a man of habit who lived by the clock; at home and at work he expected others to do likewise. In normal times, he got up at 6 a.m. - during the Mau period he got up at 3 a.m. and worked in his study - breakfasted at 7 a.m., and arrived at his office at 8.30 a.m. He arrived back at Tuaefu at 5.30 p.m., and held a 'family hour' when family matters were discussed, while he drank his regular nightly ration of two bottles of beer. This was followed by dinner, always a formal affair with the girls appropriately dressed, and Nelson himself in suit and bowtie. Family prayers - hymns, bible reading, prayers - followed, and then bed by 9 p.m. He was a staunch Methodist - his mother's villages in Savai'i of Asau and Safune were solidly Methodist and his aiga in both villages led in church affairs - and he built a chapel in the Tuaefu grounds and required all the inhabitants of Tuaefu to attend church.

In his dealings, he stood steadfastly by agreements or causes to which he had committed himself, and he sometimes referred to himself as a 'bitter-ender'. The following incidents will show how much such a trait was part of his character and will show also the immense personal pressures he was under during the time of the Mau. In about 1923, Luse

11 Information from two of Nelson's daughters, Sina Annandale and Billy Retzlaff and from Salafai Tufuga who was a close relative from Savai'i and who from 1920 until Nelson died in 1944, lived with the Nelsons' as part of the family. The following section on Nelson's personal and family life is based principally on information from these three sources.

12 Information from Billy Retzlaff.
arrived from Savai'i where she had been brought up by Nelson's mother to live with the Nelson family in Tuaefu. Rosabel had insisted on Luse's transfer but Nelson had not been enthusiastic, pointing out that if Luse came to live with them it would be on a permanent basis and she would be Miss Nelson because she was his oldest daughter, while Rosabel's girls would be known simply by their baptismal names; and he expected tension in the household if that happened. Rosabel however wanted Luse to live with them and therefore agreed to Nelson's conditions. So Luse arrived and was accorded all the privileges due her position as Miss Nelson.

Not unexpectedly, Luse's presence generated tension between Nelson and his wife, and it soon led to their separation. Nelson refused to allow Luse to leave his household once she was there, and insisted on Luse's position as Miss Nelson being strictly observed, even when adhering to these conditions meant separation from his wife. They had agreed on Luse's place in the family and he stood by that agreement. Rosabel, a strong-willed lady with a mind of her own, did not succumb meekly to Nelson's demanding ways. She had been brought up by indulgent parents and was headstrong and determined. Even before Luse's arrival she had at times rebelled against the strict routine of Nelson's lifestyle and had on some of those occasions gone and stayed with her own family. After the differences over Luse began, her visits to her family became progressively frequent and longer in duration, and one day, as she prepared for another departure from Tuaefu, Nelson told her that if she went, she would not be allowed back. She went, and Nelson never allowed her back into the family, although he loved her and was heartbroken as his daughters discovered when they read one of his diaries after he died. It was only during his final illness that he agreed to
reconcile with her after twenty years separation.

After they separated, Nelson told his wife that to prevent the children developing divided loyalties, they should remain with one parent and the other should keep away altogether. Rosabel responded that he could keep them, and as was his nature he adhered to that arrangement. Of course he could not eliminate the love between the girls and their mother; the girls sometimes visited her and each time that occurred, he was terribly upset. To Nelson, a clear headed man who lived by iron discipline and hard work, an arrangement on bringing up the girls had been made, and it should be followed, other factors including his own appreciation of the emotional difficulties involved notwithstanding.

At Tuaefu, Nelson lived in grand surroundings: a house of mansion proportions and appointments, spacious terraced grounds, magnificent gardens, tennis courts, a large Samoan fale afolau (living guest house), and a private chapel, all testified - if in somewhat ostentatious fashion, given its setting in Samoa at that period - to abundant wealth. Apart from the enjoyment he derived from living there, it would appear that Nelson looked on Tuaefu as his response to the crude prejudices held by Europeans against half-castes at that time. He apparently felt these prejudices keenly and as a result did not go out a great deal preferring instead to invite people - including the prejudiced - to lavish entertainments at Tuaefu.  

---

13 Tate to Gray, 9 Apr. 1921 and 31 July 1921: Tate Papers Mss 264 Turnbull Library, Wellington.

14 Information from Salafai Tufuga.
As the most successful businessman in the country, Nelson was naturally regarded by the white community as its leading citizen; in the first elections for the Legislative Council in early 1924 for example, papalagi voters elected him as their 'First Member' on the Council. Officials recognised this situation and it was Nelson to whom they turned for advice and assistance on local matters. As a result, Nelson gained influence within government circles and members of the white community came to expect it of him to speak and lead on their behalf in matters involving government. This situation was not lost on the Samoans, particularly those who were dissatisfied with the Faipule as their contact with government. They brought their complaints to Nelson who took them up with the Administrator and his officials. This section of the Samoan community therefore came to look to Nelson to promote their interests in their relations with government. Nelson apparently was very proud of being regarded by the papalagi as well as Samoans as their leader in their dealings with government, and he took his responsibilities in this regard seriously. It was therefore natural for him to call into Wellington and make representations on behalf of the inhabitants of Samoa.

According to Nelson his representations received sympathetic hearing from the three political leaders and especially from the Prime Minister, who expressed 'amazement' at the practice of banishment and

15 See: The petition of O.F. Nelson to the League of Nations (Sydney, 1928); O.F. Nelson, The truth about Samoa (Auckland, 1928).

16 Ibid; F.D. Baxter, 'Collection of material ...', p. 5; Information from Sina Annandale, Billy Retzlaff and Fao of Asau.

17 Ibid.
remarked that the conditions recounted by Nelson 'would not be tolerated in New Zealand and nor would they be allowed in Samoa under his government'. In consequence of this view - he had apparently been warned of the growing unrest there by Pomare on his return from the islands a few months previously - Coates instructed Norsworthy there and then to proceed to Samoa and investigate. The Minister, who had hoped to pay his first official visit to the mandated territory at the end of the last parliamentary session for the year, indicated that he would sail for the islands on the October steamer.

On his part, the Prime Minister recollected ten months after the meeting that his response to Nelson had been 'that while his representations would receive due consideration and while government desired to extend to the people of Samoa both Native and white the most generous consideration similar to that accorded in New Zealand, the government must consider also the opinions of the Administrator and the Native Councils and the people of Samoa. For that purpose, the Minister of External Affairs would himself visit Samoa as soon as possible though his visit might be delayed owing to my absence at Imperial Conference'.

The implication of the Prime Minister's account was clear: Nelson had acted beyond that warranted by the response he had received in Wellington. In effect, though, the recollection by the Prime Minister helped confirm that Nelson's representations had been well

18 Record of meeting between Hon. W. Norsworthy and Apia residents (11 June 1927); Norsworthy to EA, 11 June 1927: A.O. 25/1-2.

19 See Nelson's address to public meeting (15 Oct. 1926); Nelson to Minister, 14 Jan. 1927: A.O. 25/1-1; Gray to Administrator, 9 Sept. 1926, IT 79/78.

20 Coates to Norsworthy, 13 June 1927, A.O. 25/1-2.
received and had been responsible for provoking the Minister's visit to Samoa - justification enough for Nelson to claim sympathy from the New Zealand leaders and to promote publicly those matters he had raised with them.

Up to this time, though, there had been no word on the meeting from the three political leaders who took part. They consistently failed, or refused, to provide the Administrator with an account of the discussions during the first crucial months of the conflict, and they persisted in their silence even when Richardson, by blaming the Wellington meeting as the 'base of all the agitation', clearly indicated that the situation was getting out of hand and he was having problems coping on his own.

Depending on information gathered from Nelson's public statements and correspondence, Richardson bluntly told the Minister that the Wellington discussions had 'contained a charge against myself which was unknown to me until the receipt of a copy of Mr Nelson's letter of 14th January ... it places me in an awkward position and shows why Mr Nelson had been so persistent and confident'. A little later, when the New Zealand government was having problems finding a suitable Minister to make the trip to Samoa, Richardson hit out again: 'This trouble started with an interview between Nelson and the New Zealand government and therefore government must send a Ministerial representative to stop it'. But still no word on the meeting. When the Prime Minister finally gave his version, it was at the request of NSWorthy, who was

22 Ibid.
23 Administrator to EA, 14 May 1927, A.O. 25/1-2.
then in Samoa trying to save the situation. It came ten months too late for the Mau was by then well established.

It was a serious error of judgement. Acquainting Richardson at the earliest opportunity with the proceedings of the meeting would have been diplomatically proper and would have better prepared him for the attack when it came. In particular, if Richardson had known that his political superiors felt that at the very least the complaints raised by Nelson - and now by the dissidents - deserved consideration and investigation, it could well have tempered his self-righteous attitude. This could have prevented the bitterness which so quickly had reduced and perhaps even eliminated the avenues open for reasonable discussions aimed at a satisfactory solution.

Certainly Nelson was under no obligation - except perhaps that of human decency, always a dubious one in the arena of politics - to inform Richardson either of the object of his visit to Wellington or of the discussions themselves, as the Royal Commission concluded he should have done, while completely ignoring the fact that informing the Administrator was the responsibility of the Minister and his department. 24 As it was, Nelson talked freely to Gray about his criticisms after the meeting whereas Norsworthy did not even raise the subject with his departmental head. Also soon after his arrival in Samoa Nelson openly gave his account of the meeting and repeated it several times, once in the presence of the Chief Judge and several senior officials of the Administration during the October public meeting, and also in letters to the Minister without being contradicted.

For Nelson the outcome of the interview would have been very satisfactory indeed. That he was able to discuss freely matters concerning the administration of Samoa over the head of the Administrator would have been most encouraging in itself, but that his representations on matters of specific concern to the Samoans were given consideration indicated that the New Zealand leadership was open-minded on the question of interaction between the Samoans and the 'whites' over political issues, rendering Richardson's strict 'political separation' policy at least open to challenge. This latter consideration was of particular significance because if followed up successfully it would provided him, an afakasi with papalagi legal status, the opportunity to participate openly in the important arena of Samoan affairs in which a person in his position must have influence before he could get far in the political affairs of the country. The Minister's visit presented him not only with the excuse to promote openly those complaints he had raised in Wellington but more important, particularly with the Samoans, it provided him with a cogent demonstration of his influence with the highest political authorities in New Zealand.

On their own, Nelson and those initially associated with him would have found it very difficult to attract support within Samoa for a concerted campaign against the Administration. This would have been particularly applicable to the Samoans, given that they had their own means of combatting disagreeable official measures, and given also their preoccupation with status and authority. And as far as they were concerned at the time Richardson had the status and held the power. But with Nelson claiming support from the Prime Minister himself and being able to point to a tangible demonstration of it in the form of the Minister's visit, the power structure in Samoa took on a different complexion; Richardson's position was rendered vulnerable and the discontented group was able to launch its campaign from a position of legitimacy and strength.
In justifying his decision to interview the Prime Minister in 1926, Nelson repeatedly asserted that he did it mainly out of his concern for the welfare of the Samoans. In his petition to the League of Nations in 1928 he wrote: 'In consequence of the unsatisfactory position which existed in connection with Native affairs when your Petitioner left Samoa and in consequence of reports received by your Petitioner whilst in Sydney, your Petitioner ... visited New Zealand ... and interviewed the Prime Minister of New Zealand and the Minister of External Affairs, the Hon. Mr Nosworthy'. He claimed that in 1924 and again in 1925, being concerned with the rising discontent amongst the Samoans over the growing incidence of banishment, he had tried to warn Richardson of the dangers of this policy, but was ignored. Of the reports he received whilst in Sydney, he was particularly dissatisfied with an Order which interfered with the Samoans' freedom of movement in their own country by requiring all Samoans living in the Apia area who did not belong there and who did not have permanent employment to return to their own villages.

But Nelson was also the leading resident of Western Samoa and he carried many complaints of specific relevance to the white community. Perhaps the foremost complaint here concerned the situation in the Legislative Council. Although the elected members were fully aware before entering the Council that they would be in the minority, they were obviously not prepared for the role of impotent spectators in which they found themselves. While Richardson assured them that he welcomed the freest discussion of all matters raised during Council meetings they soon discovered that any of their views that differed

The petition of O.F. Nelson to the League of Nations (Sydney, 1928).
from the official ones were invariably ignored and rejected either through procedural requirements or through the official majority. To make matters worse, the MLCs - and the officials as well - knew that under the existing rules of the Council there was nothing that could be done to change the situation.

The only way to obtain relief was to go outside the Council, indeed outside Samoa itself. In his opening address to the October public meeting he declared,

Your representatives in the Legislative Council can never reach the stage when they can control Government policy or bring about such reforms as you may direct them to do. For that reason we have no alternative but to appeal to a higher authority. That higher authority is vested in the New Zealand government and exercised through the Minister of External Affairs.26

In saying this though, Nelson betrayed his own political ambitions. It also became clear in the same address that his frustrations with the Administration resulted largely from his failure to reconcile his political ambitions with the realities of the political situation; in particular the status of Western Samoa as a mandated territory. While he accepted that an opposition party as in a self-governing country could not be formally instituted in the Legislative Council, he nevertheless sought to establish an effective opposition in that body, which would play virtually the same role (with greater powers) as an opposition party. He argued that even if the MLCs could not possess formal powers to frustrate government's programmes, their unanimous opposition should be recognised by withholding and submitting any contested proposal to a higher authority - the Minister preferably -

before any action on it, if any, was taken. He told the meeting that there was 'nothing constitutionally wrong' in pressuring New Zealand for the 'gradual advancement of the political status of this country and its people' and he asserted that 'the New Zealand government is sympathetic with our aspirations' and that the Minister's visit 'may be taken as a recognition of our further progress in the legislation of our own affairs'. In effect though, given the political climate of the time and given also Samoa's status as a mandated territory, Nelson was being naively unrealistic.

II

Nelson arrived back in Samoa on 24 September and immediately took steps to prepare for the Minister's visit. A provisional committee comprising the three MLCs decided to call a public meeting to decide on matters to be raised with the Minister and to choose a committee to translate these into formal submissions. Other leading papalagi were asked to assist in preparing matters for discussion and the meeting was advertised in the local weekly newspaper, the Samoa Times. At about this time also Nelson was invited to S.H. Meredith's house for a private welcoming-home function; there he met several high-ranking matai normally resident in Apia, including the two Fautua Malietoa and Tuimaleali'ifano and related to them his experiences whilst overseas. Particular interest was shown concerning the Wellington meeting and Nelson advised the Samoan leaders to put down in writing any matters

27 Ibid.
they wanted to raise with the Minister and present them as formal submissions when he arrived. The papalagi, he said, were doing just that themselves and had called a public meeting to facilitate that procedure. In the course of these discussions and on subsequent occasions both Nelson and other prominent papalagi told the Samoans that they could participate in the advertised public meeting if they wished, Nelson having contemplated joint action if the Samoans were agreeable to it. 28

A few days after the advertisement for the public meeting appeared in the Samoa Times, Richardson informed the Minister: 'Although I know of no local complaints, your visit is being made occasion for political deputation'. 29 He suggested that the prohibition issue was behind the deputation proposal and thought that the Minister would be pressed for a definite statement on this matter with a view to repealing the law. There was no suggestion by Richardson that the Minister delay his visit. The day before the meeting, Norsworthy advised Richardson that his visit was 'unavoidably posponed autumn'. 30 Family affairs and specifically Norsworthy's involvement as Trustee of his wife's family estate of which certain matters were then before the court, were responsible for the postponement.

The MLCs were informed of the postponement but the meeting took place as planned, Nelson indicating that the message came too late to alter their plans and in any case he thought that the delay would give

29 Administrator to EA, 12 Oct. 1926, A.O. 25/1-1.
30 Minister to Administrator, 14 Oct. 1926, A.O. 25/1-1.
the committee 'plenty of time to do their work'. In reality, though, proceeding with the meeting was largely an angry reaction to what was felt to be a breach of promise by the New Zealand leaders as well as the belief that it was Richardson who had influenced the change in plans.\(^{31}\)

The meeting attracted just under 300 people - about half of them Samoans - and all participated actively in the deliberations. Since non-involvement by 'whites' in the political affairs of the Samoans, and vice versa, was a fundamental principle of Richardson's administration, Samoan participation in this meeting constituted a major challenge to government. In a rousing opening address, Nelson defended the Samoans' presence by saying that Samoans had wanted to participate; but he then introduced another aspect which involved what amounted to a unilateral alteration of the MLCs' status in the Legislative Council by claiming that they represented the Samoans: 'Until the Samoans are represented by their own elected members in the Legislative Council, we feel that we represent the Europeans and the Natives alike, so therefore could not exclude them from this public meeting'.\(^{32}\)

Several prepared papers including some on Samoan affairs by the Samoan contingent led by Faumuina Mulimulu and Afamasaga Lagolago,\(^ {33}\) were presented. All were critical of government. At the end of the meeting, a combined committee of 15 - the Citizens' Committee - was

\(^{31}\) F.D. Baxter, 'Collection of material ...', p. 15.
\(^{32}\) 'Report of Royal Commission ...', p. 449.
\(^{33}\) The use by Lagolago of the title Afamasaga was forbidden by Richardson in 1924 under the provisions of the Samoan offenders ordinance 1922, after he was found guilty of selling home-brewed liquor to fellow Samoans. People however continued addressing him by that title and it would therefore be used here.
chosen and charged with two specific tasks: to contact the Minister and try to persuade him to proceed with his visit to Samoa the following month, and to prepare submissions on the subjects raised during the meeting for presentation to the Minister. The Citizens' Committee was made up of six Samoans—Faumuina, Afamasaga, Alipia, Ainu'u, Tofaeono and Tuisila—all high-ranking matai, and nine members from the papalagi side comprising the three MLCs as well as S.H. Meredith, A.G. Smyth, E.W. Gurr, F.D. Baxter, A.R. Cobcroft and Kurt Meyer.

Although Samoan participation was the most outstanding feature of this meeting, and combined action became the central issue in the confrontation between government and the discontented group, it is important to mention here those areas of government administration which created dissatisfaction and drew criticism from members of the Samoan as well as the papalagi communities. Samoan criticisms revolved mainly around the Faipule and their role in advising the Administrator on Samoan affairs. The Samoans complained that the Faipule were appointed by the Administrator and were therefore government officials rather than Samoan representatives; yet they were given powers to advise and decide on matters over which they had no traditional authority. Such matters included removal of matai titles—aiga members possessed exclusive authority over the aiga title,—banishment from villages—the village fono was the only arbiter in village matters,—determination of questions concerning the individualisation of Samoan lands, and imposition of restrictions on certain Samoan customs and practices.

On the other hand, papalagi criticisms centred around the usual topics of officials (too many, inefficient, too highly paid, not interested
in Samoa), public funds (too big a national debt, extravagant expenditure, public has no say in their control), Legislative Council (Administrator's rubber stamp), Medical department (inefficient and lacked competent medical staff), and prohibition (arbitrarily imposed, not required by mandate, not observed in New Zealand itself).

Three weeks after the first meeting Richardson experienced Samoan discontent first hand at village level when a large number of matai in two sub-districts - Fagaloa and Falelatai - situated at opposite ends of Upolu, rejected the authority of their respective Faipule with the result that some abstained from the meetings with the Administrator on his official malaga while others who attended bitterly assailed him in their speeches. At a village in Falelatai, dissident matai prohibited their people from attending a yaws clinic and encouraged a general attitude of non-cooperation with officialdom.

In a society where politeness was a prime virtue, where due recognition was jealously guarded and strictly observed and where a breach of these requirements invariably drew severe censure and heavy punishment, if not violence, these actions against the head of government were very serious indeed as Richardson was well aware. Yet in the same reports informing New Zealand Ministers of these disturbing incidents he assured them that the Samoans were in fact contented, and that the few 'agitators' had no support amongst the white community either. He confidently expected that if the opposition did not die from lack of support it would disappear once he became personally involved. He told the Minister: 'My name was kept out of all criticism, otherwise the

34 Administrator to Minister, 19 Nov. 1926, A.O. 25/1-1; see also 'Report of Royal Commission ...', p. 357.
movement would I believe have failed from the first as I think there would have been no support'.

In fact the criticism raised during the public meeting affected Richardson in a more serious way than any personal attack on his name could have done, because it was a direct attack on the fundamental principle on which his Administration was built. He was therefore deluding himself, and when he brought himself into the fray with a letter to the second combined meeting demanding discontinuation of combined political action, that letter achieved exactly the opposite effect.

III

The second combined public meeting held on 12 November was a dramatic affair even before it was formally opened. The hall was packed with a predominantly Samoan audience of about 600. Outside several Samoan policemen armed with batons patrolled the grounds of the Apia market hall, while inside four white constables kept watch on the proceedings. Just after Nelson declared the meeting opened, the Acting Secretary to the Administration, Mr A.M. McCarthy, interrupted and read a letter from the Administrator. In the letter Richardson informed the meeting that 'the natives are unsettled on certain matters' as a result of the October combined public meeting. He then proceeded to justify the policy of 'political non-involvement' in the Samoan context:

35 Administrator to Minister, 19 Nov. 1926, A.O. 25/1-1.
The effect of bringing the natives into the European political arena is unwise and likely to cause trouble. It is a simple matter to upset a native race which is composed of many factions like the Samoan race and I ask the Europeans not to do it. If you persist, you are doing a thing unheard of in the annals of colonial administration and are almost certain to discredit the European community in the eyes of the outside world. The inevitable result must be to disturb the peace, order and good government of the territory. Every person knows what that means. I ask the Europeans to confine themselves to those matters which concern them and leave alone those matters which concern them not. 36

The 'whites' were assured of their 'British privileges' of freedom of speech and 'honest criticism' of government, while the Samoans were told that they had the 'fullest freedom' to bring their complaints before the Administration, although these must come through 'properly constituted channels such as the District councils and the Fono a Faipule'. The Samoans were further assured 'of the fullest hearing and the utmost consideration' in any matter brought forward the proper way and moreover 'chiefs and taule'ale'a are treated alike and both have the same rights of redress for injuries as Europeans'. In case there were any lingering doubts as to the Administrator's attitude he concluded:

I wish all people here to clearly understand that I do not approve of a political meeting which mixes native politics and European politics as its tendency must be to disturb the peace, order and good government of the natives. 37

It was a hard-hitting statement on the policy of political non-involvement, and obviously aimed at stopping the malcontents in their tracks. For a number of reasons, however, it was doomed to failure from the start. Richardson's concern for the 'peace, order and

36 'Report of Royal Commission ...', p. 454; see also A.O. 25/1-1 for police reports on this meeting.
37 Ibid.
good government' of the country was shared by everyone, but his stubborn insistence on the rigid observance of the status quo, without holding out the slightest hope of a change, after a clear public expression of dissatisfaction with the existing system, was politically foolhardy. In spite of his contempt for Nelson and his associates, he could not afford to ignore their claims completely - if only because they were respected members of the white community and their criticisms were expressed within the limits of the law.

Worse still, requiring in such a manner the MLCs and those associated with them to back down was a crude attempt to humiliate them publicly. There was a feeling amongst the dissidents that they were being intimidated into giving up what they believed to be legitimate criticisms expressed along constitutional channels, and that belief was greatly strengthened by the thoughtless and provocative actions of two senior officials: A.L. Braisby, the Chief of Police who arranged the show of police force when in fact nothing that the dissatisfied people had done up to that time was unlawful, or warranted such an exhibition, and McCarthy, who rudely interrupted the meeting and read the Administrator's letter, according to an eye-witness, in a 'very hectoring manner'.

The uncompromising demands of the letter and the bullying manner of its presentation stunned the meeting; more so because everyone present knew that this was the showdown between the Administration and the dissident group and more particularly between


39 F.D. Baxter, 'Collection of material ...', p. 35.
Richardson and Nelson. Richardson though had adopted tactics and created a situation that left Nelson with little choice but to defy the Administrator's demands. He argued that the interests of Samoans and Europeans could not be separated; that although the Administrator could not be criticised as the representative of His Majesty, he was certainly open to criticism as head of the government. He criticised the Administrator and his policy of 'political non-involvement' which he contended was unrealistic and had led to deliberate attempts to 'discredit the trader in the eyes of the native' thereby encouraging dissension between Samoans and Europeans. The Samoans, he claimed, were being denied access to the Administrator and were being intimidated into a position where they would not criticise the Administration. In dramatic fashion he declared: 'The Samoans have always been a free people and a free people they will remain. They certainly should be allowed to state any grievances they may have'.

The meeting decided to send a delegation to New Zealand to present its submission to the Minister. To finance this venture it was agreed to call for public donations and matai from the villages of Solosolo and Mulifanua immediately made contributions to start the fund - a most encouraging if rather surprising response from the Samoans, who were usually suspicious and reluctant to contribute money, especially to unproven schemes involving local 'whites'. A.G. Smyth and Mata'u Karauna were appointed Treasurer and Secretary respectively to facilitate arrangements for the proposed New Zealand visit.

While continuation of the meeting could at least be defended on the grounds that the actions of the Administrator and his senior officials had provoked it, the decision to send a combined delegation to New Zealand paid for with funds from public donations could hardly be similarly justified. A public campaign for funds would naturally highlight grievances - real and imaginary - against the Administration. And regardless of all protestations of goodwill and honourable intentions on the part of the malcontents, the real effect of such a campaign was disaffection against the constituted authorities in the country.

Why was such a visit considered necessary? The existing situation did not appear to warrant it. There had been no harsh repressive measures and the opposition movement was still largely confined to the Apia inhabitants. Moreover the complaints voiced by the dissatisfied section did not contain one on whose immediate satisfaction depended the peace and wellbeing of the population: they could all have waited for a few months until the Minister arrived.

The unequivocal public rejection of the Administrator's precise demands placed the responsibility to settle the issue once again on his shoulders. A crucial stage had been reached and in view of the tactless, bulldozing tactics he had adopted, the situation clearly called for determined and even drastic action to assert the authority of the government if his credibility and standing - and therefore those of the Administration - especially amongst the Samoans, were to be maintained. It was either that or conceding that the opposition movement had legitimate grievances which deserved serious consideration. Richardson chose neither course of action. Instead he went on the defensive and the dissidents took the initiative. A long drawn-out
confrontation looked certain unless the New Zealand government took a more direct and positive part in the tussle. But no such action was forthcoming from a government which appeared contented to take its direction from Richardson.

The Citizens' Committee moved quickly to implement the resolutions of the November combined meeting. The Minister was asked to receive a delegation in New Zealand. On Richardson's advice, the Minister replied that he was prepared to receive a delegation in January provided the dissidents' representations were submitted to the Administrator, with matters concerning Samoan affairs to be submitted to the Fono a Faipule for report. The Citizens' Committee, interpreting the Minister's reply as agreement to receive the delegation, submitted its representations to the Administrator, cleverly leaving it up to him to refer to the Faipule these submissions he felt concerned Samoan affairs. They then switched their attention to the task of raising funds to cover the expenses of the delegation.

A list was sent round prospective contributors within the white community for pledges of money while a pamphlet entitled 'Ole Fono Tele a Samoa' (The Great Fono of Samoa) was prepared by the Samoan section of the Citizens' Committee and approved by Nelson, for distribution amongst the Samoans to assist the Samoan members in their campaign for funds and support in the villages. When they embarked on this mission, Richardson moved in smartly and stopped them: Faumuina and Mata'u Karauna were ordered back from Savai'i almost on arrival, while Ainu'u was prevented from leaving Apia. Being satisfied that distributing

---

41 Minister to MLCs, 26 Nov. 1926; Administrator to EA, 13 Nov. 1926; MLCs to Minister, 28 Nov. 1926: A.O. 25/1-1.
pamphlets which criticised the Administration and the laws of the country in 'seditious terms' would tend to disturb the 'peace, order and good government of the natives', Richardson invoked the Samoan Offenders Ordinance 1922 to constrain Faumuina and Mata'u Karauna to remain in their villages for a period of three months while Ainu'u was warned to stop his association with the Citizens' Committee.  

The MLCs protested to the Minister over this action, claiming that it was arbitrary and could cause trouble. They again urged an immediate investigation. The Minister replied that the matter would be referred to the Administrator and the Fono a Faipule then in session, adding that he would be guided by the Fono's advice, it being the 'competent body to advise on native affairs'.  

This was just what the malcontents did not want, first because they maintained that the Faipule were appointees of the Administrator and would invariably support him and secondly because they argued that the Faipule did not necessarily possess the appropriate authority in traditional politics to be accorded such a role. Norsworthy rejected these objections and informed the MLCs that the Fono as constituted had 'the entire sympathy and fullest support of the New Zealand government which also has the fullest confidence in his Excellency to appoint as Faipule only those persons who are best fitted to be leaders of their people'.  

As to an investigation, the Minister advised that the Fono a Faipule

42 Richardson's instructions (26 Nov. 1926) on Braisby's report (25 Nov. 1926) on this episode, A.O. 25/1-1.
43 Minister to Administrator, 8 Dec. 1926, A.O. 25/1-1.
44 MLCs to Minister, 9 Dec. 1926, A.O. 25/1-1.
had just sent a message assuring him an investigation as suggested by
the MLCs was 'quite unnecessary' and he therefore could see 'no
reason for any investigation into native affairs in Samoa at the
present time'.

This response was a body-blow to the discontented group. The
Faipule, the centre of Samoan grievances, had been declared supreme and
untouchable by the Minister. Worse still, the investigation promised
Nelson, on which the malcontents placed so much hope to uncover
deficiencies in the Administration and thereby justify their opposition,
own seemed doomed. They felt however that the Minister (along with the
New Zealand government) was a victim of Richardson's misleading advice,
and they hoped he would change his attitude after reading their
submissions and discussing the situation with their delegation in New
Zealand. But they were fooling themselves. When the six Samoan
members of the Citizens' Committee chosen as members of the delegation
applied for travel permits to New Zealand, Richardson refused to grant
the permits on the flimsy grounds that the Minister's telegram of
16 November meant that no Samoan might be included in the delegation
without specific permission from the Minister himself.

Once again the discontented group protested vigorously. Nelson
wrote to the Minister that 'It is inconceivable that the interference
with the liberty of the subject and other arbitrary acts towards the
Samoan natives can possibly be with the knowledge and consent of the
New Zealand government'. The Minister oscillated and insisted on the

---

46 Ibid.
47 Sec. to Admin. to Braisby, 15 Dec. 1926; MLCs to Minister,
impossible condition that the Samoan delegates must be representative of the Samoan people, including the Faipule, before he could agree to receive them. The malcontents, though rapidly losing hope, countered that they had the support of a 'large majority of Europeans and 90% of the Samoans'. But this and other assurances and requests failed to move the Minister. Angry and frustrated they cabled: 'Samoan delegates approved by Samoan people: will you receive them or not?' To which terse enquiry the Minister responded that 'official advice' did not support their claims.

The day after the message asking this pointed question of the Minister was sent, five Samoan members of the Citizens' Committee - Afamasaga, Ainu'u, Tofaeono, Alipia and Tuisila - as well as district representative Anae were arraigned before the Administrator at Mulinu'u. The first three were ordered to cease working with the Citizens' Committee while the last three including Anae were handed banishment orders requiring them to return and remain in their respective villages for the next three months. The dissident group saw this action as retaliation for the telegram and the feeling became prevalent that they were being subjected to injustices and persecution for standing up for their rights. The situation deteriorated further and 'bitterness, contempt and distrust became more widespread than ever before'. It was in these circumstances that Nelson wrote to Norsworthy bitterly complaining that for the Samoans:

49 MLCs to Minister, 11 Jan. 1927; Minister to MLCs, 13 Jan. 1929: A.O. 25/1-1.


51 F.D. Baxter, 'Collection of material ...', p. 58.
martial law might just as well have been proclaimed and the whole place be considered a military camp ... Intimidation and unheard of measures of the sort now perpetuated on the Samoans will never tend to bring about goodwill and satisfaction of the Samoan people in the New Zealand Administration of Samoa.52

The Citizens' Committee was thus prevented from carrying out the resolutions of the November combined meeting. But in its efforts to implement those resolutions, it widened the confrontation considerably - assisted by the uncertain and negative government response - and generated country-wide interest, which soon led to major changes in the nature and direction of the dissident movement.

IV

The dramatic events that quickly followed the October public meeting fired the interest of the Samoans throughout the country in the conflict being played out in Apia. Many were keen to become more involved and certain matai from the outer districts requested a place on the leadership ranks of the dissident group. With six Samoans already on the Citizens' Committee and with the movement in its infancy, it might appear that this request was premature if not presumptuous. It was not: the Samoan members of the Citizens' Committee were elected in a European-controlled public meeting and were therefore not village or district representatives, and moreover the claimant matai had an obligation to their respective aiga to have their status in the movement clarified before fully committing themselves. Supporting the dissident

cause would expose them, their titles and other members of their families to ridicule particularly in their close-knit village communities, unless they could demonstrate for others to see that they commanded recognition and influence within the new group. Because they were matai, nothing less than a place on the leadership ranks would satisfy this requirement in Samoan eyes.

The request presented Nelson with a dilemma. With his knowledge of the Samoans he no doubt appreciated the considerations behind it, and realised that refusal would alienate the Samoans and would render impotent all the efforts of the dissidents. On the other hand, agreeing to the request would open the door to full-scale Samoan involvement and could well take the movement beyond his control; the Samoan representatives would not be content - would not in fact be so allowed by Samoan requirements - with just being on the executive. They would want to exercise control and they would be very difficult to resist.

Understandably Nelson hesitated. He told the deputation of district matai that the executive of the movement was chosen by a public meeting and that its composition could only be changed by a similar meeting. But this effort to blunt the Samoan initiative by reference to a European convention was a futile attempt. The Samoans knew the strength of their position and they countered by proposing the establishment of a new committee which would work in conjunction with the Citizens' Committee in directing the affairs of the movement but whose membership would be wholly made up of village and district representatives. The six Samoan members of the Citizens' Committee, who obviously felt the weakness of their position, strongly supported
this proposal. Nelson gave his approval and the Samoan Committee - later known popularly as the Mau komiti - came into existence. It appears clear though that the other dissident 'whites', including those on the Citizens' Committee, were not consulted on this matter and they had very little knowledge and even less influence over the affairs of this new creation.

Within the dissident movement itself, these matai were accepted as representatives of Samoan supporters and they asserted an independence to express the views of those they represented, so far as the Mau was concerned, in a most forthright manner. F.D. Baxter, original member of the Citizens' Committee and legal counsel for the Mau and its members during the first turbulent months of the confrontation, wrote of the Samoan Committee:

From the time of its inception, the Mau Committee was the body which controlled and organised the native opposition, expressed its views and generally led in and guided its affairs. Nor was it prepared to be a passive organ of Nelson or the Citizens' Committee. It would of course consider suggestions of the Citizens' Committee or Nelson, but it would not allow itself to be dominated or controlled. It had its own suggestions and ideas and made them known and felt. From the establishment of this Committee Nelson could influence the trend of native ideas and actions in so far as he could persuade such Committee to his views ...

With the formation of this Committee, discussions began on the matter of the conduct of Mau affairs, and after several weeks of negotiations, consensus was finally reached, on the vital issues of procedure, finance and representation during a meeting at Tuaefu on 15 February 1927, attended by the three MLCs as well as Gurr and Smyth,

54 F.D. Baxter, 'Collection of material ...', p. 58.
with Faumuina and Tamasese - appearing openly for the first time with
the dissidents - leading a group of over a hundred and fifteen represen-
tatives from all over Samoa. It was agreed that while fa'a Samoa practices
would be observed in all respects during Mau meetings, certain European
rules of procedure would also be observed to facilitate the business of
the Committee. Thus every representative, regardless of the position of
his village or district, was granted the right to speak if he had any
contribution to make; a chairman to control the meetings was also
provided for. On finances, the meeting agreed that the money donated so
far - some £255-0-6 - was inadequate for the work of the Committee and
decided to set specific amounts of contributions, styled as meaalofa -
gifts: a minimum of 10/- per matai, 5/- per taule'ale'a and 1/- per
woman and child. It was further decided that these gifts had to be
paid in by the last day of April. On the issue of representation, it
was resolved to limit the number to one representative from each village
and for the rest of the matai who had been involved in the protracted
negotiations to return to their villages to collect contributions,
organise their members and promote the Mau. The organisation of Mau
affairs in the villages was left entirely up to Mau supporters in each
village; and similarly for sub-districts and districts. In Apia, it
was decided that it would be more convenient for Mau supporters who
had come from all over the country and were scattered throughout the
Apia area staying with relatives and friends to divide them into smaller
groups for administrative and decision-making purposes. The four
faitotoa (gates) at Lepea, Vaimoso, Apia village and Matautu were the
result of that decision. It was also decided to appoint a full-time
Secretary for the Samoan section of the movement and to expedite the
distribution and signing of the petition to the New Zealand Parliament.
The satisfactory conclusion to weeks of intense negotiations moved the recorder of the minutes of the meeting to add this comment: 'It was a most dignified and solemn fono and it became clear that the country has turned with confidence to support this effort which is the search for the full dignity, freedom and wellbeing of Samoa'.

The successful establishment of the Samoan Committee on a firm and regular basis marked the point of no return from full-scale Samoan involvement that the Administration and even the dissident whites had been so keen to avoid. The adoption by the Samoan population at large of the label 'Ole Mau a Samoa' (The firm opinion of Samoa) for the opposition movement at this time perhaps epitomised the recognition of this fact best. It conveyed the message that for most Samoans, even those sympathetic to the Administration, the dissident viewpoint had become a legitimate, genuine expression of Samoan opinion, well-founded or otherwise. Amongst the Samoans, the Mau as it now stood was an organisation exercising its own prerogatives fa'a Samoa, and not merely a resistance movement.

The role of Mau supporters in the villages and districts in matters of representation, finances and general support gave them a powerful position in the affairs of the dissident movement; they knew that the existence of the Mau depended almost entirely on their support, and they knew how to exercise their power and protect their position. In the matter of representation for example they regarded a representative chosen by a community through the process of consultation and consensus as but a mouthpiece whose function it was to express the views of the

---

55 Minutes (in Samoan) of Mau meeting held at Tuaefu on 15 Feb. 1927, A.O. 25/1-1. Translation by the writer.
members of that community. The representatives on the Samoan Committee, fully aware of such an attitude, therefore kept in constant touch with their villages. In many minor matters they used their judgement, but on important issues they would request and await instructions from those they represented and they were not at liberty to divert from those instructions without losing their representative status. In this way the Mau supporters in the villages kept a very strict control on the decisions of the Samoan Committee and through it the Mau. Thus within six months of the opposition to the Administration surfacing, effective control flowed from the people in the villages and districts to the executive in Apia rather than the other way around. 56

On the other hand, because the Samoan Committee was their committee, Mau members gave it their wholehearted support. They contributed money freely for its work and they stood by its decisions and instructions. The Samoan Committee in fact quickly came to be regarded by the Mau supporters as an institution of inviolate standing. Representatives might be removed through village/district resolution or by official decree, but the institution that was the Samoan Committee or the Mau komiti remained and new members were sent to fill the gaps and to continue its work. It was due to this fact that the banishment and imprisonment of Mau leaders were ineffective in stopping the Mau.

It was these changes to the power structure within the dissident movement, more than the frothy talk of the Apia dissidents or concern with publicised Samoan grievances, that brought a flood of Samoan support for the Mau. There is little doubt that the Samoans were

56 Information from Toluono Lama of Palauli, Taulealea Taulauniu of Safune and Fao of Asau.
dissatisfied with the Faipule system and with official interference in certain aspects of their fa'a Samoa - the two most publicised grounds of Samoan complaints. However, they had their own ways of handling these nuisances in the villages and districts. In most cases individual Faipule were obeyed or ignored as it suited the people under their jurisdiction. Sometimes a Faipule, conscious of his position, would impose fines or in extreme cases recommend to the Administrator the removal of a title or even banishment. But they knew the limits to which they could go with their fellow-Samoans and they accepted the situation. In a similar way, government Regulations and Orders concerning certain Samoan customs were not allowed to stand in the way of proper Samoan observances on the appropriate occasions. And more often than not the Faipule as well as other Samoan officials participated in these 'illegal' functions.57

Consequently, the opportunity offered by the dissident movement to protest against official actions that were largely ignored anyway, did not provide a very strong incentive for the Samoans to support the Mau. On the other hand, the prospect of exercising authority that could be felt at the highest councils provided a very powerful incentive indeed, for therein lies prestige and recognition. Moreover, the Samoan Committee offered a very real opportunity for full participation in the affairs of the country at the national level. In the early stages, most of the matai who joined the Mau had suffered or had a relative who suffered deprival of matai title or banishment by recommendation of the Faipule and use by Richardson of the Samoan Offenders Ordinance

57 Nelson to No:sworthy, 14 Jan. 1927, A.O. 25/1-1; information from Le'aula of Saleaulatai and VaI of Manono.
1922. Soon however, others supported the Mau for their own reasons—in the context of Samoan society, the perpetual struggle for status provided many pertinent reasons—thereby extending the motivation behind the Mau, beyond mere dissatisfaction with government.

V

The establishment of the Mau komiti resulted in many significant changes in the lives of the people in the villages. The Mau supporters had to choose representatives, decide on matters to be put to the Mau komiti, and regulate their own activities. They also had to maintain their representatives in Apia, collect funds and promote the Mau. Organising themselves presented no problems because they possessed a traditional organisation structure with which everyone was familiar. The instigation of these activities was taken as a matter of course and the Mau supporters in the villages certainly did not need any encouragement from the Apia dissidents to do it. It was a normal response without which they could not function as responsible members of the Mau.

This development quickly polarised the people in the villages into two camps: Mau supporters on one hand and the rest on the other. Many of this latter group were Administration supporters but many more were people uncommitted either way but more concerned with the unity of their villages. As a result of this situation, it is almost certain that claims by both the Mau and government as to the support they had amongst the Samoans, were incorrect, and that the majority of Samoans
kept their options open and exploited the situation as it suited their requirements. In many cases, when the Mau people first declared themselves openly in villages, they were in the minority and the matai fono in their respective villages banned the matai concerned from participating in village affairs. This had the effect of reducing them and their aiga to a status of nonentity in their village communities. If they had sufficient numbers, Mau matai responded by declaring their own fono as independent units from the main fono. With this development the confrontation became an integral part of the everyday lives of the Samoans in the villages, as rival fono strove for ascendancy in village affairs.

The confrontation in the villages had very little to do with concern over principles and policies espoused by either the Administration or the dissident executive committees in Apia. It was primarily motivated by considerations that were of special importance to the Samoans: rank, status and recognition. Consequently once Mau supporters established rival fono in villages, the continuing existence of the Mau became of crucial importance to them; not so much because they accepted or even understood the rhetoric from the Apia committees, nor even because they themselves held strong objections to the Administration, but more because their pride and dignity fa'a Samoa depended on it.

With the emergence of this division in villages the classical form of Samoan response to confrontation situations of this type came into play: strict and exaggerated non-recognition of each side by the other. As the sides drew apart, each adopted the policy of deliberately

58 Information from Va'i of Manono and Leasiolagi of Salani.
refraining from all possible acts of recognition of the other's existence. Thus Mau supporters ignored laws and Regulations promulgated by the Administration and they also treated official orders and programmes in similar fashion. They refused to obey the pulenu'u and other Samoan officials; they refused to work their plantations according to official instructions and exhortations, and they would not collect rhinoceros beetles for official inspection; some even started to prevent their children from attending government schools and to not allow the treatment of their sick people at government clinics.

During this period, Mau supporters in the villages received a great deal of positive encouragement from the Citizens' Committee. A petition alleging that the leading Faipule Toelupe had surrendered Samoa's sovereignty to New Zealand was circulated for signatures in late December and early January. It was a rather naive allegation but in the excitement of the developing conflict and the necessity for supporters in the villages to present an image of strength and purpose, it attracted many signatures. It was never submitted to the authorities but it achieved its main aim of articulating the grievances of which the dissidents were complaining. Other circulars containing lists of the complaints raised during the two combined public meetings were printed in large numbers and distributed widely. 59

In January S.H. Meredith went to New Zealand on a token trip in lieu of the cancelled visit by a combined contingent from the Citizens' Committee. He engaged an Auckland law firm to act on behalf of the Mau and specifically to arrange for the dissident movement,

59 Copies of this petition and Mau circulars are found in A.O. 25/1-1.
including the Samoans, to petition the New Zealand parliament. He met the Prime Minister in Auckland but was referred to the Minister of External Affairs, whom he did not see but who in any case had indicated that he preferred to discuss issues on Samoa during his forthcoming visit to the islands in May and June. Meredith ended his mission by releasing a pamphlet which purported to present the facts about the confrontation in Samoa up to that point in time, but its general tone and presentation were unmistakably calculated to inflame the situation. The impression conveyed to the Samoans by Meredith's messages and pamphlet was that the Prime Minister and the Minister had reneged on their promises to Nelson. On the other hand, the Mau supporters were advised that their complaints would not be ignored because other avenues such as the New Zealand parliament and the League of Nations existed where they would receive a hearing.

During January and February a petition from the 'Chiefs of Western Samoa to the Government of New Zealand' was circulated for signing. It requested changes to the role of the Faipule, the maintenance of the authority of the Ali'i ma Faipule (collective term for the matai) in villages, the repeal of all the 'harsh laws imposed on the Samoans' and the satisfaction of complaints raised by the Citizens' Committee. They also requested that Toelupe's alleged cession of Samoa to New Zealand be disregarded. This petition was not submitted to the authorities either but Richardson obtained a copy and commented on the contents at length for the information of the Minister. However it was

---

60 PM to Minister, 24 Feb. 1927; Minister to PM, 24 Feb. 1927: A.O. 25/1-1.

61 S.H. Meredith, Western Samoa ... How New Zealand Administers its Mandate from the League of Nations (Auckland, 1927).
not discarded, instead it was expanded into a comprehensive statement of the dissidents' case, affixed with fresh signatures and readdressed to the New Zealand parliament.\textsuperscript{62} It was the Citizens' Committee's way of bypassing Richardson and Norsworthy, and therefore conveyed its loss of trust in these two men and their ability to settle the confrontation.

In mid-March a statement of objects and aims for the whole movement - now formally known as the Welfare League of Samoa - was adopted. The main object of the League was declared to be the raising of matters with the authorities which in the opinion of its members were important to the proper development of the country. The members of the League also reiterated their respect for constituted authority.\textsuperscript{63} This statement of objects and aims, however, was given to the Samoans as the fa'avae, the foundation. To them the adoption of this document and its conveyance to the Administrator was the final step in the process of formalising the existence of the dissident movement. They took this document as now conferring legitimacy - according to the European way - on the movement's opposition to the Administration. In their view the Mau had become a constituted authority in its own right.

This view was certainly reinforced by the organisational structure which was established to coordinate the activities of the dissidents. A Mau office, staffed by full-time secretary Mata'u Karauna and a few volunteers, was established in the building which housed the head office of Nelson's firm in Apia. The 'official' business of the Mau was conducted through this office: on one hand it sent out to the villages

\textsuperscript{62} Copies of this petition and Richardson's comments are found in A.O. 25/1-1.

\textsuperscript{63} Nelson to Administrator (with encls.), 23 Mar. 1927; A.O. 25/1-1.
reports on the deliberations of the committees, instructions and propaganda while on the other it received and recorded money contributions from the Mau supporters. In operation on the national level, the Mau resembled the organisation of the Administration, and in the villages it was readily taken by Mau supporters as an alternative government; a view which members of the Citizens' Committee made no attempt to change.

The last significant activity of this promotion campaign was the launching in late May of the Samoa Guardian, a weekly newspaper with a Samoan supplement which carried the emotionally-laden title of 'Ole Matua Tausi' (The nurtured parent). Although strictly speaking it was not a Mau newspaper in that the Mau as an organisation did not hold any shares in it and had no literary involvement in its production, it was a Mau newspaper in every other respect. Nelson and his firm held most of the shares; Edwin Gurr, member of the Citizens' Committee, was the Managing Director and Editor; and the objective was clearly to promote the dissident cause largely by attacking the Administration. As a propaganda medium it was an outstanding success amongst the Samoans because the written word in a readily acceptable form - newspaper as compared to circular - added greater conviction and credibility to its stories.

All these activities gave a tremendous boost to the cause of the Mau. They presented a strong impression of exuberance, direction and commitment which in themselves constituted a powerful inducement to consolidate or to join the Mau ranks. During these first few months the Mau supporters in the villages needed just such activities to offer

as tangible examples to justify and reinforce their newly-adopted stand. Yet it appears clear that Nelson promoted these activities not for the mere sake of strengthening the movement but more to create a position of strength from which he could negotiate with the New Zealand authorities. He seemed to believe that if it was clearly demonstrated that the opposition was widespread amongst the Samoans, the authorities would grant some of the Mau's requests, and he thought that such a favourable response would afford him room to counsel cessation of the Mau, without losing credibility and before it developed completely out of his control. He informed the Minister that the object of the Citizens' Committee was to 'see New Zealand's administration in Samoa firmly established in the confidence and the goodwill of the inhabitants'. And he repeatedly asked for an investigation of the Administration, in the confident belief that such an investigation would uncover the 'true' situation which prompted their complaints and would lead to remedial action. Nelson's political judgement however was defective. In his haste to consolidate the 'concessions' he believed he had won in New Zealand, he had thrown caution to the wind and challenged the foundation of Richardson's administration, without first preparing an alternative ground to fall back on. When his gamble failed, he was stranded and he discovered that he had gone too far to pull back. Certainly the Mau supporters would not be able to give up now.

The unfavourable response from New Zealand to Nelson's requests for an investigation of the Samoa Administration resulted largely from its acceptance of Richardson's assurances that the whole of Samoa was 'solidly loyal' except for Nelson and a few disgruntled

Samoans in his pay. As for the increased interest and involvement of the Samoans in the conflict, Richardson explained to the Minister that this was not due to any real dissatisfaction with the Administration. Rather it was the result of a tradition of political divisiveness which made Samoans particularly excitable when subjected to disruptive influences. This tradition, he said, had been at the heart of all political upheavals in Samoa's past and the 'self-centred, irresponsible', local white residents had always provided the undesirable influences as they were doing now. Furthermore, the Samoans 'were born intriguers and agitators [who] seem to enjoy holding fonos [sic] and discussing political questions in preference to working on their plantations'.

For several reasons Richardson believed that the agitation would not succeed. First he thought the Faipule held a strong influence in their districts; secondly he felt that 99.5% of the Samoans were unsympathetic towards the Citizens' Committee, whose members he alleged knew that the Samoans did not trust them and would never trust the commercial community of Apia to look after their interests; thirdly he believed the Samoans would see through the 'selfish designs of the white agitators' as they did in Tate's time and would then reject them. And finally he said that the Samoans, even the few who had been influenced by the Citizens' Committee, were in fact:

not really disloyal to the government but enjoy taking occasional trips to Apia and being treated as of importance by receiving the confidence of certain Europeans and taking back to their villages the latest news which during this wet season while they are confined for long periods to their fales [sic] gives added interest to their usual occupation under such circumstances of discussing the latest village scandal or rumour.

67 Administrator to Minister, 2 Feb. 1927, A.O. 25/1-1.
There was certainly a grain of truth in Richardson's analysis of the situation. Unfortunately his evaluation was motivated by contempt and an obvious desire to belittle. He never managed to rise above this level and give himself a chance of judging the situation in a more reasonable frame of mind. If he had, he might have realised that through his insistence on all Samoan views and complaints being channelled through the Faipule he had denied the rest of the population the recognition for which they craved and which the Apia dissidents were providing. He might even have seen that the increased Samoan interest in the confrontation was not due to the exaggerated rhetoric of the Citizens' Committee but rather to specifically Samoan considerations and the developing struggle within the villages.

As a result of Richardson's assessment of the situation at this time, his response to the dissidents' challenge was woefully inadequate. On the Samoan side for example, apart from dealing with the six members of the Mau komiti in January, he confined himself to producing four circulars in which he confirmed government's faith in the Faipule, and demanded an apology from those dissidents who had criticised them. Since dissatisfaction with the Faipule was widespread and the Faipule themselves as well as other Samoan officials were, during this period, complaining that their authority and government's orders were being openly rejected, these circulars tended to inflame the situation rather than bring about a conciliation. In the fourth of these circulars - 26 March 1927 - the Samoans were told that a law had been passed prohibiting both Europeans and Samoans from undermining or exciting disaffection against the Faipule and other Samoan officials.

Bell (Savai'i) to SNA, 15 Jan. 1927; Administrator to Bell, 8 Feb. 1927; Toelupe's address-in-reply, Fono a Faipule, Dec. 1926: A.O. 25/1-1.
The law referred to was the Maintenance of Authority in Native Affairs Ordinance 1927, which Richardson, in arguing for its imposition, had assured the New Zealand government would 'quickly clear the air as far as the natives are concerned and the Samoans will not support Nelson and the Citizens Committee any more'. It was an empty statement, as was his declaration in late March that 'The trouble may now be considered at an end'. The ordinance in fact came too late in the progress of political affairs to be of much value; the Samoans did not bother about it, and the rapidly developing conflict, now spreading to the villages, created so much disorganisation from government's viewpoint that it was unenforceable. Thus while the opposition forces daily gathered increasing strength and support, Richardson did nothing effective to counter it either by asserting government's authority with decisive action or by giving the dissidents' case reasonable consideration.

VI

When Norsworthy arrived in Samoa on 2 June 1927 for his long-awaited visit, the Mau was well established. Even then, a display of statesmanship on his part could have provided the guidance and direction needed to set the country on the path of reconciliation. Such could be reasonably expected of a Minister in a crisis situation, but it soon became clear that Norsworthy was not up to the task. He listened only to Richardson and accepted the Administrator's view of the situation.

69 Administrator to Minister, 8 Feb. 1927, A.O. 25/1-1.
70 Administrator to Minister, 23 Mar. 1927, A.O. 25/1-1.
Consequently, when he finally met a deputation from the discontented groups after being in Samoa for over a week, he reprimanded them in the strongest terms as he repeated the views and accusations which Richardson had made against them over the months since the confrontation began the previous October. In a cable to the Prime Minister the day after this meeting, Norsworthy summed up the meeting - the position he had adopted and the conclusions he had reached:

European Citizens' Committee limited to Nelson, Williams, Westbrook, Smyth, Gurr and Meredith who are deliberately working to ferment native disaffection. Interview yesterday convinced me they have succeeded in disturbing large number of natives who were organised to demonstrate outside Administration office. Past history of Western Samoa and recent events in American and Western Samoa proves that native political disaffection has dangerous possibilities ... Real demand is for full rights of self government for Europeans and halfcastes in Western Samoa which in the present social and political development of the native people is a monstrous proposal and so I told deputation. Natives in the movement are Nelson's dupes whom he has misled by his misrepresentations and more material inducements using his network of stores for this purpose ... I informed European Committee I regarded their efforts to disaffect and disunite the fine race like the Samoans as criminal and deserved only to be dealt with as a crime ... I finally warned European Committee that agitation must cease and that I would allow them reasonable time to undo the harm already caused falling which the N.Z. Government would take whatever action necessary to end their activities.71

What this summary did not convey to the Prime Minister - perhaps he guessed at it anyway because Norsworthy had been a ministerial colleague for several years - 'was that his Minister lacked manners; a deficiency which from the Samoan viewpoint was as serious as his lack of political judgement. A participant in the meeting between Norsworthy and the dissident leaders noted that 'Neither the tone nor the appearance of the Minister was impressive';72 but he was being polite. While

71 Norsworthy to EA (for PM), 12 June 1927, A.O. 25/1-2.
72 F.D. Baxter, 'Collection of material ...', p. 75.
Nelson on behalf of the dissidents' deputation tried to respond to his statement, No.sworthy kept up a barrage of petty interjections which the Samoan matai present, brought up in a culture where politeness, respect and dignity were requirements of the highest importance, found most distasteful. And when they themselves tried to speak, they were rudely interrupted without due regard to the standing of their titles or the mamalu (dignity) of the aiga, villages and districts which they represented. That ministerial display of boorishness guaranteed as far as the Samoans were concerned continuation of the Mau.

Samoan considerations too - for example withdrawal of recognition from the opposition party in a conflict - determined the nature of Mau activities while No.sworthy was in Samoa. During King's birthday celebrations in the first week of June, the Mau held its own sports festival at Lepea in opposition to the official sports meeting at Apia Park, while the Administrator's traditional ball at Vailima was matched by one at Tuaefu. The Mau komiti had insisted on these separate functions. To maintain their 'separateness' in the streets of Apia, while at the same time respond to newspaper reports and government propaganda which claimed that the Mau was made up of only a few disgruntled Samoans, the Mau komiti required all Mau supporters to wear purple ribbons on their shirts, or use purple turbans as head wear. The komiti also persuaded the papalagi dissidents to decorate their cars in purple colours. Finally the komiti organised a group of over 2,000 Mau supporters to gather outside the Central Office building on 11 June and offer tapuai (spiritual encouragement) - an essential part of any Samoan undertaking -

---

73 See: Record of meeting between Hon. W. No.sworthy and dissidents' deputation (11 June 1927), A.O. 25/1-2.
for the success of the fono between their representatives and the Minister. Nelson had opposed this demonstration, but the Mau komiti went ahead with it.  

During the meeting, Norsworthy told Nelson and his delegation that he would not hesitate to take the most drastic steps 'to remove what might easily become a festering wound on the body politic of Samoa' and the following day he recommended to the Prime Minister that the Samoan Immigration Consolidation Order 1924 be amended to facilitate the deportation of Europeans by Order-in-Council, and specifically to allow Gurr - 'the real power behind this agitation' according to Richardson - to be deported immediately: 'Drastic action is the only cure if Nelson and associates persit [sic] in agitation'. Coates immediately had the relevant Order amended and told Norsworthy to warn Nelson and those associated with him to 'abstain from their present conduct' or be deported.

Norsworthy accordingly warned Nelson and the other papalagi members of the Citizens' Committee who vigorously protested their innocence of the allegations which Richardson told them had necessitated those measures; but they nonetheless ceased their open association with the Mau. On the Samoan side, Richardson arraigned Faumuina and

---

75 Record of meeting between Hon. W. Norsworthy and dissidents' deputation (11 June 1927), A.O. 25/1-2.
76 Norsworthy to EA, 12 June 1927, A.O. 25/1-2.
77 Coates to Norsworthy, 14 June 1927, A.O. 25/1-2.
78 Minister to Nelson, 13 June 1927; Nelson to Administrator, 17 June 1927; Citizens Committee to Administrator, 18 June 1927: A.O. 25/1-2. This file contains many more letters exchanged between Richardson, Nelson and other dissident 'whites' over this issue.
Lagolago - 'the chief agents of Nelson and his party ... who have been very active fomenting discontent amongst the Natives ... and [who] were being used merely as tools of Mr Nelson and his Committee'\(^{79}\) - before the Fono a Faipule on 14 June, castigated them for 'agitating the Samoans' and ordered them to disabuse the people gathered in Vaimoso and Lepea of 'lies told them about government', and to disperse them to their villages. They were given three days to carry out the orders, and when at the end of that period they reported that their efforts had been unsuccessful, they were banished to Apolima island.\(^{80}\) As for the rest of the Mau komiti, Richardson hoped that the banishment of Faumuina and Lagolago would frighten them back to their villages, but after waiting for a few days and finding that they had no intention of moving, he issued banishment orders under the provisions of the Samoan Offenders Ordinance 1922, expelling 36 of them to their villages.\(^{81}\)

On 15 June, Richardson released a Proclamation notifying the amendment to the Samoa Immigration Order and notifying also the warning to Nelson and the other papalagi leaders, as well as the demands made of Faumuina and Lagolago. Three days later, he formally requested Gurr's immediate deportation on the grounds that his articles in the Samoa Guardian showed that he had not heeded the Minister's warning. The following week, he further recommended that Nelson and S.V. Mackenzie - a local afakasi trader who apparently declared publicly that he had effective ways of spreading propaganda amongst Samoans - be deported also.\(^{82}\)

\(^{79}\) Administrator to Minister, 24 June 1927, A.O. 25/1-2.

\(^{80}\) Administrator to Minister, 15 June 1927 and 24 June 1927; Faumuina and Lagolago to Administrator, n.d.; Braisby to Sec. to Admin, 24 June 1927: A.O. 25/1-2.

\(^{81}\) Administrator to Minister, 24 June 1927; A/Administrator to Minister, 1 July 1927; A.Ô. 25/1-2.

\(^{82}\) Administrator to Minister, 18 June 1927 and 24 June 1927: A.O. 25/1-2.
Richardson once again assured the New Zealand government that the measures he had taken would return the country to conditions which prevailed before October 1926, but stressed that the 'European agitators' must be punished after he heard from the authorities in New Zealand that they preferred deportation after court proceedings and that in any case he must provide specific reasons and tender solid supporting evidence before the deportations he had recommended could be considered.83 The Administrator was unshakable in his repeated view that the Samoans were contented with his government; that the agitation was due solely to the machinations of Nelson and his papalagi associates, and therefore once those papalagi were punished the conflict would end: 'I am informed that the European Committee wish to get the Natives to carry on this agitation independently, but I know this is impossible. The Natives have not been and are not now discontented excepting those disaffected by Mr Nelson's propaganda. They are, normally a happy and contented people and have full confidence in the Government. The recent agitation was solely caused by Mr Nelson and his colleagues'.84 He was deluding himself; all the evidence at the time pointed to the Samoans assuming open control of the dissident movement and they had clearly indicated that not only would they defy government authority, but they would also abandon the constitutional approach adopted by the dissident papalagi, if it did not suit their purposes.85

83 PM to Administrator, 30 June 1927, EA to Administrator, 29 June 1927: A.O. 25/1-2.
84 Administrator to Minister, 24 June 1927, A.O. 25/1-2.
When Faumuina and Lagolago - assisted by Nelson - conveyed to a Mau fono in Lepea on 14 June the Administrator's orders to disperse, and urged compliance with those orders, the fono agreed to the majority of supporters returning to their villages, but would not consider persuading the Mau komiti to disperse. The reason was simple: the Mau komiti was made up of representatives sent by districts to represent them in Apia, and only the districts could alter that position. As these representatives told Richardson in the very first letter they wrote him since the beginning of the confrontation:

The Mau was not founded by Faumuina and Lagolago, but they took part as members of the Committee so elected by Western Samoa. Therefore they can only obey your orders but they cannot disperse the people or alter the wish of the people which they represent.

This message conveyed the essence of the fa'a Samoa basis of the Mau. The Mau komiti was comprised of representatives, chosen according to Samoan practices, who were in Apia to carry out the wishes of their respective villages and districts; it was not a collection of individuals with freedom to express personal opinions or make individual decisions on matters concerning the Mau. As representatives, each would ensure that his village or district received due respect and recognition in Mau affairs, while all would be subject to the combined opinion of the districts, as expressed in the Mau komiti consensus, the ruling decision for the Mau. Judging by their response to the Mau throughout the confrontation, especially with regard to banishments and deportations, government authorities clearly failed to appreciate this reality or otherwise ignored it, and instead based their actions on the

---


87 Mau representatives to Administrator, 21 June 1927, A.O. 25/1-2.
mistaken perception that the Mau was controlled by one leader or another. Not unexpectedly therefore, banishing, deporting or imprisoning Mau representatives had little effect on the Mau; villages and districts simply sent replacements and the Mau komiti rearranged itself and kept on with its work.

When the banishment orders were served on the 36 members of the Mau komiti they ignored them and when two komiti members - Tagaloa and Fuataga - were charged in court for disobeying these orders, Tagaloa told the judge that he would not obey any orders from the Administrator or the court, while Fuataga 'insolently told the Chief Judge that he could not give any promise to appear in Court' when the case was recalled. While this case was before the court in Apia, Richardson was conducting an official malaga in Upolu during the last week of June, in what he believed would be the final formality in settling the conflict as far as the Samoans were concerned. In fact, he encountered such open defiance and disrespectful behaviour that a similar malaga to Savai'i was cancelled.

The Administrator's optimistic view of the situation as regarding the Samoans was not supported by events which followed the Minister's visit. From Savai'i, District Inspector Henry Buse reported that when he arrived at the village of Lano on 17 June to inspect the village and its plantations, a fono was held and it reached the decision that:

they would not obey any Government instructions or laws, and that it was of no use for the Pulenu'u, Pulefa'atoaga or myself to give any orders because they would not obey them - they would please themselves

---

88 A/Administrator to Minister, 1 July 1927, A.O. 25/1-2.

what they did ... Practically the same thing happened at the next village, Saipipi, and at this village I was informed that they would not take any beetles to the present Pulenu'u, but would select their own Pulenu'u and give them to him. As far as I can gather this is the position practically right from Pu'apu'a to Papa.\(^{90}\)

On the other hand, just before he left Apia for his Upolu malaga, Richardson received a cable from Mata'aafa, the Faipule of Aleipata informing him that 'the people of Aleipata in the Mau said they were instructed by their leaders not to attend your reception; do not obey Govt. officials; do not clean villages or plantations; do not search any beetles; do not pay Govt. tax etc.; but appoint their own Pulenu'u and run their own show. Two fautasi left Apia to the Mau today'.\(^{91}\) Richardson's reply to this message revealed some of the grounds on which he based his optimism concerning his ability to influence the Samoans: 'Give fautasi crews order from me not to leave Aleipata. All ali'i and faipule in district must attend my fono and put their complaints to me. Tell them not to disgrace Aleipata and the good name of Samoa'.\(^{92}\) While Samoans certainly held Richardson in the highest regard during his first years in the country, and they did in that time proudly follow his instructions, that regard had steadily dwindled since October 1926, and all but disappeared as a result of Norsworthy's ill-mannered behaviour. The Samoans had witnessed the highest ranking representative of the New Zealand government to visit Samoa since the beginning of the Mau, insolently flout the requirements of respect and recognition - these applied fully in fono even when facing opponents or lower status groups - and as a result, they now saw

\(^{90}\) District Inspector Henry Buse to Resident Commissioner, 19 June 1927, A.O. 25/1-2. Pu'apu'a to Papa refers to the north coastline of Savai'i, i.e. virtually half of that island.

\(^{91}\) Mata'aafa to Administrator, 25 June 1927, A.O. 25/1-2.

\(^{92}\) Administrator to Mata'aafa, 27 June 1927, A.O. 25/1-2.
government's response to the Mau largely in terms of insults to titles, aiga, villages, districts and country - that is, to fa'a Samoa. In these circumstances it would have been a 'disgrace' not to reject government's authority. This development was a major contributing factor to the flood of Samoan support for the Mau following Norsworthy's visit and resulted in the situation which District Inspector Buse found in Savai'i and Richardson himself faced on his malaga in Upolu.

In Apia, the confrontation between government and the Mau komiti quickly came to a head. Twice - 21 June and 25 June - the komiti wrote to the Administrator requesting a meeting between himself and its representatives, and impressing also on him the fact that the komiti was the executive body of the Mau. Richardson responded by instructing komiti members to disperse and meet him in their respective districts when he called there on his official malaga; they ignored those instructions and he issued banishment orders against them. They ignored these orders too and told Richardson that they would no longer bother with government:

While we have been supporting the 'Mau' in order to bring before Your Excellency matters about which we are dissatisfied, Your Excellency has absolutely disregarded us (the whole country). Therefore, we, the proper representatives of the whole country will no longer bother with matters of government ... We formed the 'Mau' and continued to support all the laws of the Government for the past seven months, but in doing this we have belittled ourselves in your opinion. Therefore, we have decided to remain gathered in Apia ... and it shall not be possible for anyone to depart until we receive the answer we are waiting for ... if any of the people in the country disobeys any orders, and Your Excellency deems it right to punish them, THROW THE PUNISHMENT ON OUR SHOULDERS, THAT WILL BE ON THE WHOLE COUNTRY. [Their emphasis].

93 Chosen representatives of the whole country to Richardson, 5 July 1927, A.O. 25/1-2. A few changes to the official translation were made by the writer in this quotation.
This declaration of the intention to defy government and to go their own way, 'formalised' for the Mau at the national level a development which had been in progress in the villages since the formation of the Samoan Committee in late 1926. It was also a rejection of the constitutional methods advocated by Nelson and the dissident papalagi. This letter therefore marked two very important developments in the conflict: the formal commitment by the Mau to the concept of self-government; and the assumption by the Samoans of full control of the dissident movement. From that time, matters of purely European concern were relegated and not bothered about, and Samoan considerations came to dominate the opposition movement completely; the Mau komiti and the Mau itself became the focal points of opposition instead of the Citizens' Committee and the Welfare League of Samoa.

With Samoans in control of the opposition movement, a new sense of urgency and drama entered the confrontation. In a large number of villages, Mau factions had become dominant and had assumed control of village affairs, incorporating in their ranks government officials who wanted to join the Mau and isolating those who wanted to stay with government. In these areas, rejection of government authority quickly became a normal occurrence. From around the country, reports indicating a dramatic increase in cases of open defiance of government authority, poured into Richardson's office and in the third week of August the Resident Commissioner in Savai'i wrote: 'I regret to report that the Samoans on this island are in a mutinous state'. He referred to a case of a Samoan young man who escaped from police custody and whom the police

94 See A.O. 25/1-2 and A.O. 25/1-3 for these reports.
95 Resident Commissioner to Sec. to Admin., 24 Aug. 1927, A.O. 25/1-3.
in Savai'i had had to give up after four attempts to arrest him had been resisted by Samoans who now threatened violence if the police persisted. He said the Samoans were settling their troubles their own way and had desisted from using the court for settlement of disputes and were also refusing to accept court summonses and court decisions. He feared that a clash between the Samoans in the Mau and those who supported government could occur at any moment and he felt that such a clash would not be confined to a village or district. He concluded by saying that, 'there is great tension here and the slightest thing will cause serious consequences. The present situation is not likely to continue without loss of life'.

In the event, no serious clashes occurred between the Mau and Malo (government) supporters either at that time or at any other time during the active phase of the Mau. This lack of violence was remarkable given that the situation was very tense and given also that the Samoans were not averse to resorting to violence especially if the dignity of their titles, aiga and so forth were at risk. Since government had no effective way of preventing a clash between the Samoan factions, we have to look to the fa'a Samoa for an explanation. In the process, we would also discover some of the answers to the question as to why some Samoans supported government.

Malo supporters were mainly people related to government officials. These officials had gained their posts by virtue of the high rank of their matai titles - most of the Faipule came into this category - or as a result of strong personalities, notable personal achievement or good fortune. Through their official positions, these

Ibid.
individuals had exerted influence in the affairs of their villages and districts, and had assisted relatives and friends. Ultimately that influence was used to try and improve the rank of the officials' aiga titles and perhaps the standing of their respective villages in district hierarchies. Government posts therefore became entangled in the fa'a Samoa, with the result that the obligation on the part of the officials and their relatives to protect their titles, aiga and so on, became extended to include protection of their government positions and government itself. This development was accepted by the rest of the community including Mau supporters, even if they opposed government and resented the influence wielded by officials. In the sense therefore of support for government by Samoans being expected and acceptable in fa'a Samoa, it did not constitute a major explosive issue amongst Samoans.

Similar considerations applied to Mau supporters. Many individuals in villages and districts possessed contending equality status with regard to government posts and they saw in the Mau an opportunity to challenge the influence of government officials and to promote their own interests. It was not unusual in fa'a Samoa terms for these people to exploit the opportunities presented by the Mau, and of course supporting the Mau meant tying Mau interests to those of their titles, aiga, villages and districts.

A crucial factor in curbing violence was matai control. In each village, the matai fono - whether it be Mau or Malo orientated - clamped down very heavily on the incidence of violent clashes, because such incidents reflected badly on the way it was exercising its powers; and the issue of matai control was far more important than the Mau or the Malo. This matter of matai control, particularly in the villages,
was of course one of the major issues in the conflict; Mau supporters alleging that Richardson's changes in the administration of Samoan affairs as well as his land individualisation scheme compromised the autonomy of matai fono in villages and districts, while Malo supporters argued that the fa'a Samoa had withstood outside intrusions in the past and would do so again without the necessity for a Mau.97

The case of Malietoa Tanumafili needs mentioning in connection with his lack of enthusiasm for the Mau. In Samoan tradition, the place of the Malietoa title at the top rank of the politico-ceremonial structure was totally secure. Support for the Malo or the Mau by the titleholder would not have altered that place. Being at the top, it could not be improved on; while the thousands of Samoans - Malo as well as Mau supporters - who belonged to the eight Aiga of Malietoa as well as others whose titles were defined in terms of connections with the Malietoa title ensured that the place of the Malietoa title was maintained. In government circles, Malietoa Tanumafili was the senior Fautua - that is, he held the highest ranked official post available to a Samoan. Since the New Zealand takeover of Samoa in 1914, successive Administrators - Logan, Tate and Richardson - had treated him with respect and had often sought and abided by his advice on Samoan affairs. In contrast, Tuimalealiifano had not been treated by the authorities the same way as they did Malietoa, and had since his appointment as Fautua in 1916 been involved in several clashes with government. Statuswise

97 Information from Va'i of Manono. Of all the villages and districts which supported government, Manono was the most united and solid in its support. That support however did not override fa'a Samoa requirements; she continued with her ancient role of hosting parties of Samoans travelling between Upolu and Savai'i, and assisted these groups regardless of whether they were Mau or Malo.
therefore Malietoa Tanumafili was at the top in both the traditional as well as the governmental sphere, so that in terms of Samoan preoccupation with status, his position could hardly be improved, in the circumstances prevailing at the time.

The central question in the minds of most people with regard to Malietoa and the Samoans who supported government however was the emotional one of patriotism. The Mau, it was said, was a Samoan independence movement, and therefore all patriotic Samoans should have supported it. This proposition of course was too simplistic and disregarded a host of crucial fa'a Samoa considerations some of which were mentioned above. What Malietoa thought about this specific point is not known, but when a Mau delegation requested him in March 1928 to join them, he turned down the request and advised the Mau leaders to return to their villages and districts, and ensured that they exercised full control there. On the other hand, he did not put much time and effort into attempts to persuade Mau supporters to give up the Mau, indicating that he was fully aware of the fa'a Samoa considerations behind the Mau, including the obligation to regain control of the country, and he accepted that Mau supporters had quite properly decided - even though he disagreed with their judgement - that the Mau was the best way to pursue that obligation. Instead he concentrated his efforts in trying to keep the peace, and as the Mau leaders always accorded him recognition due to the Malietoa title, he was most successful in his endeavours.

Richardson's response to the rapid escalation of open defiance

of government authority was to issue banishment orders against more Mau leaders and to remove their matai titles. Between 2-28 July he issued 49 banishment orders\(^99\) - more than were issued during the rest of the years of the Mau/Malo conflict. In a situation where government did not possess the effective means to assert its authority, and where banishment orders had been demonstrated - only a few weeks previously - to be a useless weapon against Mau leaders, issuing these orders was an invitation to further insult; and he got what he asked for.

When the first orders were served, the recipients allowed themselves to be removed by the police to the destination villages stipulated on their orders. This development was resented by Mau supporters in villages and districts who had successfully defied government authority in their own areas, and who were conducting their own affairs. They sent instructions to their representatives in Apia not to submit to banishment orders and they sent reinforcements to assist their representatives carry out their instructions.\(^100\) When a police contingent went to Matautu village during the first week of August to enforce banishment orders served on several Savai'i Mau leaders, they were told that the orders had been rejected and furthermore, they could not arrest the matai concerned.\(^101\)

Faced with a large number of Mau supporters, the police were unable to effect the arrests. For two days they tried, but with more Mau supporters pouring into Apia in anticipation of a major clash, the police had little chance of succeeding. With tension mounting, Malietoa

\(^100\) Information from Taulealea Tualauniu.
\(^101\) Braisby to Sec. to Admin., 5 Aug. 1927, A.O. 25/1-3.
stepped in and persuaded the Mau leaders gathered at Matautu to meet Chief Judge Woodward who was then acting as Secretary to Administration. Woodward came to the fale where the Mau matai were staying and told them that there would be no further banishment orders if they kept the peace, and furthermore the Mau could put its complaints against government through him. With Malietoa's assistance, the Mau leaders undertook to keep the peace and they also agreed to choose a delegation to meet Woodward and discuss their complaints.\(^\text{102}\)

Although Richardson would not admit to it, Woodward's negotiations with the Mau leaders meant that government had been forced to recognise the Mau komiti as the controlling executive body of the opposition movement. On a broader perspective, this whole episode confirmed, particularly amongst Samoans, the Mau's position of strength and government's powerlessness to do anything about it. In these circumstances there was very little chance of a settlement being reached without some drastic action on the part of government. The two alternatives it had were to use overwhelming force to stamp out the Mau, or otherwise make a sincere and determined effort to discover the root causes behind the Mau and find an effective remedy for them.

In the event, government took neither of these courses and instead enacted the Samoa Amendment Act 1927 - effective as from 5 August 1927 - allowing the Administrator to deport both papalagi and Samoans who in his opinion posed a threat to the welfare of the country. Government also appointed a Royal Commission to investigate the complaints made during the two combined public meetings in October

and November the previous year. The Royal Commission sat through September and October and its report, released in November completely exonerated Richardson and his Administration. Its findings did not have the slightest effect on the Mau, mainly because the Commission's attention was focused on matters which had little to do with the Mau as it existed in late 1927. In December, Richardson invoked the Samoa Amendment Act 1927 and served deportation orders on Nelson - exiled for five years - as well as Smyth and Gurr, each of whom was exiled for two years. Soon after these orders were served though, Mau supporters clearly indicated to Richardson that this measure would have little impact either on them or the Mau. On Richardson's request Nelson, accompanied by the Secretary of Native Affairs, met the Mau komiti and tried to persuade them to disperse all the Mau people gathered in Apia to their villages, but according to Baxter who was present, the Samoans 'refused to listen to Nelson's suggestions, and showed him scant courtesy'.

Once again Richardson's response had proven ineffective, and the New Zealand government clearly had to rethink its approach to the whole conflict before any progress towards settlement could be made. In the light of Richardson's failure to come to grips with the situation, government could look to introduce a new man as Administrator and hope that he could break through to the Mau and effect a conciliation.

103 F.D. Baxter, 'Collection of material ...', p. 121.
CHAPTER 4

THE ASSERTIVE YEARS: 1928/1929

At the beginning of 1928, the Mau was clearly the dominant party in Samoa, and a perceptive Baxter noted that the attitude of the Samoans in the Mau was that the dominant position they commanded was theirs by right; it was therefore the Administration which was being defiant and troublesome. But then he dropped back to the 'civilised' mentality:

The Administration was unable to function in native matters, the Mau defied and ignored the Administration with impunity. Mau meetings were held openly and insultingly around and in Apia and the Mau conducted itself generally in a manner to show that it regarded the Administration as nought and that it could and would do just as it liked.¹

This defiant demonstration of strength from the Mau Samoans, supported by numerous special reports available to Richardson, all stating that the Mau was under the control of the Samoans and would continue unabated after Nelson's deportation, quite failed to divert his attention from his obsession with the belief that the 'primitive and childish' Samoans would be lost without Nelson, and thus the Mau would collapse once he had gone. Accordingly he informed External Affairs that 'When the deportees leave, I anticipate complete although gradual break up of the Mau' and he hoped to get the Administration functioning fully within three months.²

In the event, he was proven wrong and had to call on the

¹ F.D. Baxter, 'Collection of material ...', p. 115.
assistance of warships from New Zealand. He left soon after at the end of his two-year extension and was replaced by Colonel S.S. Allen. The new Administrator was born in England in 1882 but emigrated with his family to New Zealand a few years later. His family had a strong background of service in public office: his father was a long-serving Liberal MP in England - for a brief period too he was a member of the New Zealand House of Representatives until he was unseated on petition - and his mother's father as well as his older brother were also MPs in the old country. He himself tried unsuccessfully to enter the New Zealand parliament in 1925 and two years later became mayor of the small town of Morrinsville, near his family property, in the North Island. He was educated in England - he graduated in Arts and Law from Cambridge - and at the outbreak of the war, he joined the New Zealand forces and was later promoted to command the Auckland regiment. He was wounded in combat and was twice decorated for bravery.  

Allen's approach to the Mau issue was essentially to avoid direct confrontation as much as possible but when necessary to move quickly and decisively to achieve an objective. These tactics in themselves hardly made an impression on the Mau, but with the passage of time the hostility between the Samoans themselves, particularly in the villages showed signs of dissipating and this gave hope to the Administration that the Mau might be brought to an end.

Within the Mau, the disagreements and the arguments inherent in any Samoan alliance of this nature became more exposed as the limelight shifted directly on to them without being diverted by Nelson. At this

---

period though, the dominant position they enjoyed overshadowed everything else, and the main task they faced was to retain the initiative in order to maintain that position.

I

On 13 January 1928, Nelson and Smyth left for New Zealand under deportation orders. Gurr, the other deportee, was expected to leave for American Samoa; he discovered, however, that he was not allowed into that Territory, and he therefore went to New Zealand on the next trip of the Tofua after being held under house arrest at the Malolelei retreat up on the hills.4

Before Nelson's departure there were rumours that the Samoans would try and prevent him from leaving. But on the day, only members of the Mau komiti numbering some thirty-five were present at the wharf to farewell him. The Mau had discussed the issue in several heated meetings with Atua, led by Leota Aoese of Solosolo village arguing that the deportees should be prevented from leaving. The majority view, however, was that there was nothing further that the three could usefully do in Samoa, and so it was decided to allow them to leave in peace.5

This decision, however, did not prevent a contingent of Mau supporters from Palauli district from parading through the main road in Apia 'singing defiant and obscene songs against government' the day

before Nelson and Smyth left. A few days earlier the same group had set off from Savai'i with the stated intention of landing and occupying Mulinu'u, but had been dissuaded from that course after Malietoa had warned the Mau leaders against it. Richardson called an enquiry into the parade episode, but the Palauli matai, Autagavaia and Lagaaia, who apparently led the march, refused to receive the summons to the enquiry, whereupon Richardson cabled External Affairs to send six policemen because he expected trouble when he carried out his intention of arresting the Palauli offenders, and recent experience had taught him that the Samoan policemen would be ineffective in arresting other Samoans. Unbelievably, Richardson was queried as to what authority he would make the arrest under, and he was disciplined enough a soldier to bother to reply. The requested policemen were sent, but J.G. Coates, the Minister of External Affairs, commented that he thought it was not a good move to arrest the Palauli matai since this would conflict with Richardson's intention of ending the Mau without the use of force, and also because many earlier offenders had not been arrested. Notwithstanding, Richardson was offered any further assistance he might need, including warships.

The Palauli insult struck at the very heart of the mamalu (dignity) of New Zealand as a country and as a people, for the object of the abuse was the tumutumuga (the summit) of her pride as it was represented in Samoa in the person and the office of the Administrator. Consequently

6 Administrator to EA, 16 Jan. 1928, A.O. 25/1-5.
8 Administrator to EA, 16 Jan. 1928, A.O. 25/1-5.
9 Coates to Administrator, 23 Jan. 1928, A.O. 25/1-5.
the Samoans expected a swift and comprehensive retaliation as demanded by fa'a Samoa conventions for such acts. But when the response came - a proposed enquiry which the Palauli leaders contemptuously brushed aside - it was pathetic; it would have been better if government had ignored the incident.

The total inadequacy of the government response to Papauli's crude assertion of the Mau's supremacy in Samoa marked what was possibly the lowest point to which New Zealand sank in her virtual capitulation to the Mau's ascendancy. During the German period in Samoa, a reported reference by a Samoan speaker in Savai'i to the person of the governor immediately led to his arrest. The man, Malaeulu of Amoa was later forcibly released from gaol by a group of matai. They had assumed that Malaeulu had been imprisoned as a result of involvement in certain trading proposals, and they felt that imprisonment for this reason was unjustified and wrong. However when they discovered that Malaeulu had been imprisoned as a consequence of an insult to the governor, they fully appreciated the situation and the utmost necessity of the government action and they therefore returned him, with apologies, to gaol.¹⁰

In the weeks preceding and immediately after the departure of Nelson, both the Mau and the Administration had engaged in moves to deal with the new situation. During the first two weeks of January, one of the Faipule from A'ana district, Aiono Aipovi, had under instructions from Richardson canvassed that whole district in an attempt to bring the Mau and non-Mau factions together in a fono at Leulumoega so that they

¹⁰ P.J. Hempenstall, Pacific Islanders under German Rule (Canberra, 1978), pp. 44/45. Hempenstall's interpretation of this incident differs somewhat from that given here.
might work out their differences. The Mau matai received Aiono in a way befitting his title and the position of his village of Fasito'outa in the fa'a Samoa. However they declined the invitation to a combined fono, and an initiative which Richardson had hoped would set a precedent for the rest of the country came to nothing.\(^\text{11}\)

The week following the deportees' departure, Richardson himself visited Fagamalo village, the administration headquarters in Savai'i, and held a fono with matai from Gagaemauga district - where Fagamalo is located - in an attempt to find a solution to the Mau/Malo conflict on that island. While the Administrator held his fono though, Mau supporters from villages in the vicinity of Fagamalo, who had declined to attend the fono, held a day of sports, feasting and dancing at Saleaula, the traditional political centre of that district and located close to Fagamalo.\(^\text{12}\) Prior to his departure for Savai'i Richardson had issued a public notice informing the Samoan people that now he had deported those responsible for creating the trouble in Samoa, the Samoans - whom he assured he did not blame since they were not to know that they were being exploited - should return to their villages and conduct their affairs according to the powers granted them in the Native Regulations Order of 1925. This public declaration that the Samoans were stupid, as well as confirmation of an Order whose contents were as much a specific and immediate cause of Samoan dissatisfaction as anything else, was hardly the appropriate issue on which to base a conciliation effort in the circumstances.


On his return from Savai'i he instructed the officials who dealt with Samoan affairs to call together all the Samoan officials on both Upolu and Savai'i so that he could personally impress on them the importance of performing their tasks with strength and determination. 'No one must be allowed to defy officials and the Government ... Laws must be obeyed. Happiness can only be obtained in a community where the people work and obey the law'.

In the meantime he despatched Iiga Pisa, one of the most widely respected Samoans and an official in the Department of Native Affairs, to the Pule centres of Safotulafai, Palauli and Satupa'itea, to try and persuade them into giving up the Mau by spreading government propaganda. As with Aiono in Aana, Iiga Pisa was well received in accordance with Samoan customs except in Palauli where the Mau matai refused to meet him. As for his message to abandon the Mau, it was politely but firmly rejected.

On the Mau side, there was also a great deal of activity although characteristically the Samoans were more concerned with the relationships between themselves and with exercising their prerogatives without bothering much about government. At a Mau Komiti meeting where it was decided to allow Nelson's deportation to proceed peacefully, it was suggested that Malietoa, Tuimalealiifano and Mata'afa should be persuaded to join the Mau, whereupon the inevitable rejoinder came: 'Why send for them? Are you not sons of the high chiefs and kings; leave them alone, we have quite a number of high chiefs in the Mau'.

---

13 Administrator to SNA and Resident Commissioner, 31 Jan. 1928, A.O. 25/1-5.
15 Secret report from a Samoan police operative re: Mau komiti meeting held at Matautu, 4 Jan. 1928, A.O. 25/1-4; Information from Pa'o of Asau, and Taito of Safotu, Savai'i.
situations at the national level, one of the roles of the high-ranking titles, particularly the Tama-aiga ones, is to provide a rallying point for the contestant parties; their presence imparts legitimacy, status and an impression of widespread support because they represent the mamalu (dignity) of major groups in society at the highest ceremonial level.

On another level of traditional politics, certain Pule centres sought to move beyond the stage where Pule and Tumua orators controlled Mau affairs in open fono, to the stage where they would actively consult between themselves at the traditional political centres before presenting what would virtually be final decisions to Mau fono for formal approval. After its demonstration in Apia, the Palauli party took the unusual step of proceeding directly to Lufilufi, several miles down the east coast. Before leaving Savai'i, Palauli and its Pule neighbour of Satupaitea had met and decided on this course of action and a Satupaitea contingent met up with the Palauli group at Lufilufi. Between the two Pule, they tried to persuade Lufilufi into forming an alliance. The proposal had a two-fold objective: the first was to commit this Tumua more fully to the Mau and the second was to form a united opinion between the three of them on all issues, which would be very difficult to resist within the councils of the Mau. Lufilufi, which although sympathetic towards the Mau had shown no great interest in the conflict, was apparently unsympathetic to the Pule proposals, perhaps because it felt it was being used or perhaps because it simply wanted to keep its options free.16

Although these issues involving the Tama-aiga and Tumua ma Pule

were of far-reaching importance to the Samoans, they went by without attracting much attention, particularly from the officials. Literally all the attention was focused during this period on a Mau measure which was relatively unimportant in terms of the Mau position at the time and in terms also of significance within the fa'a Samoa. This was the ban imposed by the Mau on its supporters against buying goods - except soap and kerosene - at the big stores in town, and the institution of a Mau 'police' to try and enforce that ban.

The final decision on these measures was taken at a general Mau fono held at Vaimoso on 11 January - two days before Nelson and Smythe left for New Zealand. The same fono also decided that as soon as Mau lafoga (contributions) scheduled for February were paid in, a sa or ban would be placed on copra cutting, subject however to the specific needs and circumstances of each village community. On the issue of farewelling the deportees, it was resolved that members of the Mau komiti only would represent the Mau on the occasion. Finally it was decided that after the departure of Nelson and Smythe, all Mau supporters from outside villages then in Apia would return to their respective communities, leaving in Apia five members from each district to represent it on the Mau komiti. 17

The boycott on the stores and the appearance of the Mau police should not have come as a surprise - the Mau had not made any attempt at hiding its intentions over these matters, and reports from reliable sources reaching government had been full of them for the previous several weeks. Richardson had made enquiries and had discovered that uniforms for the rumoured Mau police were in fact being prepared by

Nelson's company. The latter was confronted and he assured officials that he did not know anything about a Mau police, but that if uniforms were indeed being prepared by his firm he would prevent their issue. It appears likely that Nelson was against the formation of a Mau police and the boycott of Apia stores and had warned the Mau leaders accordingly, in spite of allegations to the contrary by the authorities. On the day of his departure, though, three men dressed in the Mau police uniform - a violet lavalava with a white stripe around the bottom part, a violet turban and a white shirt or long-sleeved singlet - wore it in public for the first time when they provided Nelson and Smyth with an escort at the wharf. Nelson was as powerless as Richardson in influencing the Mau if it was of a different opinion. Several months later when the Mau considered reinstituting a boycott of shops, Nelson in a report from London to the **papalagi** Citizens' Committee wrote,

The decision of the Mau [to reinstitute the boycott of stores] is not to be wondered at, but I am very sorry to learn of it. Not because of any loss in trade which my own firm may suffer as a consequence as much as I think that a boycott is an ill-advised move, more especially if the Mau again resort to picketing the shops and thus produce another clash with the Police. Furthermore, the boycott can produce no satisfactory results to the cause of the Samoan people. Any move by the Mau likely to cause a clash with the Police or the Government is to be regretted. We are, however, powerless to prevent such actions on the part of the Samoan people, even though it suits the Government's ticket to blame us for them.

A hundred men were appointed to form the first group of Mau police and on Saturday 21 January they made their appearance on the

---

Apia streets in parties of three to five. During the following weeks many more appeared and the numbers were estimated at over three hundred. As against this group, government had four papalagi policemen and about twenty-five Samoan constables. Despite their overwhelming numbers, the Mau policy avoided creating any situation that could result in a clash with government police. They moved along when requested by shopkeepers and government forces alike and they concerned themselves largely with informing Samoan shoppers of the ban imposed by the Mau and questioned their purchases, apparently with the view of applying sanctions through the relevant village fono. The Chief of Police reported that 'They maintain a dignified, quiet but nevertheless aggressive appearance', adding however that so far — after three weeks — the activities of the Mau police did not justify serious attention by his forces.21 Nonetheless, this Mau initiative added fuel to the growing fears amongst certain sections of the white community, that they faced a real threat of attack from the Mau supporters.

As the excitement over the boycott and the Mau police gathered pace daily, government made its first direct approach to the Mau leadership. On 31 January, the Secretary of Native Affairs wrote to twenty-four Mau leaders to meet the Faipule — then gathered at Mulinu'u — the following week, 'concerning the matter of the welfare of Samoa'. The reply came back that the Mau would tapuai, that is, they would offer spiritual encouragement, and wished the fono and the government good fortune; in short they would not attend. The invitation was reissued with the concession that the Administrator would meet them after their meeting with the Faipule if they wished. It was again rejected. A

21 Inspector of Police to Sec. to Admin., 8 Feb. 1928, A.O. 25/1-5.
delegation of four Faipule, high-ranking matai Tuatagaloa of Palealili, Toelupe of Malie, Leilua of Safotulafai and Aiono of A'ana went to Vaimoso to try and persuade the Mau to meet with the Faipule or the Administrator, but they were asked instead to join the Mau. Richardson then offered to meet the Mau without the Faipule, a dramatic backdown on his part, since one of the cornerstones of his Samoan policy had been that all Samoan affairs must be conducted through the Faipule. But the Mau leadership made a mockery of the Administrator by ignoring this sacrificial offer.  

The last straw was added when the Mau komiti formally replied in a letter to the overtures from the Faipule. The Faipule were told that their efforts to effect a settlement were not out of concern and love for Samoa but were motivated by a desire to satisfy the Administrator so that they could hold onto their posts; that they should have resigned long ago instead of continuing to advise the Administrator on the punishment of the Samoans. Lastly they confirmed that the Mau would not end regardless of what government did; at that moment though they were still awaiting a reply to their petition to the New Zealand government and were also petitioning the League of Nations.  

On receipt of this letter, Richardson immediately cabled External Affairs that all efforts at conciliation had failed and force was required to end the conflict: '... am convinced the Mau natives imagine they are so strong and Government weak and are too thoroughly

22 SNA/Mau leaders, 31 Jan. 1928; SNA/Mau leaders, 6 Feb. 1928; Mau komiti to SNA, 6 Feb. 1928; Administrator to Minister, 10 Feb. 1928; Administrator to Mau komiti, 20 Feb. 1928; Administrator to Minister, 21 Feb. 1928: A.O. 25/1-5.  

poisoned by propaganda to give in without resistance or settle down without display of force. I am sure it is in the best interests Mandate and will save trouble in the end if two or three warships despatched here at once to land small parties and temporarily isolate Apia while we disperse the Mau committee to their homes'. Meantime, Braisby devised a scheme for the protection of whites should any violence erupt before the warships arrived.

Exactly four weeks to the day after Nelson's departure, Richardson had to ask for warships; his boast that he could bring the Samoans to heel once Nelson's influence had been removed wholly dashed. Actually he was totally lost and just did not have any idea of what was going on. The Mau was controlled by Samoans who were fully aware that they held the dominant position and were exercising their prerogatives as appropriate in a conflict; in this situation, government's overtures amounted to inviting further insults and abuse.

Richardson's biggest hurdle was an inflexible mind in which were cemented notions of primitive natives who had no idea of what they wanted and were therefore easily exploited by unprincipled papalagi and afakasi like Nelson. He now blamed the activities of T.B. Slipper, legal adviser to the Mau, and Nelson's letters for the Mau's attitude towards government - an insult to the intelligence of the New Zealand leaders, who however did not appear to have any better appreciation of the situation themselves. The notions of the primitive native and the enlightened white were pervasive indeed amongst the papalagi.

At this period the Mau was very much on its own and keen to

24 Administrator to EA, 13 Feb. 1928, A.O. 25/1-5.
demonstrate that it could operate without Nelson, although this was probably a lesser consideration than the need to consolidate its position amongst its supporters as well as amongst the Samoan community at large. The boycott of the Apia stores can be best appreciated in this light. It was less an attempt to hurt government finances, than a demonstration to the Samoans that the Mau komiti was in control. Even A.L. Braisby, who was not credited with powers of perception by his own people, could see this; he reported of the boycott and the Mau policy, 'They are merely an impertinent sign of defiance to the Administration. A product of the Mau Committee - without sense or reason. A mark of the power and authority of the Mau - fa'a Samoa'. The boycott after all was only applied to the big stores along Beach Road - Nelson's company was the most seriously affected, largely because it had most of the Samoan trade - and all other stores including small ones just around the corner in Apia itself were unaffected.

II

On 21 February, the warships H.M.S. Diomede and H.M.S. Dunedin arrived at Apia. But instead of frightening the Samoans away from town as Richardson had hoped, more were drawn in from the villages. The evening of the same day, an extraordinary meeting of the Legislative Council - without the M.L.C.s Williams and Westbrooke, who left in protest at not having been given sufficient time to consider the proposals put to the Council - passed an Ordinance which empowered the Administrator to declare any area of Western Samoa a 'disturbed area'

25 Inspector of Police to Sec. to Admin., 8 Feb. 1928, A.O. 25/1-5.
and authorised him also to impose restrictions on activities within such areas as he thought were required for the maintenance of peace, law and order. The sub-districts of Vaimauga and Faleata, extending several miles either side of Apia along the coast and encompassing all inland Apia, were declared 'disturbed areas', and within these areas, Samoans were prohibited from carrying arms or weapons of any kind and no fono were to be held without the permission of the appropriate Faipule or Pulenu'u. In addition the wearing of the Mau police uniform, which had become a general Mau uniform, was outlawed, and Samoan malaga (visits) in any part of the Territory were subjected to prior Faipule permission. On the public notice proclaiming these measures, Richardson sought to make it clear that the armed forces were in Samoa not to fight the Samoans but to protect them and put an end to the state of lawlessness.26

These new measures however failed to make any impression on the Mau, which continued with its activities as if nothing had changed. As a consequence, two parties from the warships landed on Thursday 23 February and immediately rounded up about 250 Mau police who were on the Apia streets at the time. They all came quietly. On the way to the marshalling point, many more Mau supporters joined up, and by the time the group was transferred to Vaimea prison, a couple of miles inland of town, they numbered some four hundred. Later in the day the Chief Justice visited the prison and heard a count of nine charges, including seditious conspiracy, read out against the internees, who refused to enter a plea or to have legal counsel. The Chief Justice informed them that he took their attitude as signifying a plea of not guilty.

The following day about 200 more Mau men marched into Apia and

26 Administrator to EA, 21 Feb. 1928, A.O. 25/1-5.
gave themselves up to the armed forces, but Richardson ordered them transported several miles out and dropped off. After two days at Vaimea the internees were transferred to Mulinu'u as their large numbers and the rain had rendered the prison facilities inadequate. At Mulinu'u they stayed in the fale vacated the previous day by the Faipule. The next few days brought many more Mau supporters into Apia with the purpose of joining their detained brethren, but government forces prevented them from doing so. One of these was the Fautua Tuimalealiifano, who protested strongly to the Administrator over the internment of the Mau. He later went to Mulinu'u and apparently encouraged the internees to be strong in the Mau, whereupon Richardson decided that he would be dismissed as a Fautua but after the negotiations with the Mau were over.27

On 27 February the court sat at Mulinu'u, and although the Mau detainees repudiated government and otherwise showed indifference to the proceedings, the Chief Judge proceeded with the hearing and found all the Mau men present guilty of intimidation and of wearing the Mau uniform. The following day he sentenced each one to six months imprisonment on the first conviction. Within a few days though he was to regret, somewhat bitterly, this particular court session when he discovered that the prisoners came and went at Mulinu'u as they pleased. 'No suggestion was made to me before I passed sentence that the sentence could not be carried out' he wrote to the Administrator. 'Had any such been made I would never have invited this humiliation of authority'.28

27 Administrator to Minister, 28 Feb. 1928, A.O. 25/1-5; see also C.J. Woodward's report on the trial of Mau prisoners enclosed in Sec. to Admin., to EA, 9 Mar. 1928, A.O. 25/1-6.

28 Chief Justice Woodward to Administrator, 6 Mar. 1928, A.O. 25/1-6.
The Chief Judge felt that warders in charge of the prisoners should have been instructed to fire on escapees. He feared that the display of powerlessness by the authorities would make it impossible to hold any Samoan prisoner anywhere in the Territory in the future. The implications, however, of this 'powerlessness' were far wider than the holding of prisoners. To the Samoans, it amounted to almost criminal negligence concerning the matter of protecting one's position; they were only too ready to exploit to their advantage New Zealand's failure to protect its interests. After this demonstration of abject negligence, the rejection by the Mau of Richardson's attempts at conciliation was guaranteed, if it was not already assured before the arrival of the warships.  

The internment/imprisonment of these Mau men presented Richardson with the opportunity to make personal contact with them. Several times before he had asserted that if only he could effect such contact with members of the Mau komiti the conflict could be solved, but that the dissident whites had deliberately kept the Mau people away from him. Not altogether a convincing statement since, for one thing, his policy had been that the way to him was through the Faipule. In any case, here was his opportunity.

As soon as the court had finished with the Mau detainees Richardson offered them his solution for settling the conflict. He asked that the Mau be ended and asked also a Mau agreement to be given to the following:

(1) non-allowance of interference by whites in Samoan

---

29 C.G.A. McKay, personal communication, 26 Apr. 1975, was emphatic that the Mau would have been brought under control then if the forces from the two warships had been instructed to deal with the dissidents firmly at the time.
political affairs and vice-versa,

(ii) act constitutionally under powers given in the Native Regulations Order-in-Council 1925 in determining between themselves questions of land, fine mats and other matters concerning Samoan customs,

(iii) nominate another Faipule if displeased with the present one; otherwise a deputy Faipule could be appointed,

(iv) reactivate the District Council fono and submit to the Administrator matters of concern,

(v) obey the law,

(vi) Palauli district to apologise for its insult to government,

(vii) sentences against them to be suspended if these conditions were observed,

(viii) end the Mau and everyone to work together in harmony,

(ix) a deputation of chiefs to visit New Zealand 'to learn first hand from the N.Z. government its goodwill towards them'.

In short, Richardson was conceding to the Mau virtually everything they had raised as a grievance against the Administration. Through their spokesman Tamasese, the Mau prisoners refused even to consider Richardson's proposals, claiming instead that what they wanted was for the New Zealand government to hand over to the Samoans control of the affairs of their country; a demand which Richardson said was seditious and impossible. Several times, and in a most conciliatory though still heavily patronising manner, Richardson tried to persuade the Mau men at Mulini'u to change their attitude, but to no avail.

30 Administrator to Minister, 28 Feb. 1928, A.O. 25/1-5.
The Administrator then proposed to the New Zealand government a change of tactics: he would remove from Mulinu'u twelve leading members of the Mau, take them on board one of the warships and make another attempt at talking them over. If this attempt failed then he intended banishing three or four of the leaders to Niue Island and confining the rest at Vaimea prison. External Affairs immediately responded that the Samoans could not be transferred to Niue because the Cook Islands of which Niue was part was not a part of New Zealand as defined in the Samoa Act 1921, whereas such identification was legally required in the matter of destination for any banished Samoan. Faced with the alternatives of banishing the prisoners within Samoa or to the Tokelau Islands; imprisonment at Vaimea or New Zealand; or remittance of sentences and dispersal, Richardson, who probably felt that the support he was receiving from New Zealand at this critical juncture in the conflict was not all that it could be, chose the last alternative.

He thought that banishment would be ineffective, while imprisonment in New Zealand could be politically embarrassing to the New Zealand government. He also feared that local imprisonment might lead to greater humiliation if the Mau decided to free the prisoners. In an attempt to minimise the political capital which the Mau was bound to make out of this government back-down, Richardson told the Mau prisoners when remitting their sentences that he was doing it to demonstrate his sincerity in trying to negotiate a settlement. To the Minister he said that as his term was drawing to a close, he wished his last act to be one of kindness and consideration for the Samoans as 'consistent with

31 Administrator to EA, 5 Mar. 1928; EA to Administrator, 6 Mar. 1928: A.O. 25/1-6.
And so the Mau marched away from Mulinu'u in triumph. On his part, though, Richardson rationalised that the processes he had gone through with the Mau, even if they had failed to bring about a conciliation, had in fact placed the authorities in a better position to deal with Mau individuals in a decisive manner. In accordance with this view and apparently also to demonstrate to the non-Mau Samoans that government was not powerless against the Mau, Richardson instructed that Tamasese be arrested if he attended a publicised illegal Mau fono. Tamasese was duly warned by A.M. McCarthy, the government lawyer who was acting as Chief of Police whilst Braisby was away on leave, but when the Mau fono was held as planned in Apia two days after the Mau men had marched out of Mulinu'u, Tamasese attended.

As Tamasese left the fono, the police moved in to arrest him. Tamasese refused to go quietly with the arresting party; his companions crowded around him, preventing the police from removing him forcibly and enabling him to get away to Vaimoso in a taxi. The police party, accompanied by a small contingent of soldiers from the warships under the control of Commander Godfrey, the officer-in-charge of the armed forces in Samoa, followed Tamasese to Vaimoso and the police again tried to arrest Tamasese. He once again refused to go quietly and the police, faced with a hostile crowd and unable to count on assistance from the soldiers whom Commander Godfrey - under strict instructions from New Zealand not to use force and not to be involved in situations requiring the use of force - had ordered to stand back, could not get

---

32 Administrator to Minister, 28 Feb. 1928, A.O. 25/1-5; Administrator to EA, 6 Mar. 1928, A.O. 25/1-6.
near Tamasese to effect the arrest. Godfrey then ordered all the
government men to withdraw.\textsuperscript{33} Although Richardson was frustrated by
the inability of the soldiers to act firmly and felt that Tamasese
must be arrested, no further attempts were made during his time in
Samoa; the New Zealand authorities having advised against any further
arrests even if such inaction created a bad impression. They did not
want to compromise the situation for the new Administrator.\textsuperscript{34} While
it was true, as Richardson reported, that at the time 'law and order
depends on [the] good will of [the] natives', and this inaction
therefore hardly affected government's position of powerlessness,
withdrawing from this particular confrontation in fact compromised the
situation more for the new Administrator than if the arrest was pressed.

On the Mau side, another attempt was made to strengthen their
position fa'a Samoa. Fresh from their 'victory' at Mulinu'u, the Mau
leaders despatched a delegation led by Tuimaleali'ifano, who was working
openly with the Mau although still a Fautua, to request Malietoa to
join them. A formal letter from the Mau komiti was carried by the
delegation to strengthen its representations. Malietoa turned down the
request with a warning that the Mau was risking the peace of the country.
He advised that the Administrator's concessions be accepted and the Mau
dispersed. On receipt of Malietoa's response, Namulau'ulu, a leading
orator of the senior Pule Safotulafai, declared the support of his
district of Fa'asaleleaga for Malietoa's views and moved that the Mau
adopt Malietoa's advice. Autagavaia of Palauli strongly opposed this

\textsuperscript{33} Administrator to Minister, 10 Mar. 1928, A.O. 24/1-6. Report
by Sergeant H. Urwin re: attempted arrest of Tamasese, 8 Mar. 1928,
A.O. 25/1-5.

\textsuperscript{34} EA to Administrator, 21 Mar. 1928, A.O. 25/1-6.
motion and the matter was allowed to drop and the fono turned to consider Richardson's proposals.  

The Vaimoso fai totoa considered that the Mau should accept all the Administrator's ten points, though on the condition that Nelson be returned. The Lepea contingent supported this position. Namulau'ulu, on behalf of the Matautu fai totoa, wanted the immediate acceptance of the three concessions concerning Faipule appointments, titles, fine mats and other Samoan customs and traditions, with further discussions to be held over the rest of the proposals. The fourth group, resident in Apia and dominated by Autagavaia and the Palauli district representatives, was of the opinion that everything offered by government should be rejected, and the Mau await the results of Nelson's efforts overseas before committing itself to any consideration of the official approaches. No compromise was reached and so the deadlock continued.

At this time too, Faumuina and Lagolago, whose banishment had been terminated, were trying to win back their influence within the Mau. They tried to gather together the six original Samoans elected onto the Citizens' Committee in October 1926, but only Ainu'u joined them. Within the councils of the Mau, they advised a more conciliatory attitude towards government, pointing out that the conditions offered by the Administrator satisfied all the original specific grounds of Samoan complaints - thereby indicating that they did not regard self-government as one of the Mau objectives as they knew them.  


were behind the times, and the Mau supporters, revelling in their power and dominance, were not impressed with their views. Faumuina probably appreciated that the time was not opportune to press their claim for the leadership and so he returned to Lotofaga, his village on the south coast. Lagolago, on the other hand, stayed on and started several initiatives aimed at settling the conflict and regaining his influence in the public affairs of Samoa. He was not to succeed.

The Mau was greatly encouraged at this particular time by the spate of defections to its ranks of important titleholders who had formerly held official posts. Soon after Nelson's departure, Pupepe of Solosolo village, a high-ranging aloali'i (chief's son) who was a Fa'amasiso (Samoan judge), and another aloali'i, Saipaia of Faleolo village, who was a Pulefa'atoaga (Plantation Inspector) joined the Mau. In Savai'i too, Samoan officials throughout the island went over to the Mau. And in the first week of April, the tama-aiga Tuimaleali'ifano was formally replaced as Fautua by Mataafa Salanoa Muliufi, thus severing his official links with government and cementing his place within the Mau.

Richardson heeded instructions from New Zealand and henceforth left the Mau alone. However, he told the New Zealand authorities that government should 'definitely decide on a policy of dispersing the Mau komiti'. He reported that the Mau was declining and that it was being kept alive by 'hotheads' such as Autagavaia and Tamasese, who he alleged made a pledge to Nelson to keep the Mau going and were being paid to maintain that attitude. Before Nelson's departure, he had reputedly promised the Samoans that he would either return when the grievances of the Samoans were satisfied or would die abroad. He was also reported
as having earnestly urged the Mau komiti at the wharf, just prior to his departure on deportation, to stick to the Mau, and sworn that he would return with the victory. And Richardson to the end insisted that the continuation of the Mau had been due to these mutual pledges by Nelson and a few Mau leaders, supported by letters, speeches and writings by both Nelson and Holland, with active on-the-spot encouragement by Slipper. Many of Richardson's allegations were unsubstantiated and he failed to take into account the rhetoric of Samoan oratory as well as the clear demonstrations by the Mau Samoans that they were in control.

Two weeks before his departure, Richardson met about a thousand non-Mau Samoans at Mulinu'u, whom he had allowed to gather - 'the Mau people had been doing it for months, so why not the non-Mau people' - and ascertain from government just what it intended to do about the Mau. After three days of meeting he managed to calm down this group with the assurance that New Zealand had ample forces and determination to cope with the situation; that they could best serve their country by letting government handle the Mau rather than taking matters into their own hands. He then promised them that if there was any lawlessness within their districts and they wanted special police assistance it would be forthcoming on request. Also that if after a reasonable time the Mau leaders still failed to respond favourably to the conditions offered them, New Zealand would then act to bring each leader to his senses.  

The involvement of the non-Mau Samoans in the conflict was feared by many leaders, papalagi and Samoan, as constituting the most dangerous threat to the peace of the Territory. After Palauli had insulted the Malo, just prior to Nelson's departure, non-Mau Samoans

from Vaimauga had gathered and planned to punish the Mau offenders themselves. Richardson and the Faipule persuaded this group not to carry out its plans. But as Mau activities increased around Apia, ridiculing government and by implication the non-Mau Samoans, many more from outer districts, notably those of Falealili and Aleipata, joined their Vaimauga colleagues and threatened a direct confrontation. When the Mau delegation arrived on 14 March with its message for Malietoa to join them, that Fautua had just returned from dissuading the non-Mau contingent, then camped at Vailele village - about three miles east of Apia - from carrying out its threat. Hence Malietoa's warning to the Mau delegation that the organisation was risking the peace of Samoa. It was a similar fear of a widespread clash between the Samoans which persuaded Richardson to allow the Mulinu'u meeting and to give all his assurances, empty though they sounded in the circumstances. That this threat was real and that a sizable group of non-Mau Samoans felt deeply disturbed about the whole Mau affair, could be gauged by the numbers who attended the Mulinu'u meeting and by the repressive measures which were taken against Mau people in certain villages. A few days after Richardson's departure on 6 April, village fono in at least one Vaimauga village banished Mau supporters from its midst, destroyed their houses and plantations and shot their pigs.38

III

At the time of Richardson's departure, government's authority was virtually non-existent so far as the Samoans were concerned. A communication

38 Administrator to EA, 11 Apr. 1928, A.O. 25/1-6.
from the Resident Commissioner in Savai'i towards the end of April spelled out the situation: of those he had summoned to appear before him to answer the charge of non-payment of the gun tax, 155 refused to accept summons and declared that there were no laws in Samoa, 121 summons were not delivered - mostly because defendants were kept out of sight of the messengers, and 252 were summoned but would not appear. He went on to say that there were also many civil and criminal cases where those involved openly stated that there was no law in Samoa and that New Zealand had no control here. He concluded by pointing out that the situation was not helped by the common knowledge amongst the Samoans of two convicted men from Savai'i roaming freely around Apia.  

Non-recognition of the *papalagi* conventions was not confined to official institutions and official measures. At Nelson's plantation located near Palauli, for example, Samoans from nearby villages had on several occasions killed pigs which belonged to the plantation while the manager watched in impotent rage. For a period of over eighteen months, this manager had brought several cases against Samoans who had openly taken things from the plantation, but none of these cases had been settled, and he had not received any protection from government either.

Towards the end of April the Samoan military police, seventy-four strong, landed in Apia and replaced the contingent of marines left behind by the warships which Richardson had summoned. The following week Colonel S.S. Allen, the new Administrator, arrived and assumed control

---

39 Resident Commissioner to SNA, 28 Apr. 1928, A.O. 25/1-6.
40 R. Ott to Resident Commissioner, extract in Resident Commissioner to SNA, 28 Feb. 1928, A.O. 25/1-6.
from Colonel Hutchens, who had acted as head of the Administration since Richardson's departure. Allen's welcome was a dignified and joyful occasion; seven taHALOLO from both Upolu and Savai'i were presented, songs specially composed for the occasion were sung and young people from government schools performed dances.

Allen did not take long to give an indication that he was prepared to act against the Mau and that he would be resolute and decisive, using whatever means was at his command. Three weeks after his arrival, he ordered the arrest of Leota Aoese of Solosolo village on the grounds that he had allegedly threatened to kill one of the Faipule - Fonoti of the Vaa-o-Fonoti district. He instructed that the civil and the recently arrived military police forces combine to effect the arrest during a MAU FONO attended by hundreds of Mau supporters at Matautu village. Allen himself was on hand to witness the action.

A Verey light was fired to signal the start of the operation; civil police armed with batons made up the arresting party, supported by troops armed with rifles with bayonets fixed. Leota was one of the most active, influential and militant of the Mau leaders and he was popular with Mau supporters. When the government forces had declared their intention, the Mau TAULELEA, who were congregated outside the house in which the fono was held, grappled with Allen's men, hindering their advance; whereupon the Mau matai ordered the taulelea to stand back and let the government men carry out their mission unmolested. The taulelea obeyed, but not before several of them had suffered head injuries from the free use of gun butts.

Allen together with Tamasese and other Mau leaders inspected the casualties; the new Administrator concluding from the polite
disposition of the Mau leaders that the action had had a 'satisfactory' impression on the Mau people. On being queried further by External Affairs over the incident, Allen responded: 'It is believed a trial of strength was inevitable and that result will be satisfactory'. Whereupon the inevitable offer of assistance by way of warships was made; Allen declined the offer.  

Leota was convicted and sentenced to three months' imprisonment. Faipule Fonoti now petitioned the Administrator to remit the sentence after his differences with Leota were settled fa'a Samoa. Allen however refused to grant Fonoti's petition on the grounds that Leota was convicted of a 'deliberate and premeditated defiance of authority' and to remit his sentence would be injurious to good government. The new Administrator thus succeeded in making his point clear to the Mau as well as to the rest of the population.

On the King's Birthday - 4 June - the Mau in reply made their point clear to Allen. Early that day, two contingents of Mau men numbering between 900 and 1,000 and all wearing the Mau uniform converged on the central office building from both ends of town, each contingent being led by members of the Mau komiti and a brass band. At 8 a.m. the two parties met up in front of the central office just as the Administrator arrived, the bands played 'God Save the King' as they took the salute, followed by three cheers for King George. The group then marched to Vaimoso where about two thousand people engaged in sporting competitions - with prizes awarded - singing and dancing, in celebration of the King's birthday.  

---

41 Administrator to EA, 26 May 1928, 27 May 1928 and 29 May 1928; EA to Administrator, 29 May 1928: A.O. 25/1-6.
42 Braisby to Sec. to Admin., 8 June 1928, A.O. 25/1-6.
to comprise one of the most important official functions on such occasions, but there were none this time. Allen had won his trial of strength, and the Mau had won theirs by making a mockery of government, in the nicest possible way, which added more weight to the insult.

In the second week of June Allen embarked on his first full scale malaga of Upolu and the following month he conducted a similar malaga in Savai'i, briefly reporting that both were satisfactory. Apart from those malaga, Allen kept to himself, neither initiating any actions against the Mau, nor within the Administration, nor yet saying much to the New Zealand government. He read books and studied the files. He was by nature a reserved man, but he had also decided not to accept social invitations so as to avoid the charge of discrimination should he decline some. Also he apparently felt that by removing himself from the social life of the white community, he would discourage rumours and reduce the pettiness which preoccupied this section of the population. On the other hand, Allen might have decided that none of the members of the white community was worthy of his company.

In late June he received a confidential cable from Sir William Parr, the New Zealand High Commissioner in London - through the New Zealand government - who had just returned to London from presenting New Zealand's case, with Richardson's assistance, before the Mandates Commission in Geneva. Before the Commission had been the petition from the Mau and a petition from Nelson. Parr reported that members of the Commission had privately told him the authority of the mandatory power must be maintained, while at the same time the existence of the Commission could not be used as an excuse for failure to take whatever action was necessary.

necessary to maintain law and order. Parr quoted the Chairman of the
Commission as having said,

Authority must be maintained ... it would be disastrous
to mandatory system if spectre of the Mandates Commission
Geneva were to hamper authorities in maintenance of
order and proper respect for mandatory's authority ... 
I sympathise with Richardson in difficulties of position ...
Commission desires the New Zealand government should
fully understand they support New Zealand government
wholeheartedly in maintaining order and respect and
confidence ... No disorder must be allowed because of 
ideas of Geneva ... Your first duty to prevent any unjust
and illegal assumption of authority by anybody.44

These views agreed with Allen's on the Samoa situation. He
thought, however, that to make a move just then would be premature.
The Mau leaders had indicated that they were awaiting the results of
their petition to the League of Nations and Allen considered that the
right psychological moment to get into contact with the Mau would be
when those results came through. In the meantime he made preparations
for that moment when effective action was required. Members of the
military police were gradually introduced into the outer areas, even in
districts where papalagi police or soldiers had not been seen over the
previous five years. Government posts were established in far flung
districts such as Aleipata in Upolu and Falelima in Savai'i, and manned
by white policemen.45 Allen's objective in gradually infiltrating his
men to the outer districts was obvious. By the time the report of the
Mandates Commission on the petitions from the Mau and Nelson came to
hand, members of the military police had gained a useful degree of
familiarity with the local conditions and a little knowledge of the
people. At the same time the Samoans found the presence of the papalagi

44 Enclosed in EA to Administrator, 26 June 1928, A.O. 25/1-6.
45 Braisby to Lt. Moore, 15 Aug. 1928; Braisby to Sec. to Admin.,
police in their midst not so unfamiliar.

On the Mau side, non-recognition of the laws and other government measures had become very much a part of their lives. Nonetheless they appreciated the improvement in the atmosphere of the relations between the officials and themselves as the bitterness and the excitement became diffused under Allen's almost nonchalant attitude towards the Mau. They accordingly refrained from more calculated provocations such as processions and demonstrations through town, public performances of taunting songs about the officials and deliberate baiting of police. They knew their strength and they knew others recognised it too and it was not necessary to make a demonstration of it. They could enjoy it in a relaxed atmosphere and this was what they did; individual villages and districts treating each other to ta'alolo, feasting and dancing, at the four Mau headquarters around Apia. There was keen competition and old forms of food presentation such as the talo paia (sacred taro) were revived and indulged in with all the ceremony and pomp traditionally attached to such occasions. 46

At the same time though they were continually on the watch to ensure that their position was not compromised. A letter from the Chief Justice demanding the appearance in court of tax defaulters who were Mau members, was met by a Mau komiti response that they wanted to be left alone and not be bothered by allegations of breaches of laws with which they were not happy. The Mau's position was set out thus:

We do not wish to be forced or to be subjected to any punishment from the government for we are dissatisfied with the laws and the government of today; we absolutely

refuse to have anything to do with the laws we are unhappy with until we receive a determination of our case which is being put to the highest court in the world. If we lose, fine; if we win, fine. But right now we want to do just those things which would bring prosperity and happiness to our country, while at the same time keeping the peace ... As for those you have asked concerning tax, we declare before you,

THEY WILL NOT APPEAR BEFORE YOU[their emphasis]

This letter merely presented what the Mau people had been saying in court and in the villages for a long time. Still, spelling out such an attitude in a formal letter - the impact is even greater in Samoan - was not only dramatic, but placed the court and government in a most difficult position; it gave them no room at all to move.

IV

On August 18 Allen called in three Samoan members of the original Citizens' Committee - Lagolago, Tofaeono and Ainuu - discussed the recently arrived Mandates Commission Report with them, and afterwards gave them a copy for the information of the rest of the Mau komiti. After considering this document, the komiti decided that they would await the resolutions of the General Council of the League of Nations before deciding on their next course of action, thereby thwarting Allen's plans of getting through to the Mau over this Report and discussing an end to the conflict. The petition had been rejected by the Commission.

In the last week of August, Tamasese was summoned to court to answer a charge of unpaid tax. The Mau people sensed that the arrival of the Mandates Commission's report and their refusal to accept it had

signalled the renewal of active confrontation and the summons on Tamasese was the opening shot. They responded by increasing their festive and ceremonial activities and by conducting these through the main streets of Apia. The ta'alolo processions would start at Vaimoso, for example, with Matautu on the other end of town the destination. Or the other way round. And because ta'alolo processions included dancing and singing by any number of people, their passage through the Apia main street meant a major demonstration. Government did not interfere with these activities. At the same time Allen, recognising the rift within the Mau leadership and Lagolago’s support for conciliation, tried to get the original six opposition Samoan leaders to exert pressure on the Mau and persuade it to enter into discussions with government aimed at a settlement. He however did not understand the nature of Samoan leadership, and so failed to see that he was engaged in a futile exercise. Lagolago was in a difficult position because he had not been living in his village of Fasito'otai and was not in fact the representative of that village on the Mau komiti — in short he did not have a proper base of power to support him. It was the same with Ainu'u, of Sapapali'i village but living in Apia. Also the original six were chosen by a papalagi-style meeting, and not sent in by their districts. Faumuina and Alipia were in the same position but they had rectified the situation — the former through Richardson’s decision to transfer him from Apolima island, where he had been serving banishment, to his traditional village of Lotofaga, and Alipia through circumstances in not being banished and using the time to gather village/district support. Even after Faumuina’s banishment ended, he remained in Lotofaga, visiting Apia only for short periods; he obviously appreciated the position and was biding his time for a thrust at regaining his influence within the
Mau leadership. And so the attempt to bring the Mau to a conclusion through Lagolago ended in failure after Lagolago and Ainu'u played a final desperate hand during the first week of September by writing a stirring letter to the Mau komiti requesting its members to come to terms with the Administration, failing which they would abandon the Mau. They abandoned the Mau. Significantly, the new Mau komiti who considered the letter from Lagolago and Ainu'u contained only one of the 'original six' - Alipia of Leuluamoega, who had always been considered a hardliner but whose influence appeared to have been largely eclipsed by the Pule orators led by Autagavaia.

Other attempts were made during this period to bring the two sides together. Allen himself did not take any direct initiative, but he encouraged those who offered to try. Thus when members of the Citizens' Committee - as well as other leading residents - led by Meredith and Williams suggested playing a conciliatory role between the Mau and government, Allen told them to proceed with a message to the Mau that he would talk with its leaders without prejudice and with an open mind. On the other hand, he made it clear that a settlement could only be discussed directly between himself and the Mau komiti. The suggestion by the white residents, to meet the Administrator in a conference, was rejected out of hand by the Mau. But rather than give up, they cabled Nelson in London to advise the Mau komiti to meet the Administrator.

Nelson was cautious, and with justification. Censorship in operation in Apia would have meant that the contents of the telegram were known to the officials and it therefore put him in a difficult position, for to advise the Mau would have negated his claim that he had

ceased to guide the Mau since the Minister's visit in June 1927, and that claim was a vital part of his appeal against wrongful deportation then before the Privy Council. On the other hand, not to advise the Mau could have been used as evidence that he wished the confrontation to continue. At the same time he was worried that he did not have much knowledge of the details of the Administrator's offer on which to base any advice he might give. He also feared that if the Mau decided to follow his advice and found the results of a meeting unsatisfactory, he would lose their respect and confidence, something which he was wholly unprepared to risk, these he said being worth more to him than his return to Samoa. The whites came back and said that the fono would be held with the full understanding that it would not in any way prejudice the interests of the Mau or of Nelson. In response Nelson said that while he was most willing to assist in reaching a settlement, his legal advisers considered it necessary that a direct request from the Administrator be made before he could act. Whereupon that attempt ended in failure, but resulted in Meredith and Williams virtually abandoning the cause and Nelson as well as the Mau losing a great deal of resident support and sympathy.

In reporting to the Mau on this episode Nelson said that he agreed with the residents that they should discuss conciliation. However because he did not know the conditions offered, he therefore could not give appropriate advice, but at any rate the Mau had the power in their hands, and the wisdom to know what best to do, and it was not for him to tell them. Earlier in the same report, however, he had attacked the New Zealand representatives at the Mandates Commission.

as having told lies on the Samoa situation. Moreover he made clear his doubts on the League of Nations' adoption of the Commission's report, alleging naively that the whole thing was a plot by the big powers and Europeans to browbeat Samoa into submission.

Nelson had guessed correctly. There is little doubt that if he had advised a reconciliation with the Administration at this point, the Mau would not have taken his advice, but would have probably ditched him. After the Mulinu'u episode, when Tamasese demanded self-government, there was little doubt that the Samoans would not be satisfied with the removal of the causes of specific grievances. Everything appeared to be in their favour and there was no compelling need to give up with their fundamental requirements unfulfilled. On Nelson's part, after the condemnation he received in the report of the Mandates Commission he needed the continued existence of the Mau and their support of him more than ever if he were to have a chance to clear his name.

In the second week of September Tamasese and Tuimaleali'ifano saw Allen and informed him that they had no grievances but that they were waiting for a report from Nelson concerning their petition to the League of Nations. That report arrived the following week, but there was no approach from the Mau. Instead, more ta'alolo were conducted through Apia and Mau tax defaulters became more resistant to receiving court summonses. Concluding that there was no possibility of reaching a settlement through peaceful discussions, Allen asked the Minister for authority under the Samoa Amendment Act 1927 5.2(b) to return ten of the Mau komiti to their villages and restrain them there for a period of two years in each case. Two weeks after the request was made, Coates

replied that Allen must comply with the procedure prescribed by s.2 of the Act before authority could be given. Probably feeling annoyed at this, Allen decided to defer any action under this legislation and to proceed with the arrest of Tamasese instead, for disobeying court orders and non-payment of tax. He believed that some fight was inevitable and that it was essential that court orders be enforced and not only those as chosen by the Mau. Coates left the decision on any necessary action to Allen's discretion. But he was clearly uneasy and he offered Allen the assistance of 'one or two warships' each capable of landing a party of a hundred men. The Administrator, however, did not accept the offer, considering that the police were sufficient to deal with any contingency that might arise. In any event, Tamasese was then ill and action had been deferred.\(^5\)

Another unfortunate event had a bearing on Allen's decision to press ahead with the arrest of Tamasese. On October 13 he had written to the Mau komiti requesting a meeting on Friday 16. The letter was delivered just before noon and while it was being considered a party of six armed policemen arrived to arrest Tamasese. They were unsuccessful in doing so - they were stoned by women and children and Tamasese did not offer himself up. Two days later McCarthy went to Tamasese with a letter from Allen asking him to surrender to the court or bear the responsibility for any further trouble. The Mau leader was not able to agree and during a court case that resulted from this incident - the Samoa Guardian alleged McCarthy went to apologise to Tamasese and McCarthy won a defamation claim in a case that went to the Supreme Court on appeal - Tamasese said that the decision was not his but that

\(^5\) Administrator to EA, 14 Nov. 1928 and 18 Nov. 1928; Coates to Administrator, 14 Nov. 1928 and 19 Nov. 1928: A.O. 25/1-7.
of the Mau komiti which he was bound to follow.

On Monday 26 during a fono of the Mau komiti which lasted until early on Tuesday morning, Tamasese pleaded with the komiti to agree to his seeing the Administrator, but the komiti was firm that he should not. Just before sunrise the same morning, armed police in two trucks and a van arrived and arrested Tamasese after a brief struggle, Tuimaleali'ifano calling out to the Mau people to refrain from any attempt to prevent Tamasese's arrest. The following week Tamasese was sentenced to six months' imprisonment for resisting arrest and six weeks' for contempt of court. The Mau did not appear to take any particular interest in the case, few of them appearing in court during the hearing, and Allen concluded that the result of the arrest and the sentence was good and materially weakened the Mau. He suggested that Tamasese should serve his sentence in New Zealand and the New Zealand authorities readily agreed. On 15 December Tamasese left Apia to serve his sentence in New Zealand. He was under the charge of Berendsen, the Secretary of External Affairs, who ironically was a member of the team which severely condemned the handling of the internal operations of the Samoa Administration.

The day before Tamasese was taken to New Zealand, a full fono of the Mau met to consider what action to take, if any. Tuimaleali'ifano led the meeting and he put the question: war or peace? Namulaulu of Safotulafai on behalf of the Matautu faitotoa spoke first and counselled


that Tamasese should be allowed to leave for New Zealand in peace and he was unanimously supported by speakers representing the other three faitotoa, including the fiery Autagavaia who spoke for the Apia contingent. 54

Allen told the New Zealand authorities that hard labour and strict prison discipline should work an improvement in Tamasese's attitude. Berendsen however considered - the Minister agreed with him - that Tamasese should not be treated as an ordinary prisoner but should be proffered some degree of consideration while in prison. Allen was asked to reconsider his suggestion and he responded that while Tamasese should be kept apart from criminals he warned that 'any special privileges given him should ... be carefully studied because they are likely to be construed as an indication of superior status, which I think is quite a wrong idea to convey to a native prisoner'. 55 In the event Berendsen's sensitive counsel prevailed.

V

The imprisonment of Tamasese in New Zealand did not bring about any obvious changes in the situation. Within the Mau, in which Tamasese had acted as chairman of the Mau komiti on occasions, Tuilmaleali'ifano who had also acted in that capacity continued in that role, with Faumuina, who had returned from his village on the south coast, also

---

acting on occasions. The changes created no problems for the Mau komiti partly because the real function of a chairman here was to be the front man, the spokesman for the Mau and partly because Samoan fono did not normally require a formal chairman, all participants knowing their respective rights and obligations. Because of the status accorded to the position of chairman and the public nature of its function, it was invariably assumed by a person of high rank, which rank rather than the position of chairman, determined his place and dues in the fono. The views of such a chairman, however, were by no means the last word for the Mau. The power within the Mau komiti and hence the Mau was held by the village/district representatives; during negotiations those views were expressed by four spokesmen - usually orators from the Tumua and Pule centres - appointed by representatives resident at the four faitotoa. The opinions represented by these four spokesmen were the ones that counted - if they coincided, that was the ruling decision and if they differed, as they often did, then a compromise was negotiated. And the chairman must go along with that decision. Tamasese, when asked in court why he attended Mau public meetings which were outlawed, replied that the Mau komiti decided to hold such meetings and there was nothing he or anyone could do to stop them - he was only chairman and was obliged to follow the decisions of the fono. He was not trying to evade responsibility, he was stating a basic fact of life.

On the government side, Allen was now not optimistic that Tamasese’s imprisonment would bring the Mau to the conference table. He appreciated that Tamasese in fact was, despite appearances, not the dominating influence within the Mau and he told the New Zealand authorities

to remember that Tamasese was but a tool in the hands of 'very astute men in the Mau komiti'. He however had to complete the arrest and sentence of Tamasese not only in pursuance of his policy that any action started must be pursued resolutely to the end, but also because he believed that if Tamasese got away with non-payment of tax no other Samoan would feel obliged to pay either. Notwithstanding his appreciation of Tamasese's role in the Mau, Allen increased his efforts after Tamasese's departure to break through the Mau's refusal to talk with government. But again these efforts - mainly attempts at persuading the Mau - were unsuccessful. A fresh approach was clearly needed.

Since Allen's arrival he had quietly studied the situation and by the end of 1928 he had resolved on several alternatives. It appears that his strategy was not to meet the Mau head-on, as Richardson had done, and thereby give the dissidents more ammunition, but rather to undermine their position by removing the causes of what seemed to be their main complaints while at the same time holding the police ready to act decisively when required. Allen obviously learned two important lessons from Richardson's era - the first was not to give the Mau a rallying call, such as a law directly aimed at smashing it; the second was that the New Zealand politicians seemed prepared to parade its armed forces only as a threat, and the Samoans had called that bluff. He prepared his plans accordingly. In the area of taxation Allen proposed to do away with the poll tax and towards this end he had an enabling ordinance passed in November 1928. He believed that the collection of unpaid taxes up to that time would be sufficient to demonstrate and re-establish the authority of the government. But he

57 Administrator to Minister, 10 Dec. 1928, A.O. 25/1-7.
was not prepared to see the unpaid taxes piled up demonstrating further
government's lack of ability to function. At the same time, of
course, he would remove one of the Mau taunts that while they only paid
5/- for Mau lafoga (contributions) others were paying 36/- for the
government poll tax.

Concerning the administration of Samoan affairs Allen proposed
to amalgamate the civil and military police into one force, the Samoa
Constabulary, and to place several of its members in the districts as
government agents. This would not only give him representatives in
the outer districts he could implicitly depend on, but it would also
enable him to reorganise the whole network of Samoan officials who,
except from not functioning in the contentious climate created by the
Mau, were also costing the Administration a great deal of money. By
the beginning of 1929 Allen had established several police posts
throughout both Upolu and Savai'i and these were manned by small
contingents of white policemen. They would form the basis of Allen's
programme: the district officers would be located in these police
posts and they would have white policemen to assist in collecting
outstanding taxes as well as help to carry out other functions as
determined by the Administrator.

Allen's plans received a boost in the second half of 1928 when
the New Zealand government expressed concern about the administration
and the finances of the Samoa Administration. The matter was raised by
Berendsen, who had taken over from J.D. Gray as Secretary of External
Affairs and who obviously did not want his administration of the

58 Administrator to PM, 15 Mar. 1929, A.O. 25/1-8.
department to be saddled with any injudicious actions of his predecessor. Allen himself had expressed grave concern over the same matters and, for the same reasons as Berendsen, readily agreed to an extensive investigation. The Prime Minister appointed a committee of enquiry consisting of the Public Service Commissioner, the Assistant Secretary to the Treasury and the Secretary of External Affairs; he told them that his main concern was the 'very heavy subsidy-call on the New Zealand taxpayer' made by the mandated territory, and he wanted this eliminated or reduced. The committee was not bound by any set order of reference, the Prime Minister wishing for the fullest enquiry. 59

The committee finished its investigations in December and submitted its report to the Prime Minister in mid-January 1929. It summarised its findings thus:

**Staff:** we consider the service is overstaffed and the officers generally inefficient.

**Finances:** we regard the finances as in a very unhealthy condition, showing an entire absence of control.

It recommended the replacement of principal officers of the Samoan Administration including the Secretary to the Administration/Deputy Administrator, the Treasurer, the Officer-in-Charge of the Repatriation Estates and the local Internal Auditor. It further recommended a drastic reduction in the benefits received by staff in the matters of allowances, leave on pay, rent-free housing, etc., and the bringing into line of staff with those in the New Zealand public service. Samoans and half-castes should not be employed except 'where warranted by the special nature of the duties' although a 'limited number of pure Samoans should of course be retained in order to provide

59 The full report is contained in file IT 1/49.
the race with the necessary opportunity to learn self-government'.

When the committee submitted its report, it was to the new Liberal government which had defeated the Coates Reform party in the December 1928 elections. Although it gave a highly unfavourable reflection on the Samoan Administration, the report was probably received with less concern by the new government than it would have been by its predecessor - it enabled the new government to clear itself of the mistakes of the past and start anew. Sections of the Report were subsequently published in May followed by a public statement that government was not responsible for the mistakes of the past and would not discuss them. Allen himself had discussed their conclusions and proposals with the members of the committee before they left Samoa and had agreed with them. The findings and their publication would also clear him and give him the opportunity to instigate his measures unencumbered by recent history. But while these were perhaps justifiable steps to take in the circumstances, the fact remained that the Administrator and the New Zealand government were the responsible parties for the administration of Samoa, regardless of the personalities who filled those institutions.

In early February the new government made its first policy statement on Samoa: it desired an end to the Mau and promised treatment of Mau aspirations 'in a generous spirit' but the Mau must first give up its attitude of passive resistance. Government would not negotiate with any movement which was subversive to the good government of Samoa and laws would be enforced. Allen thought that the effect of this

60 IT/1/49.
statement would be favourable but that it would take some time for the good to show because 'permeation of the Samoan intellect is a long process'. In the event it appeared that permeation did not even start, for the Samoans ignored the invitation by the Prime Minister to discuss a settlement while at the same time they persisted with their refusal to pay taxes and their ignoring of government authority. The Administrator now informed the Prime Minister that he was most doubtful that the Samoans would come to the conference table and, after expressing his concern for the continuing situation where government was suffering through allowing the Mau Samoans to get away with defying the law, he requested permission to use the military police to a greater degree to enforce the payment of taxes and thereby to reassert to some extent the authority of government.

Although 'considerably disturbed' by Allen's pessimistic view of the situation and also well aware of the necessity to maintain government's prestige, Ward was reluctant to accede to Allen's proposals. He clung to the possibility of a negotiated settlement, which he believed had improved by the change in government, though at the same time he assured the Administrator that the policy set out in the public statement would be followed. He suggested four alternatives which he thought could break the deadlock: the first was for Allen to travel to New Zealand with representatives of the Mau for discussions; the second was for Allen to travel to New Zealand by himself to discuss plans with government; the third was for a Minister and the Secretary of External Affairs to travel to Samoa for consultations, and the fourth was as in the third alternative, but with Tamasese travelling with the

---

62 PM to Administrator, 15 Mar. 1929; Administrator to PM, 15 Mar. 1929: A.O. 25/1-8.
Minister to Samoa, having been released before the end of his prison term for the purpose. The Prime Minister favoured the fourth alternative and was not keen on the first - apparently Richardson's suggestion - on the ground that he believed the settlement should be effected in Samoa.

On receipt of this reply from the Prime Minister, Allen then requested 'urgent' permission to proceed with the plan of attack for which he had been preparing the ground work for several months - the abandonment of personal tax and the reduction in the numbers of Samoan officials. Plans for announcing the changes the following week had been finalised. As for the alternatives proposed by the Prime Minister, Allen said the first one would be a 'futile and extravagant joy ride' for the Mau people while the fourth one would be useless as 'no gesture of conciliation was appreciated by the natives' and in any event the importance of Tamasese was overrated. On the other hand he would welcome a visit from a Minister, particularly if that turned out to be the Prime Minister; he could also travel to New Zealand at any time, although preferably not before May with the change in the Secretary to the Administration just occurring.

Once again, though, the Prime Minister refused Allen's request, stating that they needed time to consider the plan to abandon the personal tax and that they felt that an announcement to drop direct taxation unaccompanied by some plan for an alternative tax would be regarded as a sign of weakness and capitulation to the Mau. And they could not afford to give way any further just then. At the same time

63 PM to Administrator, 15 Mar. 1929, A.O. 25/1-8.
64 Administrator to PM, 15 Mar. 1929, A.O. 25/1-8.
the New Zealand government was not ready to approve an increased export tax on copra which Allen had suggested as the alternative tax to cover for the termination of the personal tax. On the other hand Allen was told he could proceed with the reduction of Samoan officials if he wished and that a visit by a Minister to Samoa in late April was being given serious consideration.  

Allen was upset by the Prime Minister's response, but he abided by the instructions although under protest: 'I wish to make it clear that I consider this bad policy and adopt it only as least of evils with which your instructions confront me'.  

The Administrator's main concern with the instructions from New Zealand was that it placed him in a difficult position with regard to explaining away the dispersal of the Samoan officials; he was also aware of the danger of the Mau claiming a victory out of the suspensions, in the absence of an announcement of the intention to abandon taxation.

VI

Within Samoa the situation was relatively quiet. The Mau was doing as it pleased and government restricted its counter activities to the arrest of a few Mau members of insignificant standing. *Mau komiti fono* were held regularly and some of its untitled members were picketing Vaimosono village at night causing some inconvenience. Every so often though the Mau flexed its muscles: in early February, after a few weeks free of direct confrontation or demonstrations, Faumuina led a

---

65 PM to Administrator, 18 Mar. 1929, A.O. 25/1-8.

66 Administrator to PM, 18 Mar. 1929, A.O. 25/1-8.
group of over a hundred Mau men from Lepea to Magiagi village just inland from Apia where it was learned - from a Samoan policeman - that the military police would try and effect arrests at dawn on that particular day. The arrests were not attempted. A few days later the same group paraded in full Mau colours through roads in the areas around Apia and through the township itself. The police did not try to confront the Mau men. Two weeks before this episode, Public Works men, backed by about forty military policemen, cut the water supply to the villages of Vaimoso and Lepea for failure to pay water rates. They were confronted by women and young people in those villages but the Mau matai ordered that the government men be allowed to carry out their task without hindrance.

Most of the initiatives during the first two months of 1929 came from Lagolago and his ex-Mau komiti associates. Lagolago consulted the Fautua and the Faipule and suggested that the Malo matai send a deputation to meet the Mau komiti. The purpose of such a deputation was to impress on the Mau leadership the futility of their continued resistance now that the League of Nations had given its decision, and to let the Mau members know that the Samoans in the Malo also had the interests of the country at heart and would suffer equally whatever fate befell the Mau. While the Fautua and the Faipule apparently agreed to this proposal in principle they were obviously too astute to participate in its execution. Malietoa, however, on his own met some of the Mau leaders and exhorted them to keep the peace. Since the Mau from the beginning had always accorded recognition and respect required by the fa'a Samoa to him as the Malietoa, and had heeded his advice to keep the peace on previous occasions when he had given it, Malietoa's

advice at this juncture probably had some bearing on the relatively quiet atmosphere. Lagolago though, irrepressible as ever, continued with his abortive efforts not only to bring the two sides together through personal contact but also in publishing statements informing the Mau supporters that the Mau, through irresponsible decisions taken by a certain section of its leadership, had strayed far from its fa'avae (foundation) and that if this continued the Mau would be destroyed and no benefits for Samoa would have accrued from their efforts. The Mau ignored Lagolago's attempts at conciliation.

In March Allen proceeded with the suspension of the Samoan officials. On the whole this step was accepted by those concerned with resignation, but they made it clear to the government that they considered the move 'ill-advised and an encouragement to the Mau morale'. They suggested an alternative of continuing in their posts with reduced or no pay, but government rejected that proposal. Doubtless these suspended officials were more worried about their own standing within their respective villages and with the inevitable mockery to which they would be subjected by the Mau supporters. Their plight, however, was lessened to some degree by the appointment of the white District Officers and the stationing of small contingents of white police in the districts. These white men afforded a cogent example that government had not forsaken the Malo Samoans in the village, and even the suspended officials could point to the white policemen as a demonstration that 'their' side had not given away control of the country to the Mau, in fact was asserting it in a most positive manner. A further reason which made the suspensions more palatable to the Samoan officials was the

68 Malietoa to Hutchen, 5 Feb. 1929; Braisby to Administrator, 6 Feb. 1929: A.O. 25/1-8.

assurance by government that the measure was a temporary one and that once the Mau had been brought under control the positions would be restored. At the top of the heap, with the Faipule, the impact of the changes was lessened further still with the retention of most of them as 'advisers' by Allen, who in his ignorance of fa'a Samoa considerations was impressed by the dismissed Faipule's not going over to the Mau.

In late March the Resident Commissioner in Savai'i conducted an island-wide malaga to inform the Samoan officials of the changes in the administration of Samoan affairs. He reported that the changes were received reasonably well, while on the general situation the Mau and Malo supporters in the villages appeared to be coexisting in peace, hospitals and schools were well attended and copra cutting was on a satisfactory level throughout the island. In most villages he had little trouble meeting Mau people, although attempts to arrest tax defaulters and others wanted by the law were unsuccessful. In one district he was met by Mau people in a fono and they told him to discontinue the issuing of summonses on Mau people, particularly for non-payment of taxes. He was told the Mau had made it plain to the Administrator that no taxes would be paid until the conflict had been resolved; continuation could only result in more problems.

The Resident Commissioner nonetheless persisted with the summonses, anticipating that the white District Officers would be able to enforce them as soon as they became established in the villages. At the same time he recommended that to create a psychological advantage for these white officials, the villages of Palauli, Salailua and Safotu

70 S.S. Allen, 'Notes on Samoa', IT 1/57.
be raided and the Mau people there taught a lesson. However, despite this recommendation, the overall tone of the report was optimistic - the people in the villages were settling down to their normal routine of existence and the bitterness created by the Mau/Malo conflict was gradually disappearing. It was on this note that Allen left for consultation with the New Zealand government in early April.

Although there were reports that Cabinet was not impressed with Allen during the consultations, the decisions taken were a total victory for the Administrator - cabinet confirmed his proposal to abandon personal taxation while at the same time instituting an increase of 10/- per ton in export tax on copra. It was also decided that a small charge should be made for medical services for everyone after Allen had opposed a cabinet proposal that 'loyal' Samoans continue to receive free medical care, on the grounds of complexity of Samoan customs and other technical reasons. Personal taxation had incorporated within it a medical levy. In announcing these decisions the New Zealand government declared that it was anxious to reach a settlement in a conciliatory manner as soon as the Mau ceased its defiance of the law. Meantime the laws would be enforced 'where necessary' and outstanding personal tax, which remained a debt to the Administration, would be collected 'as opportunity offers'. Allen now had everything as he wanted for an effective - as he saw it - offensive against the Mau. And this occurred at an opportune moment for the Administration, for the Mau party was experiencing problems within its ranks.

Since February/March 1928, when the government backed down in its

---

72 PM to Administrator, 2 May 1929; Administrator to PM, 2 May 1929: A.O. 25/1-8.
confrontation with the Mau even with the warships and soldiers behind them, the Mau leadership in Apia had gradually exercised greater powers until they reached a stage of instructing and demanding certain things from their supporters in the villages. To a large extent the people in the villages went along with this, contented that the Mau komiti was getting satisfactory results. They paid contributions to the Mau, they sent food into Apia for the maintenance of their respective representatives and the Mau komiti and they visited Apia when required to join the Mau festivities, demonstrations and other activities. But with Allen's policy of avoiding confrontation in the form of direct action or provocative laws on one hand and pursuing whichever action was taken to a successful end on the other, the Mau leadership was denied opportunities to demonstrate that it was moving forward all the time, exercising its prerogatives and deriving strength from the weaknesses of the government. They had exhausted the avenues to which they could properly take their complaints, the League of Nations being the highest authority, and now they were without a visible focus around which to gather their forces and translate their strength into a meaningful 'victory' of substance, rather than of just promises and words. The Mau in short was languishing, not moving; its position of strength beginning to become a disadvantage to its continuing vitality. They had to find ways to maintain their image of dynamic progress - even if only in appearance.

To add to the Mau problems, the dramatic events of the early years of the confrontation, which created such intense feelings within village communities, had largely been forgotten and the villagers had generally returned to their cordial relations in their everyday lives. People still sided with the Mau or the Malo but their differences had
been elevated largely to a formal level - individuals would join a Mau demonstration and afterwards go fishing with a non-Mau person.

In this situation it was imperative for the continuing credibility of the Mau komiti that it be very careful in its choice of action proposed to the villages and that it be even more careful with the way those proposals were put; because nothing was happening that could provoke any fresh, appealing initiative and they were forced to fall back on old ones. In the first months of 1929 Mau supporters in the villages were instructed to cease cutting copra once they had paid their Mau donations. They were also told that copra cut for this purpose was to be sold to Nelson's stores only. After a token show of observing these instructions for a few days, the Samoans carried on as they wished. The Mau komiti reacted by instituting a system of fines for individuals and villages who failed to abide by its instructions, and ended up with a list of fines for practically every village in the country as well as the majority of leading matai in the Mau, even on the komiti itself. It was clearly a farcical situation. The komiti dispatched delegations to the villages to discuss the situation with the Mau supporters, and the clear message it received back was that it could not order the people in the villages to do anything; it could advise and entreat but it could not command. Certainly the komiti could not demand fines; it should have realised that such fines would be ignored. The komiti was rapidly approaching the very attitude that the Samoans found objectionable in the government. The Samoans in the villages would run their affairs as they saw fit according to their own circumstances and even the Mau komiti could not dictate to them.

To refer to an illuminating instance. In the village of Faleasi'u, which lay about fifteen miles from Apia along the north-west coastline, the Mau reigned supreme. Even the office of the pulenu'u had been withdrawn. At the time the villagers were building a new church - L.M.S. - and although they were very active in the Mau their main interest at the time centred on its construction. To keep up with money requirements as the work progressed congregation members had cut copra and, instead of drying the copra themselves, sold it to a particular trader who had a copra dryer. This way the villagers could obtain money quickly, although at a lower rate than if they had sun-dried the copra themselves. This trader was not one of Nelson's. When the Mau komiti instructions concerning a ban on copra cutting and selling only to Nelson stores were issued, they were ignored. The Mau komiti sent a deputation which urged the Faleasi'u people to cease building the church and cutting copra, but it too was ignored. The village was then fined, but that was disregarded as well. They did, however send £10 to the komiti as a 'present' - the fine was £30 - for the Mau, the money having been given by the trader, with whom the villagers had continued doing business. When a papalagi policeman went to Faleasi'u to enquire about the matter, he found all the matai at the church site and they told him that they were firmly in the Mau and would assist it if requested. This was just the attitude which constituted the problems in the villages for the Mau leadership; the people declared that they were Mau supporters but followed the lead of the Mau komiti only in so far as it coincided with their own perception.

Actually there had been instructions from the komiti to ban

copra cutting before and these had not caused conflicts within the movement. On those occasions, however, implementation of the instructions had been left to the discretion of the people in the villages. Mau people in each village knew just what to do with such instructions: they knew how to preserve their integrity as Mau supporters in their own particular context while at the same time maintaining the dignity of the Mau komiti in Apia. But with the komiti's insistence on strict observance of its instructions and introducing fines, that room for manoeuvring and use of discretion was removed, and there was really only one way Samoans would act in such a situation.

While the komiti might have acted rashly at this period as a result of a perception that the villagers had given it a sufficient mandate to make demands on them, its action was actually triggered by a decline in the Mau contributions. This was worrying because the Mau needed the money for Nelson's work in New Zealand and its own activities in Samoa; more importantly, the falling contributions indicated that interest in the Mau was waning.

But if there were difficulties within the Mau there were greater problems amongst the dissident whites. Since Nelson rejected the suggestion from the leading dissident whites to advise the Samoans to meet the Administrator in late 1928, the Citizens' Committee had been slowly but remorselessly disintegrating. Williams had moved up to become the first elected member in the Legislative Council without a word of protest on behalf of Nelson, who had been disqualified from the Council through absence from meetings. Meredith was said to have left the movement, undoubtedly being assisted in this direction by a similar move by his brother-in-law Lagolago. Through his monthly
reports as well as by personal letter Nelson had striven hard to keep
the dissident whites committed to the cause. One of the specific
measures suggested by Nelson to assist in revitalising the Citizens'
Committee was its reconstitution to bring in new blood and especially
to incorporate in its ranks T.B. Slipper, at that time highly regarded
by Nelson. The dissident whites did not share Nelson's trust in Slipper
and they excluded him from the reconstituted Citizens' Committee. In
April Nelson informed the committee that rejecting Slipper would bring
the whites and the Mau into conflict, and he went on to say that if he
was forced into a situation where he had to make a decision which to
stand with, Mau or Citizens' Committee - he could not remain neutral -
he would stand with the Mau on the grounds that it was the 'main body'
and it had also 'contributed all the fighting funds without which the
struggle would have had an ignominious end'.

This choice would not have been a difficult one for Nelson.
He was finding the Citizens' Committee an embarrassment; he complained
to the committee about its intention to give departing senior
Administration officials sympathetic send-offs to New Zealand. At this
time also the Mau were complaining that reports from Nelson to the
whites were being passed on to the Administrator. And of course the
whites never were in a position to force the government to take serious
note of their views, as the Samoans were.

While these problems emerged within Samoa, Nelson was having
some success in publicising the cause of the Mau in New Zealand. In
late February a public meeting held at the Auckland town hall drew over
a thousand people and passed resolutions calling for the release of

75 Report by O.F. Nelson (no. 25), 20 Mar. 1929, and (no. 27),
18 Apr. 1929: Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.
Tamasese and the revocation of the deportation orders on Nelson, Gurr and Smyth. This meeting was promoted by the Samoa Defence League. When the resolutions were presented to government it proposed to answer the matters raised in speeches given during the meeting, but Allen wisely advised that the submissions and speeches should be ignored. After this meeting the League, assisted by several Samoans living in Auckland, conducted open-air meetings - sometimes every day of the week, conditions permitting. However, despite its efforts, its success in hard terms was minimal - Nelson himself admitted that 99.9% of the New Zealand population did not give a damn about Samoa. The League was also a failure in raising money for the cause, let alone its own activities; the Mau had to send money from Samoa to keep it going. 76

On another front, Nelson started publishing the 'New Zealand Samoa Guardian' in late April to publicise the cause of the Mau which he felt was being mishandled by other newspapers in New Zealand.

For the Mau therefore, at this period, there was no assistance in any form from the Citizens' Committee, and at the same time it had to support financially the white effort in Auckland, which was largely one for appearances, with no real bite. The Mau, in other words, was going it alone. And although Nelson's optimism gave them encouragement, they were never under any illusions that they held their own fate and that of the Mau in their hands. With the difficulties encountered in keeping the Mau people motivated sufficiently to maintain its forward momentum, and with Allen grasping the initiative, it was not unexpected to find doubts within the Mau komiti as to the viability of continuing the Mau on its course of refusal even to talk to the Administration.

During May, after public notification of the changes in the taxation structure within Samoa, Tuimaleali'iifano, nominal chairman of the komiti, suggested that a fono with the Administrator should be arranged; and he was supported by representatives from Leulumoega, Samatau, Falelatai and South Aana, all of them from Aiga closely allied to the Tuimaleali'iifano title. The other representatives disagreed. Led by Faumuina, this group argued that the proper response to government measures was to put Mau police back on the streets and reimpose a boycott on the stores. Tuimaleali'iifano did not take this rebuff lightly, he left the fono immediately and returned to his house at Tifitifi, Faleolo.  After a short period, he returned to Vaimoso. Similarly, the villages which sided with Tuimaleali'iifano showed their displeasure by withdrawing from Mau activities for a period of time.

The return of the Mau police on the Apia streets and a renewed boycott of stores did not eventuate. Instead, a fresh initiative was attempted in the form of setting up a malo fou (new government) to look after the affairs of the Mau supporters. Because the representatives of the Mau people in the villages/districts were already in Apia constituting a fono of representatives, it was decided that setting up a judiciary would be the next step at that stage. Four fa'amasino or judges were appointed, Faumuina and Saipaia to sit at Lepea with Tuimaleali'iifano and Fuataga to be located at Vaimoso. Each fa'amasino was allocated ten leoleo or policemen who would enforce that fa'amasino's judgements and these 'officials' were to be paid. To enable the Mau to meet the costs, all those who had been relieved of the government personal tax were asked to pay 2/- to the Mau funds. However because these

77 Braisby to Sec. to Admin., 14 May 1929, A.O. 25/1-8.
78 Braisby to Administrator, 28 May 1929, A.O. 25/1-8.
fa'amasino were not given a clear jurisdiction - there were after all no 'laws' they could adjudicate on - and because the host of problems involved in organising such a scheme was apparently not even considered, and because there was no such tradition in fa'a Samoa they could invoke, the project was a failure from the start. Due to the lack of thought given to these aspects, it would seem that the scheme was tried not so much to promote a malo fou for the Mau but rather to try and remedy the difficulties the Mau was experiencing in obtaining donations from its supporters and in keeping its claims alive and vital.

Another decision of the Mau fono had even greater impact. Forced by the same need to keep the Mau before the public eye, the komiti decided to encourage the appearance of Mau members in full uniform in Apia. Apart from encouraging individuals, the Mau also organised groups - sometimes numbering up to five hundred - to march through the villages surrounding Apia town and through Beach Road, showing the Mau colours. During the first two weeks of June, three such parades were mounted starting with one on 3 June, the King's birthday, when all the Mau leaders joined in the procession of some five hundred men in full Mau uniform which arrived in front of the central office building just as the police were raising the flag, and called cheers for King George. Faumuina led these parades.79

At the same time the stepped-up attempts by government to secure tax defaulters - many of those had participated in Mau parades without being challenged - necessitated the precautionary measure of allocating uniformed groups of five or more Mau supporters to accompany prominent Mau matai who were themselves tax defaulters. The intention was to

79 Braisby to Sec. to Admin., 14 June 1929, A.O. 25/1-8.
discourage the police from arresting the senior men, but since the escort was normally made up of the sons and close relatives of the matai concerned, it was inevitable that fighting would result if arrest was attempted.

On 15 June a police party arrested Tagaloa of Saluafata on Beach Road. He was a leading Mau matai and his six companions, armed with heavy sticks, fought the arresting party of six policemen, armed with batons and at least one wielding a pistol. It was a willing encounter and soon members of both parties were bleeding freely from head wounds, but the police had managed to secure Tagaloa. Minutes after the clash started, police reinforcements as well as more Mau men arrived simultaneously, swelling their respective numbers to about forty. Faumuina was amongst the later arrivals and it was due to his resolute stand against the extreme pressure from the Mau men to continue the fight and free Tagaloa - Allen's characteristically juggled account of this incident to the New Zealand authorities would not admit to Faumuina's peace-seeking role - that the clash did not develop into a more serious confrontation. 80 Tagaloa was subsequently sentenced to nine months' imprisonment for non-payment of tax and resisting arrest.

This incident was significant on two main counts. In the first place it was the first time that the Mau men had resorted to actually fighting government police. During previous occasions when the police had encountered the Mau, as for example when arresting (or attempting to arrest) Mau members, the Mau men had hindered but had not fought them. When the attempt was made to arrest Tamasese on an Apia street, 80

the Mau men present simply crowded around Tamasese, bundled him into a taxi and took him to Vaimoso. When the police went after Tamasese at Vaimoso, even at the time when they succeeded in arresting him, it was the women and the children, not the men, who resisted the police parties, largely with stone throwing.

The second consequence of Tagaloa's arrest was the police reaction to the injuries of its members. Two days after the clash Braisby issued instructions that 'all European police on duty will carry loaded revolvers', spare ammunition, and batons. The off-duty men were instructed to carry batons at all times, with revolvers handy but not too evident. The instructions continued that if wanted men marched into town with Mau parades, the police would concentrate their numbers and arrest those men as well as any others who might try to prevent their arrest. The guns might be used when police were in 'danger of serious injury' or in 'defence of life'. In addition to these measures, Braisby instructed all the papalagi police to attend, at the British Club, classes he would be giving on street fighting.  

The Chief of Police prefaced his instructions with the statement that going by the 15 June incident 'it is obvious that passive resistance by the Mau has ceased and they are prepared to resist and assault police with clubs and other weapons'. Undoubtedly, this was an argument used by Braisby to obtain Allen's agreement to policemen carrying guns. Allen and Braisby had held a meeting just prior to the latter's instructions being issued and it seems clear that the Administrator was fully aware and had agreed with the instructions before their distribution. These

82 ibid.
instructions were not withdrawn during Allen's time as was suggested to the New Zealand government would be done, once the excitement created by the incident of Tagaloa's arrest had died down.

Actually, the Tagaloa incident occurred at a time when a rather serious row was developing within the Mau. It concerned the type of reception for Tamasese, who was expected in Apia during the last week of June. After word was received that Tamasese was returning to Samoa, Lufilufi, representing Atua, suggested that Tamasese be accorded a royal reception in the traditions of Samoa. Specifically it was proposed that a fale ula (a specially constructed and decorated round fale for use by a Tupu, particularly during ceremonial occasions) be constructed at Vaimoso for Tamasese. Atua's suggestion immediately brought to the surface wider issues, notably those concerning the Tupu o Samoa, Tumua ma Pule and traditional allegiances which made up such an important part of the life of the Samoans but which since the turn of the century they had, at the insistence of the colonial administrations, tried to accommodate in a peaceful state of co-existence.

Fa'asaleleaga district led by Safotulafai rejected Atua's suggestion on the grounds that such treatment for Tamasese would be tantamount to declaring him Tupu o Samoa, a development Fa'asaleleaga could not accept because it recognised Malietoa as the rightful holder of that position. Several other groupings in the Mau supported Fa'asaleleaga and after the Vaimoso faitotoa expressed a similar opinion, the Mau komiti dropped Atua's proposal. When representatives of Atua meeting at Lufilufi learned of the komiti's decision, they threatened to leave the Mau immediately, their anger heightened by the failure of the
komiti to consult them before the decision was taken. But with the arrest of a prominent Atua marai in the Mau, that district could hardly defect just then. On a more general level, the arrest helped shift the focus of the Mau people elsewhere and prevented this potentially destructive confrontation from developing into open conflict.

This difference of opinion between Tumua and Pule highlighted another important aspect of the Mau. On one hand the tama-aiga involved in the Mau were of the Sa Tupua - Tupua Tamasese and Tuimaleali'ifano. Their traditional support came largely from Atua and Aana districts of Upolu. On the other hand the greatest support for the Mau came from Savai'i, Malietoa country. Because the Mau was organised along fa'a Samoa lines, it was the representatives from the villages and districts who exercised real power in the councils of the Mau. At the same time dominant influence was wielded by the representatives of those villages and districts whose people were giving most assistance in terms of money contributions, food presentations, participation in activities and so on. Because the biggest tangible support came from Savai'i, the Mau was effectively run by the Pule representatives. This situation of Upolu ceremonial leadership competing with Savai'i political dominance created a system of checks and balances within the organisation. From another viewpoint the whole episode concerning a royal welcome for Tamasese also highlighted the point that the Samoans considered it important to join the Mau so that they could protect their fa'a Samoa positions and prerogatives in Mau dealings.

In the last week of June Tamasese arrived back from New Zealand.

---

83 Braisby to Sec. to Admin., 14 June 1929, A.O. 25/1-8.
The occasion should have been one for the biggest Mau demonstration yet, but the differences that had arisen within the ranks of the Mau concerning the royalty issue, together with the uncertainty created by the policy of aggression indicated by recent police action combined to reduce the reception for Tamasese into a subdued affair. On the day, the Mau marched into town in strength, all its leaders, including those wanted by the police, participating. But the demonstration lacked fire, and that defiant confidence which had marked Mau processions in the past. The police did not attempt any arrests.

Tamasese's welcome went off without trouble. Part of this was obviously due to the desire of the Mau supporters to preserve a united appearance. On the other hand, there was also the factor that even amongst the Sa Tupua people themselves, there was lacking a united opinion on the issue of Tamasese's reception. The problem was that Tuimaleali'i'ifano was also in the Mau, and although Tamasese held the senior title - Tupua - in the Sa Tupua maximal lineage, Tuimaleali'i'ifano was the person who, in terms of age and experience, the Sa Tupua people were more likely to look to for leadership. Tamasese was not yet thirty years old, had spent much of his life in Apia and was therefore largely unknown to the Samoans in the villages and districts. He had first come to public notice during the negotiations with Richardson at Mulinu'u earlier in the year. On the other hand, Tuimaleali'i'ifano had a long record of involvement in public affairs both as an individual and as a Fautua, a post to which he was appointed by Colonel Logan during the military occupation as a replacement for Tupua Tamasese Lealofi, the Sa Fautua appointed by the Germans.

For several weeks after Tamasese's return the situation remained relatively quiet, the hindrance of traffic through Vaimoso and Lepea by
the Mau being the main immediate issue of contention. At times the Mau pickets provoked the police, but Allen at this period restrained Braisby and his men. One evening during the first week of August, for example, Braisby, at the wheel of a police car containing five other policemen, refused to stop on being signalled by a group of Mau tauulele'a and women near Vaimoso, and the car was stoned. Braisby was hit on the back of the head and, temporarily knocked out, stalled the car. He recovered quickly, however, restarted the car and took off. The following morning Braisby wrote a letter to the Mau leaders and the matai of Vaimoso village, drawing their attention to the obstruction of traffic through Vaimoso and the stoning of the police car. He warned them that if such activities continued, the police had been instructed to use firearms and 'whatever other means possible' to counter the hindrances, and if a clash occurred the 'consequences will be on your heads'. Allen ordered the letter not to be sent. On the same day this letter was written Braisby recommended that street lights at Vaimoso and Lepea be put out of action, rather like the water supply being cut off earlier, but Allen again countermanded Braisby's initiative and the street lights remained.

Allen was aware of the internal problems experienced by the Mau leadership and he did not want any over-reaction by the police to interfere with the process of decline which he believed was occurring to the Mau. In mid-August the Prime Minister sent Allen a summary of what he intended to say in parliament concerning Samoa, and included in the speech was the prospect of the Prime Minister visiting Samoa at the

---

84 Inspector of Police to Sec. to Admin., 3 Aug. 1929; Braisby to Mau komiti, 3 Aug. 1929; Sec. to Admin. to Braisby, 6 Aug. 1929; A/Sec. to Admin. to Braisby, 16 Oct. 1929: A.O. 25/1-8.
end of the session. Allen immediately cabled the Prime Minister advising that he should not announce any intention to visit Samoa as this would arrest the decline of the Mau. He went on to say that 'no grounds should be given anyone else but myself to open any negotiations'. The Prime Minister concurred and so his statement was confined to the reiteration of the old policy that government was ever prepared to talk to the Mau with a view to settling the confrontation, once the Mau obeyed and recognised the law. He also announced that two Samoans would be nominated to the Legislative Council - Malietoa and Mataafa the two Fautua were nominated and the number of European elected members was reduced from three to two - and that expenditure was being reduced and attempts made to render the territory self-supporting. In any case, he concluded, New Zealand would not contribute large subsidies while hostility and ingratitude by a large section of Samoans continued.

As before, the Mau, in a dominant position in spite of internal clashes and setbacks in villages, ignored this statement. The komiti's problems however were mounting and at this period were compounded by the growing despondency in Nelson's letters - the strong optimism had faded as moves he had initiated in New Zealand through several avenues of courts, cabinet and public meetings became defeated outright or failed to produce the results for which he had hoped. Now rather than promising success for the Mau, as he had tended to do in earlier periods, he was emphasising the need to continue because the Mau had sacrificed so much. While saying that the Mau could do as it decided - it always did anyway - when it came to the issue of a settlement being negotiated

85 Administrator to PM, 20 Aug. 1929, A.O. 25/1-8.
86 EA to Administrator, 9 Sept. 1929, A.O. 25/1-8.
in Samoa without him, he reminded the Mau of his commitment to the cause and the personal sacrifices he had made. Nelson was facing other problems whose solutions were somewhat at variance with the thinking of the Mau komiti. The main one concerned the difficulties his firm was experiencing over its copra trading; it was losing money in this area and was unable to meet regular shipping commitments even with the Mau komiti instructions to the Mau people to sell their copra exclusively to Nelson's stores. Nelson therefore urged the komiti to lift its ban on general copra cutting, withdraw its instructions to sell only to his stores and to forget about its fines. He obviously wanted the normal market forces to operate and he was clearly conscious too of the negative response with which Samoans would react to measures such as those adopted by the Mau komiti. The komiti ignored Nelson's advice.

It did, however, consider another initiative concerning the construction of a building at Vaimoso which could serve as a point of focus for Mau people. Tamasese suggested that the contingents at Vaimoso and Lepea combine to build a fale tele - a round fono house - which would be the fale fono of the Mau similar to the Faipule fale fono at Muliu'u. The contingent at Lepea, however, opposed this idea because it raised other fa'a Samoa issues such as the relative standing of Vaimoso and Lepea in Faleata, and it was dropped. Instead it was decided to renovate the old bandstand at Vaimoso village and convert it into premises which would serve as Mau headquarters offices. The Mau fono would continue to be held in one or the other of the fale tele belonging to Vaimoso families, which had been used for that purpose

87 Letter from Taisi, 14 June 1929 and 11 Nov. 1929: Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.
in the past. These decisions were taken before Faumuina and Tuimaleali'ifano left for New Zealand - they paid their taxes to get permits - in late August, to assist as witnesses in Nelson's suit against the New Zealand Herald newspaper for defamation and libel. Nelson therefore had first-hand information on the trend of thinking within the Mau leadership at this rather difficult period.

On the day of the opening ceremony for the new offices, a fono of the Mau leaders appointed eight high-ranking matai from its ranks and charged them with the task of visiting all the villages throughout Upolu and Savai'i - the four Upolu matai would travel in Savai'i while the four Savai'i matai would conduct the Upolu mission - in an attempt to boost the diminishing interest in the Mau. Specifically, the two delegations would reconfirm the sa (ban) on copra cutting; chase up the unpaid Mau contributions of 4/- per matai and 2/- per taule'ale'a; obtain some idea of the numbers of Samoans in the villages who had died as a result of an influenza virus which had been affecting the population; and explain why the komiti felt that the Mau should not participate in the matter of the appointment of Samoan representatives on to the Legislative Council. The overall effect these delegations had on Mau supporters in general is unclear, but one thing they found was an almost universal non-compliance with komiti instructions restricting the cutting of copra. Even more significant was the discovery that many of the leading members of the Mau, including komiti 'chairman' Tuimaleali'ifano were involved, sometimes personally, in breaching the copra ban instructions. Imposition of fines on the offending villages and individual members of the komiti was strongly

88 Braisby to Sec. to Admin., 14 Sept. 1929, A.O. 25/1-8.  
89 ibid.
contested in the komiti fono when these matters were discussed and created yet another area of discontent within the Mau leadership.  

In New Zealand, Nelson dropped his case against the New Zealand Herald newspaper, which meant that the trip by Tuimaleali'ifano and Faumuina was wasted. Nelson, however, bold and enterprising as ever, sought to utilise the opportunity of personal consultation with the two Mau leaders to launch new initiatives to help bolster interest in the Mau in Samoa. A petition to King George V, which had been under consideration by the Mau for some time, was finalised to be taken to Samoa for signing. Though a highly visible sign of the Mau's continuing pressure and existence, this petition followed several others which had all failed to achieve their goals, and there was every reason to believe that this petition would also suffer the same fate. More important, the Samoans were well aware of this fact and were not likely to be jumping with renewed vigour at yet another petition.

It is in this context that the other initiative suggested by Nelson achieves proper significance. Seizing on the Mau's attempt to form a malo fou (new government) a few months earlier, Nelson quietly suggested that the concept should be pursued further. His suggestion, however, differed from the one espoused by the komiti in the sense that the appointment of Mau judges and policemen was done perhaps largely as a means of improving its funds. Nelson was more interested in appointing Mau officials in villages/districts who would perform such functions as recording births and deaths, co-ordinating the search for

90 Administrator to Minister, 26 Oct. 1929, A.O. 25/1-8.
rhinoceros beetles, and generally performing duties previously carried out by government officials. Mau people in the villages had been doing some of these things for quite some time, but Nelson wanted these duties and the people performing them placed on a formal level. Although this suggestion was a logical one, given the procession of actions the Mau had engaged in, it demonstrated clearly the difficult position the Mau leadership had reached in coming up with projects to sustain the interest of the Mau. For such a system to work, a strong central authority was of course needed, but if the komiti was being openly rejected on the matter of copra cutting, how could it hope to get away with instructing the Mau Samoans on other aspects of their lives?

On 15 November Tuimaleali'ifano and Faumuina arrived back from New Zealand. The occasion brought the biggest Mau demonstration seen in Apia. Soon after the Tofua anchored the first parties of the Mau arrived in town. These consisted of several groups of fully uniformed men armed with 'large clubs, knives and sticks'. There were about twelve men in each group and they stationed themselves at strategic places along Beach Road. Soon after, two large parties of uniformed Mau members marched in from the eastern and western ends of town. The two parties were led by brass bands and numbered about 1,500. They met in front of the market near the central office and then congregated next to the customs buildings where their numbers swelled to over 3,000. Meantime eleven decorated fautasi (long boats) manned by Mau crews had put out into the harbour to bring in the two leaders. On landing they joined the welcoming crowd and led them to Vaimoso. The reception party

91 Letter from Taisi, 14 June 1929, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.
contained all the leading Mau matai including those on whom warrants had been served - Matau Karauna was amongst them - as well as many taulele'a wanted by the law. Mau flags were carried and a ta'alolo party from Matautu was also present. But despite the numbers involved and the assertive manner in which the Mau carried out the reception the whole undertaking went off without a hitch. In the afternoon of the same day over four thousand people congregated at Vaimoso, where a feast and entertainment took place. The petition to the King was signed and returned to Nelson by the same boat and Faumuina, in reporting on their visit the following day, urged the Mau to continue with establishing its own administrative structure through which the affairs of its members could be regulated in a more orderly manner. He called on those present not to lose interest in the struggle because the Mau had won; claiming that H.E. Holland - whom he referred to as the Sui Palemia, which normally means acting Prime Minister, but perhaps used here to mean alternative Prime Minister as leader of the opposition parliamentary party - had promised Tuimaleali'ifano and himself that the mandate over Samoa would be given to another country and control of Samoa would revert to the Samoans themselves once the petition to the King had been heard.

The enthusiastic reception was due largely to the fact that the Tupu o Samoa issue was not raised on this occasion, and the aggressive approach adopted by the police in recent months appeared to have subsided. At the same time the deployment of Mau men during the reception in Apia strongly indicated that they were conscious of the

---

92 Braisby to Sec. to Admin., 18 Nov. 1929, A.O. 25/1-8.

93 Faumuina's speech at Vaimoso (copied verbatim), 16 Nov. 1929; Administrator to Minister, 19 Nov. 1929: A.O. 25/1-8. Holland and the Labour Party had come out in support of the Mau, although on doctrinaire grounds rather than on an understanding of the situation in Samoa.
possibility of trouble and were probably under specific instructions
to deal firmly with any police attempts to disrupt the demonstration.
Although Faumuina's reported speech was a gross misstatement of the
situation in New Zealand, it should be interpreted in the context of
the occasion and the rhetoric normally used in Samoan oratory at such
times. No one would have taken what Faumuina said as the exact
representation of the position in New Zealand, yet the speech constituted
a fiction which Samoans utilised to meet their respective requirements,
while recognising it for what it was. In this case, the Mau supporters
would have used Faumuina's speech to strengthen their resolve in the
Mau, and together with the assertive and enthusiastic reception they
had put on to welcome the two leaders, the Mau appeared to be regaining
the initiative in the conflict.

The vigour and confidence displayed by the large number of Mau
supporters who had come from all over Samoa to welcome their two
leaders was seen by Allen as a negative development. For some time,
he had believed that the changes he had introduced, especially in the
areas of administration, taxation and police supervision, together
with the internal conflicts occurring in the Mau ranks, were combining
effectively to weaken the Mau to the extent where it would either die
out, or its leaders sit down with him and negotiate a settlement.
While there were tangible grounds for his belief, the reality of the
situation was that difficulties experienced by the Mau had not in fact
been translated into abandoning it, let alone into recognising government,
as demonstrated by the Faleasiiu episode and the continued refusal to pay
taxes. Now with a buoyant mood again evident amongst the Mau people,
the conflict appeared no nearer a settlement than when Allen first
arrived some twenty months earlier.
CHAPTER 5

BREAKING POINT - MAU PUT TO THE TEST: 1930/1931

As 1929 drew to a close, the attention of the Mau became focussed on the imminent return of Gurr and Smyth from exile. Gurr though, after consultation with Nelson, chose to remain in New Zealand where he had been assisting the dissident effort, particularly the production of the New Zealand Samoa Guardian, while Smyth who had spent most of his two years in exile in Fiji, planned to arrive in Apia on 28 December. To mark the occasion and to honour this papalagi who had suffered as a result of his association with the Mau, the Mau komiti decided to stage a major reception to welcome him home. Such a function would also help reinforce the confidence of Mau supporters, through their involvement and united effort.

In the weeks leading up to Smyth's arrival, several clashes occurred between Mau members and the police. While there was nothing different between these and earlier clashes, there had been some very important changes in the relevant circumstances, as a result largely of the apparent recovery of the Mau from what Allen had felt was its progress to disintegration through internal dissension. In his desire not to interrupt that process of Mau self destruction Allen had placed restraints on police actions against Mau supporters. But with the Mau displaying unity and consensus, it became unlikely that the imposition of such restraints on the police would continue. As a result, the likelihood of

SKETCH-PLAN
APIA BEACH-FRONT
(Mau March, 28 December 1929)
violence erupting during a Mau/police clash became greater than ever before, particularly given that police frustration at being unable to counter, in their own way, what they saw as Mau provocation, had built up over a long, trying period. That fatal clash occurred when the Mau marched to welcome Smyth back to Samoa.

I

As dawn broke over Apia on the morning of 28 December 1929, the Lady Roberts, which had travelled overnight from Pagopago, entered the harbour and was joined by several fautasi manned by Mau supporters from Fa'asaleleaga district in Savai'i, providing her with an escort. On board the Lady Roberts was Smyth and also Robert Hall-Skelton, a New Zealand lawyer who had been a leading activist in the New Zealand Samoa Defence League in Auckland. Hall-Skelton's mission in Samoa was to collect material for Nelson's libel case against the New Zealand Herald newspaper. At the same time on land, a procession of uniformed Mau men - the Vaimoso party - numbering some nine hundred entered Beach Road on the western end of town and, led by a brass band and a flag-bearer carrying the Mau flag, marched toward the central office building, where it was to meet a similar party from Matautu village on the eastern sweep of Apia bay; together they were to provide the reception 'committee' for Smyth and Hall-Skelton, when they stepped ashore at the Tivoli jetty.  

4 This account of the incident is based on the following sources: Brasby to Sec. to Admin., 30 Dec. 1929; Administrator to Minister, 31 Dec. 1929: A.O. 25/1-0; Mau representatives to Nelson, 9 Jan. 1930, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia; "Coroner's Finding in the Inquest Respecting the Fatalities in Western Samoa on 28th Dec. 1929", AJHR, A-4B 1930; Evidence of Proceedings of Inquest, A.O. 25/1-9 and IT 1/23/11.
As the Vaimoso party marched past the Customs buildings located at the western end of town, Braisby informed police headquarters by telephone that Matau Karauna - the man Allen said he had selected to be arrested if he participated in the march - was in the procession, playing in the band. The police chief then went out into the harbour and boarded the Lady Roberts. The arresting party of seven white and one Samoan policemen waited at the corner of Ifi'ifi street and Beach road about a hundred metres from the police station for the procession to arrive. Police efforts to identify Matau however failed while the Mau column was on the move, and this prevented the police from attempting the arrest at the road junction where they had waited, the position most advantageous to them if they ran into trouble. In trying to identify their man, members of the arresting party walked alongside the band, and Mau 'police' were ordered to close ranks alongside the head of the procession and prevent the police from entering the column. When the band was just past the central office buildings, the procession came to a halt and turned to face the buildings, apparently for the purpose of saluting - symbolically and perhaps also contemptuously - the seat of government and the flagpole which stood near the main entrance. The Mau had done this before. In that instant, Matau was recognised by the police and even as the procession turned and continued, the leader of the arresting party, Sergeant W. Fell, managed to break through the Mau ranks and tried to arrest his man by putting his arms around him. The rest of the arresting party were prevented from following Fell and as a consequence fighting - fists mainly at this stage - broke out. When this fighting started the supporting police party of some twenty men, all armed with revolvers - three of the arresting party had revolvers while four carried ropes - joined in and as Fell was struck to the ground
the police used their guns freely, firing into the Mau ranks. The Mau people pulled back in the face of this onslaught, taking with them five of their members dead and many more injured. They were armed with batons only and since they could not get near the police to use these, they resorted to stone throwing. The police retreated to the station and armed themselves with rifles and bayonets in accordance with their battle plan, but Constable William Abraham did not make it; a heavy blow on the head had killed him.

Once the police gained their barracks they resorted to rifles and a Lewis gun mounted on the second-storey verandah. The coroner subsequently found that this rifle fire mortally wounded Tamasese and two other men who went to his aid, while the Lewis gun had not been fired directly into the crowds. It appears that at this point in time the leaders of the Mau were strenuously trying to regain order and calm down their members, as they had tried to stop the fighting on Beach road. With intensified rifle fire and the Lewis gun hammering from the police station, their efforts succeeded. The bodies of the dead and wounded were picked up and the Mau party returned to Vaimoso. The Matautu party had halted some distance from where the fighting took place and it was not involved in the clash.

The Mau plans concerning its welcome for Smyth had been well known to the police. During the last week of November, the Mau komiti had finalised the details of its reception and villages/districts were notified. The police obtained a copy of that notice as well as an account of the komiti's deliberations during that particular meeting as it did for all other Mau meetings.5 The intended reception was to be similar to

---

two previous occasions that year - in June and November - when Mau leaders returned from New Zealand. On these two occasions, men wanted on warrant had paraded with the Mau but the police had taken no action to arrest them. This time according to Allen, he determined that this flaunting of the law with impunity would not be tolerated and he ordered at least one wanted man to be arrested. In his report to the Minister on this fatal incident, he wrote,

It seemed to me impossible to allow persons wanted by the Police to be paraded in this manner, and I therefore gave consideration to the arrest of at least one such person if similar action should be taken by the Mau on this occasion. I accordingly instructed Inspector Braisby to be in readiness to arrest one of the wanted men and selected one K. Mata'u to be arrested if brought in to the town. This man was chosen for the reason that he is recognised, and he is one of those for whom a warrant was issued for assault in June last.6

On the morning of 27 December Mr Rudolf Kruse, a Director of Nelson's firm, approached Braisby and requested that Smyth and Hall-Skelton be allowed to land at the Tivoli wharf rather than at the Customs wharf. His reason for this request was that 'many friends and other people' would like to meet Smyth and Hall-Skelton on their arrival and the Tivoli wharf was a more appropriate place for the reception particularly as there was construction work being carried out at the Customs wharf. Braisby did not give Kruse permission immediately but consulted Allen over the request and in the afternoon he notified Kruse by phone that permission was granted. However before Kruse left his office in the morning, and before consulting with the Administrator, Braisby told him to let the Mau know that if men wanted on warrants paraded, they would be arrested. Kruse told Braisby that he was not a representative of the Mau and that he doubted if the Mau would heed such a warning delivered

by him. Still he undertook to pass on the message if he saw the Mau leaders. Later that day Kruse met Tamasese at Vaimoso to tell him about the landing at Tivoli wharf and he also passed on the message from Braisby. According to Kruse, Tamasese, on hearing Braisby's warning, smiled and said that he would discuss it 'with the others' that night. At the same time Kruse felt that Tamasese did not take the warning seriously.\(^7\) Tuimaleali'ifano testified during the inquest that Tamasese in fact mentioned the warning and that he had counselled Tamasese both that night and before the march started the following morning, not to permit the wanted men to participate in the procession.\(^8\)

As we have seen earlier though, the final decision for the Mau rested with the village/district representatives and there is no evidence that they received the warning.

After his consultations with Allen, Braisby drew up action plans and that evening gathered all his forces and gave them their instructions. The plans were comprehensive and well-rehearsed because Braisby was certain that his warning would not be heeded and that if an arrest was attempted violence would result.\(^9\) Strangely enough, Braisby, although certain that there would be violence, chose to be absent from the scene of action at the crucial time.

The Territory's Chief Justice J.H. Luxford who acted as coroner at the inquest which followed found that the measures taken by the police were reasonable and justified except for the rifle fire which

\(^7\) Braisby to Sec. to Admin., 30 Dec. 1929; R. Kruse's testimony, Evidence of Proceedings of Inquest: A.O. 25/1-9.

\(^8\) Tuimaleali'ifano's testimony, Evidence of Proceedings of Inquest, A.O. 25/1-9.

fatally wounded Tamasese and two men – Tuia and Migao – who went to his aid. He added though that 'In circumstances as then prevailing it is inevitable that some action will be taken which may appear at the time to be justified, but when inquired into subsequently will be found to have been unnecessary'. As for the Mau, they had defied the law and paid the consequences, notwithstanding that government had allowed that defiance of the law to develop to a critical stage.

The Mau regarded the coroner's findings as biased and unsatisfactory. Certainly there were several important matters which the inquest failed to clear up. For example, there was the issue of who were killed by revolver fire, rifle bullets or the Lewis gun; Dr Herbert Hutson who examined the dead and treated the wounded testified that he did not see anyone with more than one bullet wound, but Hall-Skelton told the inquest that he saw several Mau casualties carrying more than one wound. Neither the Mau's lawyer nor the coroner pursued the matter. But Slipper who represented the deceased Samoans, at least should have persisted over the issue, particularly as there were avenues clearly open to him to resolve this matter. He could for instance have produced photographic evidence – the Mau and the families of the dead men engaged the highly respected Apia photographer John Tattersall to photograph the men and their wounds – and a statement by Tattersall on what he saw and photographed would have been invaluable. Then there was the matter of policemen using rifles after the retreat from the clash on Beach road.

---

10 'Coroner's Findings ...', AJHR, A-4B, 1930.


12 Administrator to Tattersall, 30 Dec. 1929, A.O. 25/1-9. Allen was worried about these photographs and requested Tattersall to notify him before releasing them.
This matter, including all the relevant orders and instructions, and the fact that only eighteen of twenty men in the supporting party went onto Beach road - the senior policeman said no one was left at the station to cover a retreat - could also have been well exposed by incisive questioning. That those and other matters were not cleared up satisfactorily must be blamed largely on Slipper's ineptitude, so that although the Administrator refused to guarantee safe conduct to some people in the Mau - by then declared a seditious organisation - whom Slipper wanted as witnesses, they could hardly have made any difference to the final outcome. Slipper had the full right of cross-examination and was able to call 22 out of the 35 witnesses that appeared before the coroner. But his questioning of leading witnesses, particularly those called by the government, showed incompetence of almost criminal magnitude and highlighted again the tremendous disadvantage the Mau was put to in relation to its legal representatives. This lack of competent legal representation was first demonstrated during the Royal Commission sitting in 1927 and would be demonstrated again in the following years.

In the situation that existed at the time it seems a futile exercise to put the blame for what occurred on any one party. On one hand, government had a duty to administer the affairs of the territory and a crucial part of that duty was to uphold the existing law, whether it was 'good' or 'bad' law. The Administration had failed miserably in this duty, and its failure in the past to arrest wanted men who had participated in Mau processions rendered Braisby's indirect warning on the matter ludicrous. It was hardly unrealistic for the Mau to disregard this warning under the circumstances.

On the other hand, there could be no doubt the Mau people knew that continued flouting of the law, particularly in a way openly insulting
to government, would one day lead to a violent confrontation. If this had not occurred before it was certainly not due to discretion and good judgement on their part. The general confrontation had progressed to a stage where there were really only two alternatives remaining, given the steadfast refusal of the Mau to discuss a settlement: use of force by government, or New Zealand to abdicate and leave the territory to the Samoans to do as they wished. As there was never any possibility of the second alternative being realised, the use of force appeared inevitable. The Mau leadership contained too astute politicians not to appreciate the realities of the situation and even though the government had been erratic in carrying out its duty, it was the Mau which, each time it paraded wanted men in Apia, was knowingly chancing the inevitable.

This incident marked a change in Allen's policy of dealing with the Mau. For several months before this fatal clash occurred, Allen had desisted from taking a strong line, believing that the Mau was gradually declining due to internal disagreements. Even the New Zealand government queried Allen's inaction over the Mau pickets and interference with traffic at Vaimoso and Lepea. It would seem that this time Allen's hand was forced by Braisby when he sent the warning to the Mau that wanted men would be arrested if they paraded. Braisby informed Allen that he had given the warning and the Administrator chose to support him, although obviously like Braisby, he was fully aware of the high probability of violence resulting from this initiative. In all, eleven Mau members died as a result of the shooting that morning - the last one died in February 1930 - and over fifty were wounded. Of the police party involved, one died and a few others received minor injuries; a remarkable result given that the police had asserted they were under an intense barrage of stones, and it was an established fact accepted by the police, that a stone thrown by a Samoan was a lethal weapon.
The day after the shooting, Allen in response to an offer of help from the Prime Minister cabled that no immediate assistance was needed, except more ammunition and Mills bombs. He added that offers of assistance from Malo Samoans were pouring in and he anticipated 'the general effect [of the shooting] will be good though Skelton's presence here will tend to encourage confirmation of the trouble'. Prime Minister Ward responded immediately, suggesting deporting Skelton and perhaps even Smyth; but Allen considered such action unjustified just then because Skelton was collecting material for a court case while 'Smyth is an ass'. Allen was waiting for the Mau reaction after the funerals were over before recommending a comprehensive policy on handling the Mau under the changed circumstances. In the meantime, he decided after consultation with the Fautua to adopt an aggressive stance towards the Mau.

In New Zealand Ward summoned his Cabinet Ministers from their holidays to his bedside in Wellington on the last day of the year (30th in Samoa), and the same day he advised the Administrator of Cabinet's decision to make available at Suva the cruiser Dunedin to be at his call, and assured him that 'in case of Mau aggression Cabinet is willing place all assistance at your disposal which in your judgement may be necessary'. At the same time Cabinet stressed that it would prefer to


14 PM to Administrator, 29 Dec. 1929; Administrator to EA, 29 Dec. 1929: A.O. 25/1-9.

15 PM to Administrator, 30 Dec. 1929, A.O. 25/1-9.
have the opportunity of considering any major steps Allen intended taking; a requirement which 'most upset' the Governor-General who expressed in very strong terms his feeling that the Administrator was being hamstrung at a critical time by the New Zealand government. Such was the intensity of the Governor-General's criticisms that Sir Joseph was moved to reply, 'Your Excellency will appreciate that the government and not the Administrator have to take full responsibility for whatever occurs in Samoa and in this respect I will say that this government do not fear criticism, but they must realise their responsibilities and require to carry public opinion in New Zealand with them'.

A week after the shooting Allen concluded that the Mau had 'lost heart and is disorganised'; if government maintained its aggressive policy 'we can now break up the Mau and probably without bloodshed'. On this premise Allen recommended that he require the Mau to hand over twenty men wanted on 'criminal charges' - an extravagant term - within five days, failing which he would proceed with force to arrest them; that with regard to leaders not on this list, he be authorised under the Samoa Amendment Act 1927 to confine them to their own villages; and that the Mau be notified to disperse to their home villages from the Apia area. To enforce these measures Allen said he would require 'more force at my command and you should send warship to Suva as suggested to proceed here when required', assuming that the warship would carry a

17 PM to Governor-General, 4 Jan. 1930, IT 1/23/8-15.
landing force of about a hundred and twenty men. All the recommendations were immediately approved.

Allen put his intentions into effect at once. The list of twenty charged or convicted with criminal offences included Faumuina (abusive language), Matau Karauna (assault) and Autagavaia (threatening to kill). The second list contained sixty names of those whom the Administrator required to meet him at Mulinu'u on 8 January. On this list appeared Tuimaleali'ifano's name. Accompanying these lists was a notice requiring Samoans who did not belong to Paleata and Vaimauga districts to leave these districts before 11 January on the grounds that these districts were 'disturbed areas', as proclaimed by Richardson in early 1928, although completely ignored by the Mau and not enforced by government since that time.

The day following the serving of these notices, the Mau met in a critical fono at Vaimoso to decide the response to Allen's demands. Present at the meeting were lawyers Slipper and Hall-Skelton and they apparently advised the Mau to agree to the Administrator's requirements so as to avoid further bloodshed. The Mau leadership, however, was uneasy and regarded the notices as an excuse to lure them out to be shot. They did not trust Allen and they did not believe he had any intentions of settling the confrontation any other way but by force. But they were not prepared to abandon the Mau. They therefore decided neither to surrender 'wanted' men nor to meet the Administrator at Mulinu'u but instead to evacuate their members from their bases around Apia, move to

19 Ibid.

villages outside the Faleata and Vaimauga districts and be prepared to shift into the hills if they were pursued by government forces.

Faumuina who had been unanimously chosen to succeed Tamasese to the recently created post of General Secretary of the Mau, the Mau komiti (twenty in number), the secretarial staff and other assistants did not however join these parties. They moved inland of Apia and coordinated Mau activities from a shifting base in the hills.  

This decision was put into effect that same night, encouraged along by rumours that Allen intended to attack Vaimoso. The Mau office was closed, the flag lowered and by 9 p.m. Mau parties started moving out. Those who resided at Vaimoso and Lepea - some twelve hundred - headed for the villages of Leauva'a and Levi further west along the coast, while some five hundred who had lived at Matautu and Apia villages made their way to Falefa and Falevao villages along the northeastern coastline. The parties used motor vehicles and boats but most walked. Their movements were quiet and orderly; by morning the four faitotoa around Apia were empty of the Mau.

It appears that the decision to evacuate by the Mau leadership was taken without waiting for directions from the villages/districts. Directly after the shooting, messengers were dispatched to the villages/districts with the news and asking for directions on the next move. News of Savai'i Mau parties preparing to depart for Apia was received on the same day that Allen handed down his notices to the Mau. When

21 Mau representatives to Taisi, 9 Jan. 1930, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia; Braisby to Sec. to Admin., 8 Jan. 1930, A.O. 25/1-9; Information from Taulealea Taulauniu of Safune, Savai'i.

22 Ibid.
these Savai'í parties arrived in Upolu they found the Mau already at Leauva'a and Levi. It appears that the Savai'í opinion counselled against meeting the police in an open clash because the police had guns and other weapons while the Mau possessed none, and it also cautioned against provoking the police or giving them an excuse to use their guns again. Those Mau people already in Apia were advised to stay where they were though, and more people would be sent in to bolster their numbers, particularly in anticipation of police arrests of men wanted by government. Mau supporters in the villages, however, had not been in Apia during the fatal shooting and had not experienced the trauma of seeing defenceless men shot down. At the same time the decision to disperse from Apia was taken firstly to deny the police any excuse for further shooting and secondly to give both sides a cooling down period. The headquarters in Apia had not been abandoned for good. Indeed the Mau intended to return to its strongholds around Apia after only two weeks in the outer districts.

Allen, however, was not going to allow the Mau to return to Apia. He believed that the Mau departure from Apia indicated clearly that it was breaking up and its members demoralised; he intended to capitalise on that demoralised spirit and crush the Mau completely. He therefore asked the New Zealand government to consider ways of granting him legal powers to outlaw the Mau as an organisation and also powers to deal with anyone, especially any European, who became involved in promoting the Mau.

---

23 Information from Taulealea Taulauniu of Safune, Savai'í; Resident Commissioner to Braisby, 6 Jan. 1930, A.O. 25/1-9; Administrator to Minister, 3 Feb. 1930, A.O. 25/1-10.

24 Mau representatives to Taisi, 9 Jan. 1930, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.
The New Zealand government responded by suggesting an Order-in-Council empowering Allen to declare the Mau illegal and seditious while at the same time providing for the imposition of a penalty on any person, European or Samoan, assisting or associating with it or attending meetings under its auspices. This approach was suggested because it would 'avoid the necessity for formal evidence at trial of undoubted seditious nature of organisation and thus preclude opportunity of propaganda evidence'.

Allen immediately agreed to the suggested Order-in-Council - 'it seems exactly what is needed especially with regard to Europeans' - and requested that it be proceeded with at once. Together with the warship, which departed from New Zealand on the night of 8 January (N.Z. time) complete with a Moth aeroplane, tents and a reporter from the Auckland Star and sailed directly to Apia at Allen's request instead of standing by at Suva, Allen was provided with all the requirements which he felt were necessary for a sustained campaign of aggression against the Mau.

But that was not the end of his problems. The inquest, which commenced on 2 January 1930 was going well for the government; still, he was forced into an awkward position when he was requested to guarantee safe conduct for Mau people who were required as witnesses at the inquest and he could not see his way to give such a guarantee. The allegations that the inquest was less than fair to the Samoans were valid in themselves and were skilfully exploited in anti-government propaganda even though it was doubtful that further witnesses would have materially improved the Samoans' case, given their lawyer's dismal performance during that hearing.


On another matter, Allen refused transmission of an account of the shooting to the New Zealand press because in his view the account was 'offensive, untrue and seditious' and also because he felt that the account reflected on the inquest which was still in progress. Hall-Skelton objected, and cabled Holland to raise the matter with the New Zealand government. Holland duly obliged and both the government in New Zealand and the Administrator were required to come up with justification of the Administrator's use of censorship on correspondence. At the same time as this issue was being thrashed out, attempts were made - apparently led by Hall-Skelton and Smyth - to organise a public meeting amongst the white community. The attempts were unsuccessful in the end, but Allen was again put to much trouble - including police intervention in the preliminary meetings - to stamp out that potential source of embarrassment. Hall-Skelton and Smyth left Samoa soon after.

On 10 January the Order-in-Council which contained powers authorising the Administrator to declare the Mau a seditious organisation arrived from New Zealand. The same day he issued three further notices to the Mau: virtually the whole of the north coastline of Upolu was declared a 'disturbed area' and non-residents of that area were asked to leave for their own homes immediately. Furthermore heavy restrictions on movements, as well as a ban on fono and ta'alolo, were proclaimed for the 'disturbed areas'. The Order was published the following day and became effective on Sunday 12 January. The same day, the Dunedin arrived in Apia. The Mau was declared a seditious organisation on Monday and the operations by combined police and military forces commenced immediately.

---


The arrival of the Dunedin acted as the final confirmation to the Samoans that Allen intended using firepower to crush the Mau. There were fears that the warship would bombard the villages in which the Mau had congregated. Because they did not want these villages to suffer and because they believed that they would be shot on sight, quite apart from not wanting to give up the Mau, the decision was taken to take refuge in the bush. Apart from a few who could not possibly survive in the bush, such as the old man Tuimaleali'ifano, all the Mau men then present in the villages along the north coast took to the hills.  

As all of them had spent a large portion of their time in the bush during the normal course of their lives, working their plantations, hunting and felling trees for the building of fale and boats, the prospect of staying out there was not a daunting one. They could erect bush shelters within the hour and an inelaborate Samoan fale took only a few hours to put up with so many helping hands available. For food, the plantations in whichever location they were at provided their requirements and of course they did not need cooking ranges, pots and other kitchen utensils to prepare and eat their food. In addition, those that remained in the villages nearby - mainly women and young people - prepared loads of food and took it up to the fugitive Mau. For drinking they collected rainwater by using leaves attached to tree trunks if they were a distance from rivers and lakes, and there was always available coconuts, with their plentiful supply of juice and flesh. They were in fact set for a lengthy stay if the circumstances demanded it.

Allen's objectives and the means for achieving them were simple. He aimed to secure 'those required on warrants or otherwise, and dispersing the rest to their villages' and to achieve this, he planned to corner the Mau at the western end of Upolu. To ensure that the wanted men did not slip over to Savai'i he had virtually all the boats which were found on the north coastline of Upolu seized and brought to Mulinu'u. The New Zealand government which was told that only Mau boats had been seized felt that this was an illegal act, but Allen blandly asserted that his action was legal while the boats were used in support of a seditious organisation.  

The Administrator did not launch an operation on the eastern end of Upolu conjointly with his initiative in the west, believing that the staunchest adherents of the Mau were concentrated in the west and that if he succeeded in removing those from the councils of the Mau, it would quickly die out. Also, several villages on the eastern half of Upolu such as Lauli'i, those in Falealili district and several in Aleipata had remained nominally Malo supporters and he did not expect the Mau fugitives in that part of the island to last for any lengthy period of time amongst those Malo people. He did, however, establish police posts to keep an eye on the movements of the Mau on that side of the island and he sent emissaries, such as Tupua Sam Meredith, formerly of the Citizens' Committee but now an M.L.C. and a Malo supporter, to try and talk these Mau people into giving up. These missions failed to win over the Mau members, while at the same time the Malo villages when visited by the Mau treated them as visiting Samoan malaga parties and accorded

them all the courtesies and hospitality befitting the titles of the visiting matai and befitting also the standing in Samoan tradition of the villages and districts represented in these parties.  

During the first two weeks of operations, when combined teams of police and military men conducted daily excursions into the interior of Upolu, concentrating on the area between Apia and Mulifanua village along the northwest coast, nothing was seen of the Mau except youths carrying food inland. The Administration in this period resorted to arresting a few of the Mau matai, including Tuimaleali'ifano, as well as a few taulelea found in villages who probably had nothing to do with the Mau. These men were charged with minor offences and dispatched to their villages while Tuimaleali'ifano was held in custody at Mulinu'u for a week 'to keep the old fellow out of trouble'.

Saipai'a, an important titleholder but without influence within the Mau - though his title had entitled him to a conspicuous place in the Mau leadership - indicated that he had left the Mau, and Allen, in need of positive results to report, made much of Saipai'a's 'defection', although he was fully aware of his lack of influence and support within the Mau.

After two weeks of fruitless sorties into the bush, the government forces had their first break. On 22 January two Mau camps - including the principal one on the western side of Upolu - were located. On the main camp, the Inspector of Police reported,

It consisted of about five acres of bush land in tall timber. The fales [sic] were large. Some of them would accommodate 100 men. Twenty three fales [sic] had been built of bush timber. The roofs were well made and were

---

33 Administrator to EA, 18 Jan. 1930, A.O. 25/1-10; Administrator to EA, 3 Feb. 1930, A.O. 25/1-10.
waterproof, thatched and tied with sinnet. Banana leaves and wild tomua [sic] being used. Several of the fales [sic] had floorings of light poles laid on thick branches and altogether were quite comfortable and weather proof.\textsuperscript{34}

The police/military forces estimated that over a thousand men had used this camp, that practically all their food had come from the villages on the coast and that the camp had been occupied twenty-four hours before they had stumbled onto it. No occupant of the Mau camp was seen. The armed parties, however, came across several groups of youths carrying loads of food and drinks inland and they captured the food as well as some of the youths. They also arrested as a matter of course any Samoan males they found inland away from their villages, working in their plantations or engaged in some task in the forest, on suspicion that those Samoans might be Mau supporters.\textsuperscript{35}

During one of these encounters - the Mau in the bush were under strict orders not to engage the armed government forces in any type of hostility - a young man, Molia from the village of Safune in Savai'i, was mindlessly shot in circumstances which generated a much more bitter feeling amongst the Samoans toward government than even the shooting on 28 December 1929. A party of about thirty police and military men had surprised a group of about ten youths inland of Fasito'otai village. These young men were part of a network which relayed food from the villages to the Mau in the bush, and they were waiting for the food to arrive; when they were pounced on. All succeeded in escaping except for Molia, who was stopped by a bullet.\textsuperscript{36} According to the

\textsuperscript{34} Braisby to Sec. to Admin., 23 Jan. 1930, A.O. 25/1-9.
\textsuperscript{36} Inquest on Molia, A.O. 6/8.52; Braisby to Sec. to Admin., 23 Jan. 1930, A.O. 25/1-9; Administrator to EA, 23 Jan. 1930, A.O. 25/1-11.
version of the incident told amongst the Samoans, Molia had been on his haunches looking up pleadingly at the white policeman, when this man shot him. He then told the critically wounded Molia to stand up and walk to the track. This was a kind of callousness which the Samonas found most distasteful notwithstanding their acceptance of the existing state of conflict. In their talk the word *papalaqi* became interchanged with the word *manu* - animals.\(^{37}\)

The evidence given during the inquest into the shooting - Molia died four days after being shot - established from the testimonies of the two white policemen present at the shooting that Molia had thrown a stone underarm at the policeman - Lance-Corporal L.R. Ricketts - pursuing him, and Ricketts, 'fearing' for his life, shot him. Since Molia was by himself in the clearing and was also covered by another policeman with his revolver, Ricketts' statement that he feared for his life against an unarmed youth - Molia said he was 16 years old but the authorities asserted he looked 28 - was unconvincing. So was his testament that he fired as he ducked to avoid the stone; he was said to be a short man and it would be reasonable to assume that if his statement was correct, his gun would have been close to the ground when it was fired. However Molia, who Ricketts said was standing at the time, was shot just below his ribcage and the bullet followed a downward course in his body ending up lodged in his upper thigh. Molia's deposition, taken by the Chief Justice at hospital, stated he was shot while on the ground, having collapsed from exhaustion. During the inquest, several policemen who testified implied very strongly that the shooting was motivated by a sense of revenge on the part of the white policemen for the death of

\(^{37}\) Mau representatives to Taisi, 6 Feb. 1930, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.
Constable Abraham. 38

The Chief Justice brought in a formal verdict that Molia had died from Ricketts' bullet, but added that 'it would be improper at this stage to make any comment on the case'. This strange statement was given clearer meaning when Allen caused charges of manslaughter to be brought against Ricketts. These were subsequently dismissed. But there was an interesting twist; the four assessors - local white residents - who heard the case with the Chief Justice, stated in their unanimous acquittal decision that Ricketts was 'justified in firing on Molia for his own protection, believing his life to be in danger'. 39 Allen himself, as hard a colonial official as any, felt that the shooting was unjustified 'as no life was in danger' and had offered his resignation on the strength of that belief. 40 His offer was declined by the Minister.

To the Mau, the assessors' opinion was typical of the attitude adopted by the local whites, many of whom had initially been supporters of the dissident movement. They were now offering their services to the government forces as informers and as guides - a local planter was the guide for the party that shot Molia and his account of the incident was most condemnatory of Molia's party, much more so than any of the police evidence. Nelson, who had always been careful to present to the Samoans the good side of members of the white community, wrote from New Zealand:

My heart feels the shame when I think of our brethren Europeans and halfcastes and some Samoans who have dodged from the course that we had all decided to take.

---

38 See A.O. 6/8/52.


I cannot forget the days when this thing was initiated, when most of the papalagi doubted that the Samoans would stick to it, believing that only the papalagi could be trusted to stand fast. But now we see the faithful and the unfaithful. Only a few Samoans have opted out but the papalagi and most of the halfcastes have now shown that they are unfaithful.41

Since late 1928 the Samoans in the Mau had known that they were virtually on their own. They rather preferred things that way, recognising that Nelson was probably the only white who could be of any real assistance to them. On the other hand it confirmed their view that when the crunch came whites would reject the Samoans and side with their own kind. Those whites who persisted with the Mau - Nelson was obviously the best example of this - were naturally regarded as men of exceptional courage and conviction. They were respected and admired. The trust in Nelson was thus largely a result of the Samoan perception that he was prepared to sacrifice his wealth and position, but above all prepared to deny his white blood for his Samoan side.42

IV

With the discovery and destruction of the main Mau camp, Allen and the government forces believed they had the Mau cornered and increased their efforts in an attempt to bring the conflict to a quick end. The districts of Lefaga and Falelatai on the southwestern coast were declared disturbed areas and forces on land, supported by the spotter

41 A letter from Taisi [to the Mau komiti], 3 May 1930, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.

42 Information from Paō of Asau village.
plane and naval units on the inter-island vessel Lady Roberts, swept onto the south coast of Upolu to round up the Mau men who were believed to have crossed over the mountain range from the north side after their camp had been destroyed. Stepped up also were night raids on the villages throughout the whole of Upolu and especially those in the disturbed areas. On the pretext of searching for Mau men who might have sneaked in from the bush under cover of darkness for food and shelter, government forces entered fale (p) and freely used their bayonets to slash through matting, mosquito nets, clothes' chests and beds. They did not find any Mau men but they persisted in these searches, humiliating the women and terrorising the children.

During these night raids and also in daytime searches, the government forces senselessly wrecked furniture and removed or destroyed fishing apparatus - spears, goggles and nets - and anything else, such as battery-powered torches, which the people in the villages might conceivably use to obtain food or to assist the Mau. When a delegation of Samoan women asked Allen and the Commander of the naval forces to cease these night raids and searches, Allen firmly told them 'that they had only their own husbands and families to blame for them, and they must use their influence with their own families to end the Mau ...'. This callous response helped spark off the women's Mau.

Allen's response to the women was partly due to his frustrations at being unable to pin down the Mau. After several weeks of military

---

44 Mau representatives to Taisi, 6 Feb. 1930, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia; Administrator to Minister, 17 Feb. 1930, A.O. 25/1-10.
45 Administrator to Minister, 17 Feb. 1930, A.O. 25/1-10.
operations, not a single important Mau leader - Allen had a list of eighty - except for Tuimaleali'ifano, had been secured. The Mau parties in the bush had evaded the government forces with ease and the declaration of disturbed areas, the imposition of restrictions on travel and other Samoan activities, as well as the subjection of those in the villages to intimidating tactics, had not stopped the supply of food and intelligence reaching the fugitive Mau. The disintegration of the Mau confidently predicted by Allen just did not look like eventuating.

It was time to take another look at the situation and Allen whittled the possibilities down to two alternatives. The first was for the New Zealand government to dispatch immediately to Samoa a force of two hundred and fifty men which it had recruited and given training at Trentham. It was thought that these additional men would place continuous pressure on the Mau, which would result in 'a fair prospect of securing the leaders which is the most important object to aim at'. The Commodore favoured this option. The second alternative was for the naval forces in Samoa to continue as they had been doing for as long as possible and then for the Samoan constabulary to maintain whatever pressure they could on the Mau after the navy had left. Allen preferred this alternative. 'My own impression is that this is all that will be required, and that no further force will be needed'. He did, however, ask for additional powers to control traffic, food supplies and to censor mail. He also floated the idea of imposing martial law.

The New Zealand government, by an Order-in-Council, immediately granted Allen the additional powers he had requested and Allen put these

---

46 Administrator to Minister, 3 Feb. 1930, A.O. 25/1-10.
47 Ibid.
to use directly on the arrival of the Order in Apia. Members of the police force as well as the military were given virtually unfettered powers to detain and search any person travelling in Upolu, to seize and examine and if necessary to possess and retain anything carried by such persons, and finally members of the government forces 'may employ such force as is necessary ...' to effect these duties. By proclamation Allen restricted all travel on Upolu - outside a one-mile radius from the Central Office in Apia - to hours between 5.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.; travellers were to use only the main road along the coast and defined public paths. Medical practitioners and white missionaries were not affected by this proclamation and a written permit from the police also placed one beyond these restrictions. All those travelling by sea around Upolu were required to call into Apia harbour - though only between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. - and offer themselves up to H.M.S. Dunedin or any other designated vessel for examination. Finally, all those who travelled on Upolu were not allowed to carry any amount of food greater than required for their sustenance during the trip, unless specifically authorised by the Administrator himself or his appointee. All these measures, according to Allen, were necessary to prevent food and information getting to the Mau people in the hills.

Soon, however, he had to admit that they were not effective and after trying other approaches such as dropping propaganda leaflets on Mau positions in the bush, pursuing tentative approaches from certain Mau leaders, and encouraging missionary initiatives, and coming up with Mau stragglers only, Allen began to doubt his judgement given only two weeks earlier and started to come around to Commodore Blake's view that the force standing by in New Zealand would be needed. He wrote, 'I had

48 The Western Samoa Gazette, 7 Feb. 1930 and 8 Feb. 1930; copies of all Orders and Instructions are found in A.O. 25/1-10.
confidently expected some [Mau leaders] would have been caught before now... It is essential to obtain some success with the leaders before our efforts can at all be relaxed. I reluctantly think, therefore, that the force you are preparing will probably be needed'.

Allen had just then discovered after six weeks of continuous operations that the main body of the Mau which his forces had been pursuing did not include the core of the Mau leadership which had remained in the hills inland of Apia since 7 January and had coordinated the activities of the Mau from there. Through messengers, they had kept in constant touch with all the Mau parties as well as Apia and thence Nelson in Auckland.

On Allen's discovering this, the armed forces were pulled in from the south of Upolu and an intensive operation was mounted for Faumuina and the Mau leadership. This concentrated campaign again failed. At the beginning of February the Mau leaders had dispersed and joined the other Mau parties, leaving with Faumuina only one representative each of those Mau parties east and west of Upolu. Two of the strongest and most militant leaders, Autagavaia Siaupiu of Palauli and Lavea Taussitino of Safotu, both of Savai'i, were the chosen representatives. With messengers and other taulelea this party was reduced from about fifty to under ten and in this way they felt that the control centre of the Mau would be able to evade capture more easily while still being able to function effectively. When Allen launched his operation to capture the Mau leaders inland of Apia, he did not

---

49 Administrator to Minister, 17 Feb. 1930, A.O. 25/1-10.

50 Mau representatives to Taisi, 6 Feb. 1930, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia; Administrator to EA, 14 Feb. 1930, A.O. 25/1-10.
realise that it was doomed to failure from the start, for not only was he searching for a few Samoans in dense tropical forests but that part of the hills where the Mau leaders moved was known intimately to Faumuina - it was his land.

While government forces were engaged in this futile search, Mau parties in other parts of Upolu came down the hills, especially at nights, and joined occupants of villages near their camps in feasting. This provided welcome relief, for it had been a particularly wet January/February and hiding out in the bush had become uncomfortable, particularly for the older men, some of whom had to be carried around on stretchers fashioned out of sticks and leaves.  

To add to Allen's worries, increasing numbers of the naval contingent, unused as they were to tropical conditions, were succumbing to sickness and the Commodore was sufficiently disturbed by the condition of his men to request an almost immediate departure for New Zealand. Government in Wellington was not happy with this, partly because it did not want to send the Samoa Military Police unless it was absolutely necessary, partly because it wanted the naval party to be in Samoa when the military police arrived if they were sent, but mainly because the Minister of Defence - Hon. J.G. Cobbe - was on his way to Samoa and they wanted his views before taking any action.

51 Information from Toluono Lama of Palauli, Savai'i; T.N. Reid, A Man Like Bati, (London, 1960) provides an excellent account of the weather conditions at the time when the Mau was in the bush, and recaptures also the general atmosphere in Samoa during the Mau.

Cobbe arrived on 19 February and conciliatory overtures on his behalf, conveyed mainly through the white missionaries, intensified, and soon succeeded in persuading the Mau to come in for a conference. This success was due largely to two factors - trust amongst the Mau in the word of the missionaries that everyone in the Mau could attend without fear of being arrested or molested in any way by the military forces or the police, and secondly trust that Cobbe would ensure that the promises made by the missionaries on behalf of the government would be upheld. The Mau had long since lost all faith in Allen and believed him to be a vicious, dishonourable man.

The Mau leadership saw Cobbe as a man more likely to be sympathetic to their requirements if only because he had not been personally involved in the confrontation and therefore should not be embittered towards them. As a member of the New Zealand cabinet he was an active decision-maker on Samoan affairs, which role gave him a higher rank and status to the Administrator. The Samoans were always sensitive to matters of this nature and would invariably deal with persons of standing almost as a compulsive demonstrative of their own preoccupation with such matters.

So the Mau came down from the hills and in a series of meetings held amongst its supporters just prior to negotiations with government, decided that whatever the result of the talks, they would not return to the bush. They would not resist the armed forces, but neither would they

---

53 Mau representatives to Taisi, 8 Mar. 1930, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia; Cobbe to EA, 2 Mar. 1930; Administrator to EA, 25 Feb. 1930; R. Bartlett to Administrator, 28 Feb. 1930 and 2 Mar 1930: A.O. 25/1-10.
give up the Mau. On the government side Cobbe was optimistic of negotiating a satisfactory settlement with the Mau and advised the New Zealand government not to make any definite arrangements for the dispatch of the military police to Samoa. Allen, on the other hand, after consistently arguing that if only the Mau would agree to sit down with him and talk matters over the conflict would have ended long since, now said on the eve of such talks taking place that he was not optimistic of a satisfactory outcome.

The Administrator might have felt annoyed at being told by the Prime Minister just how important it was to obtain a settlement and being directed that should a deadlock emerge, points at issue should be immediately conveyed to Cabinet for a decision and in the meantime not to allow the conference to disperse. In his response to the Prime Minister Allen said, 'It should be understood we are not dealing with civilized or intelligent people and negotiations which would be conducted in such a case are not possible here. Samoans are devoid of reasoning faculty and success or failure must therefore depend on a few simple issues ...'.

Throughout the talks that followed Allen's conduct betrayed a lack of confidence and also a lack of knowledge on how to handle the situation, with the result that he was reduced to falling back on a show of contempt for the Mau leaders and their thoughtful approach to the

54 Mau representatives to Taisi, 8 Mar. 1930, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apla.


56 Administrator to EA, 2 Mar. 1930; PM to Administrator, 2 Mar. 1930: A.O. 25/1-10.
negotiations. He appeared obsessed with the fear that the Samoans were playing with him and he therefore adopted bulldozing tactics and at the first meeting he made three demands - end the Mau; surrender those wanted by the court for trial; Mau leaders to meet the Administrator in fono whenever required - which he refused to allow to be subjected to negotiation. Furthermore he required immediate replies from the Mau on his demands, insisting that they were subjects that did not require much time for resolving.  

Because there was never any question of ending the Mau under the conditions then obtaining, the actual response to the demands did not pose any difficulties. The point at issue was more whether they should even bother to discuss these demands with the Malo. In the end they decided to play out this pretence, first to give the Mau a chance of getting together unimpeded to discuss future directions, secondly to impress on the Minister that they were reasonable men and because they just could not resist the challenge of embroiling themselves in political discussions.

While Allen's insecurity and inflexibility predetermined the failure of the talks, the considerations which prompted the Mau to indulge in the discussions ensured that they would not be hurried, but would proceed through recognised fa'a Samoa procedures which are required in dealing with such matters. Faumuina, on behalf of the Mau, told the government delegation: 'No one could claim control of the Mau; there was no one leader. All were equal. They must therefore have a decision on behalf of the whole of Samoa. They desired time to thoroughly discuss the Administrator's proposals'.

57 'Notes on meeting with Mau leaders at Vaimoso', 3 Mar. 1930; Administrator to EA, 27 Feb. 1930: A.O. 25/1-10.
58 'Notes on meeting with Mau leaders ...', 3 Mar. 1930, A.O. 25/1-10.
On the second morning (Tuesday 4 March) Allen returned to Vaimoso, as he had promised the previous day, to receive the Mau's reply. Faumuina appeared by himself with Tuimaleali'iifano and informed the Administrator's party that no decision had been reached. Whereupon Allen, probably angered by the rebuff from the Mau, returned to his office and cabled the Minister of External Affairs that 'My impression is we shall get no further, that no answer is intended and that we shall not be able to prolong the conference beyond tomorrow because there is nothing more to say and therefore we shall have to commence action again'.

He went on to say that he believed the second and third points presented no difficulty but that the first one was dividing the Mau and no answers were intended. He was wrong again, the Mau answered the first point the following day - the Mau would not end - but continued its deliberations over the other two demands.

With that, the Mau deflated Allen's act and once again placed the onus on him to come up with another proposal to end the confrontation. Cobbe suggested a more conciliatory approach, but Allen convinced him that his demands were the very minimum he could allow the Mau. So another Ministerial visit, undertaken without definite policy directions from Wellington except to play it by ear and trust the man on the spot, ended in failure to bring the Mau to a satisfactory cessation.  

The Mau, however, decided to give up to the authorities the wanted men, although it insisted that these men had not been protected

---

59 Administrator to EA, 4 Mar. 1930, A.O. 25/1-10.

60 For J.G. Cobbe's report on his visit to Samoa (20 Mar. 1930), see IT 1/23/8-18.
by the Mau but had escaped capture through the incompetence of the police and the military forces. The men marched to the police station and turned themselves in. On the issue of meeting the Administrator there were differences amongst the Mau; some wanted such meetings although on the understanding that non-Mau Samoans would not participate. In the end it was decided that any meeting with the Administrator would be a waste of time until the governments both in Samoa and in New Zealand saw their way clear to meet some, if not all, of the requests made by the Mau since late 1926.61

As a parting shot, the Mau presented the Malo party with a list of seventeen 'points' which requested inter alia the dropping of charges against Mau leaders so that negotiations could be established on a secure and dignified basis; expressed dissatisfaction with the findings of the inquests into the 28 December killings and Molia's shooting; complained of the hardship suffered by the women and children; questioned the way New Zealand had carried out its mandate of Samoa and raised again the matter of the Berlin Treaty of 1889 and the 1900 Treaty which effected the division of the Samoa islands and the belief that New Zealand should abide by the terms of the treaties.62 Most of these submissions came from Nelson, by way of the Tofua that had just berthed, and were submitted by the Mau more as a gesture than anything else, because all had been made before and Allen had stated categorically that they would not be conceded; in any case the crucial decision, that the Mau would continue, had been taken.

61 P.T. (Tamasese Meaole] to Taisi, 3 Apr. 1930, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.

62 Faumuina and other Mau leaders to Administrator, 7 Mar. 1930, A.O. 25/1-10.
The conduct of these negotiations, particularly on Faumuina's part, generated dissatisfaction amongst the ranks of the Mau. Two incidents were responsible for this state of affairs, and both occurred on Wednesday 5 May. When the negotiations opened that day Faumuina informed the Malo party that the Mau would not end while on the matter of the Mau members wanted by the police the Mau had not shielded them and if the police wanted to arrest these men, then it was their job to get them. According to the new Tamasese titleholder - Tamasese Meaole - this was the decision of the Mau and Faumuina should have confined himself strictly to that, but he went beyond and indicated to the Malo party that the Mau would in fact hand over the wanted men although he had not been authorised to say so. Faumuina and the twenty members of the Mau komiti, on the other hand, maintained that the Mau had in fact decided to hand the men over, and this appeared to be borne out by the men offering themselves up at the police station, rather than waiting for the police to come and arrest them. Apart from demonstrating just how sensitive Samoans are on being properly represented in the strictest sense of the word, this incident also showed how a decision reached through consensus was easily amenable to different interpretations.

The second incident was Allen's pardon and withdrawal of the charge - abusive language - which had been preferred against Faumuina. Allen said he did this as a mark of sympathy and also as a demonstration of their genuine spirit of conciliation towards the Mau. Tamasese recounted that Faumuina's failure to reject this pardon shook 'the country', particularly when it was remembered that the late Tamasese had

63 P.T. [Tamasese Meaole] to Taisi, 3 Apr. 1930, Mau Papers, PM's Dept, Apia.
64 Mau Representatives to Taisi, 8 Mar. 1930, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.
rejected offers from the Malo of official posts and also when so many other Mau leaders still had charges hanging over their heads. 'The country was exceedingly angry with him [Faumuina]; even to the stage of some asking him if he had performed thus out of cowardice. Some felt that he was a Judas'.

In fairness to Faumuina though, his behaviour would not have appeared to indicate such a state. As pointed out above, the decision to give up the wanted men was apparently made by the Mau before Faumuina made that undertaking to the Malo party. On the question of being pardoned there are several matters to note - first, the charge against Faumuina grew out of either Allen's or Braisby's imagination. There was no basis for it and it would not have stood up in court, even in a court obviously experiencing difficulties with remaining outside politics. The charge was clearly made with the purpose of bringing Faumuina into talking distance of the authorities rather than of putting him in prison. Secondly, it would have been futile if not dishonest to reject the pardon on the spot. It was not within Faumuina's powers to reimpose a charge on himself. This was demonstrated when he led the wanted men to the police station and offered himself up to police custody saying that he did not accept his pardon, and the police told him that they could not arrest him. At the same time, Faumuina himself had been offered several official posts since the beginning of the confrontation but had rejected them.

Tamasese's account of these matters doubtless reflected certain feelings amongst the Mau people; it would appear, however, that he

---

overdramatised them somewhat with a view to the post then held by Faumuina. Nelson clearly believed this, for in responding to Tamasese he advised him: 'My own true opinion is for you to remain quiet until the country decides to appoint you - there will be opportunities'. In the meantime, he urged Tamasese to accept the leadership chosen by the Mau and work with diligence and dedication for the good of Samoa. Of course the clearest demonstration that Faumuina had not abused his position and exceeded his brief to the extent indicated by Tamasese and in the stories that have persisted even up to now, could be seen in the fact that the Mau did not remove him as 'Chief Secretary', the top administrative post in the Mau organisation.

Throughout the discussions both sides maintained a restrained hold on their presentations while remaining steadfast in their positions. The Mau, however, was prepared to negotiate - although admittedly after confirming that the Mau would not end - and the concessions on the wanted men, as well as the admission to the possibility of fono with the Administrator, were made with the purpose of persuading Allen and his party to soften their position somewhat and engage in reasonable negotiations. The Malo people however, dominated as they were by Allen's contempt for the Mau leadership, refused to recognise this opening.

Tuimaleali'ifano in a speech rebuking Allen's attitude, which the latter said was 'both rude and hostile' but in fact was merely forthright and frank, made the pertinent comment: 'We now see that you are only trying to get something good for you out of us. What about us?'.

---

66. Taisi to Tamasese, 17 Apr. 1930, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.
67. See 'Report of meeting held at Vaimoso' (5 Mar. 1930), A.O. 25/1-10.
He said that the New Zealand government had been lying about the situation in Samoa and had blamed the Mau for the continuation of the conflict and yet, he continued, referring to the 1918 epidemic and the 1929 shooting, 'thousands of Samoans have been buried in the earth' and this established that there are 'people amongst you who have committed offences'.

This was one of the major issues raised by the Mau, which argued that it was ludicrous for the government to pursue those of its members who had not paid taxes and those who wore Mau uniforms - 'there are no bullets in them' - while at the same time those responsible for shooting and killing Samoans had gone Scot free. The reference to Malo people who had committed offenses was also a thinly-veiled indication of the Mau belief that the 1929 shooting was deliberately planned and that Allen had been intimately involved in the operation. Tuimaleali'iifano concluded by returning to the central point of the Malo's refusing to negotiate: 'Now what have you given the Mau? You only urged the Mau to give up and you have nothing to give to satisfy us. The Mau will not say yes until you have put a crown on the Mau'.

Another demonstration of the hardening attitude of the Mau to Allen's inflexibility came in the form of reversing clear indications given earlier during the talks that although the Mau would not end, they would disperse to their villages and continue the work of the Mau there. In his concluding remarks Faumuina told Allen and his party that the Mau would not disperse from Apia 'and you can do what you wish with the Mau'. Allen thought that this was an empty boast and so

---

68 Ibid.; the belief that Allen was intimately involved in the 1929 fatal shooting was used as a theme of a Samoan song which is still one of the most popular in the country.
reported to his Minister in Wellington. But when the truce ended and
the armed forces checked out the Mau strongholds around Apia, they
discovered that Faumuina had meant what he said - the Mau had not
dispersed. Furthermore, the forces discovered that the Mau intended
to allow the Malo to do as it wished with them as they had told Allen.

When the police and military arrived at Vaimoso on Saturday
morning 8 March, they found the Mau matai and taulelea engaged in 'ava
ceremonies. They all vore their Mau uniforms in defiance of repeated
warnings by Allen on this specific point during the talks. On being
told that the Mau would not disperse and was waiting for a reply to
their requests, the armed forces entered the houses and started tearing
the stripes off the lavalava(p). The Mau people remained seated and
continued with their 'ava. They were then informed that they would all
be taken to prison, whereupon they finished their 'ava and then gathered
at the roadside waiting to be transported to prison. They had already
decided to embarrass the Malo with large numbers in prison, as they
had successfully done in early 1928. This time, however, only some of
the leading figures were retained by the police in prison and the rest
sent away. This group returned to Vaimoso. They were however not left
alone by the Malo forces.

Vaimoso village was immediately placed under siege conditions.
Guard posts were established in the village and strict restrictions on
movement were imposed. Males were allowed to leave but no one was

69 Administrator to EA, 8 Mar. 1930 and 6 Mar. 1930; 'Report of
meeting at Vaimoso' (5 Mar. 1930): A.O. 25/1-10.

70 P.T. [Tamasese Meaole] to Taisi, 3 Apr. 1930, Mau Papers, PM's Dept.,
Apia; Administrator to EA, 10 Mar. 1930, A.O. 25/1-10.
allowed to return and no new ones were allowed to enter. Only women
and children were permitted some freedom of movement. The troops
confiscated all the food they could find in the village and no food
was allowed in from the outside. No concessions were made for the
normal residents of Vaimoso. After two days of this treatment and with
still a core group of about 400 (Allen reported 200) refusing to shift
from Vaimoso, Allen - also recognising that starving out the people
congregated at Vaimoso was not working - changed his tactics. His armed
forces in large numbers moved in on Monday 10 March and forcibly loaded
Mau people from villages outside Vaimoso onto vehicles and boats and
delivered them bodily to their respective villages. 71

Allen was determined to keep them there with two objects in
mind - to prevent the Mau from 'coming to a head again at Vaimoso or
elsewhere' and to give the people a chance of living together once again
in their villages and hoping that time would bring harmony. The problem,
of course, was to immobilise the Mau, which had clearly indicated its
intention to contest government authority, while at the same time ensure
that the measures taken to effect immobilisation were not so outrageous
and violent that they in themselves created bitterness and resentment,
and therefore jeopardised the chances of achieving this second objective.

In the event, Allen chose to persist with his policy of aggression
against the Mau and to put pressure on Mau supporters in their villages
and districts. The declaration made the previous month restricting
travel was revoked but replaced by a declaration (dated 13 March)
regulating travel between Upolu and Savai'i so that effectively all

71 P.T. [Tamasese Meaole] to Taisi, 3 Apr. 1930, Mau Papers, PM's Dept.,
Apia; Administrator to Minister, 12 Mar. 1930, A.O. 25/1-10.
Samoans travelling between these two islands required permits. Moreover, powers to all police and military men to detain, search and arrest were extended to cover both Upolu and Savai'i and those travelling inter-island. Allen also ordered that the wearing of Mau uniform 'must be stopped' and Mau fono anywhere must be promptly dispersed. He wanted the traffic between Savai'i and Upolu to be closely watched and added another condition to the grant of travel permits - 'no permits given to anyone who has not paid all arrears of tax'.

The day after the Mau were forcibly removed from Vaimoso he ordered a police patrol to circulate throughout Upolu to break up any Mau gatherings, check on the wearing of Mau uniforms and deal with any cases of intimidation. He also had contingents of marines patrolling the 'disturbed' areas - all the north coast and southern 'A'ana - daily, to enforce the same instructions. When the Dunedin left for New Zealand on 13 March, three days after the dispersal of the Mau, a party of twenty-five marines was left behind to assist the police.

The police and the marines executed Allen's orders with relish. After months of frustrations in being unable to come to grips with the elusive members of the Mau, they suddenly found themselves presented with Mau men who literally gave themselves up to the armed forces, and they now had the powers and the instructions which enabled them to give full rein to the satisfaction of their frustrations on those upstart natives. Mau meetings were routed with bayonets and gunbutts freely in use; old matai were prodded, pushed, kicked and had lavalava ripped

72 Administrator to SNA and Resident Commissioner, 10 Mar. 1930, A.O. 25/1-10; copies of all declarations and police orders are found in this same file.
off them. *Fautasi* were fired on and occupants made to run, normally from Mulifanua or somewhere in 'A'ana district, carrying their suitcases all the way to Apia, where they were put on other boats and dispatched again to Savai'i. Those Mau people found in villages not their own were force-marched back to their own villages, led by a soldier and with another one bringing up the rear and prodding or beating along those who slowed down. A truck carrying more military men normally followed these processions and the marines alternated. Often during these marches older men would drop by the roadside unable to move, and they would either be lifted on the truck or left to the care of Samoans. Many of those people had tried to visit Apia to see their matai and relatives who were in prison.

With most of the Mau leaders in gaol - Autagavaia, Namulauulu and Alipia were imprisoned for eighteen months each - these tactics succeeded to the extent that fewer of the Mau people persisted in returning to Apia and there appeared to be a lull in the activities of the Mau on the national scale. Allen, although cautious, reported to his Minister that the Mau was 'quite broken'. His caution was well-placed, however, for the Mau men, many of whom had been away from home for months and in some cases years, were taking a much-needed break, enjoying being home and being with their families. But they certainly had not given up the Mau.

The tough line adopted by the authorities in dealing with Mau members on the outside was being repeated in the prisons. Stories

73 P.T. [Tamasese Meaole] to Taisi, 3 Apr. 1930, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia; L. Naea, 'Report to Leulumoega', 30 Apr. 1930, A.O. 25/1-11 [Naea was apparently a Mau operative in 'A'ana and this handwritten report was for the Mau leaders]; Administrator to Minister, 17 Mar. 1930, A.O. 25/1-10; Braisby to Administrator, 25 June 1933, A.O. 25/1-14.
concerning groups of old matai being squashed into a tiny cell or kept in solitary confinement for a few days under the most appalling conditions reverberated throughout the Samoan community. At the same time, the repeated arrest and imprisonment of the 84-year-old Tama-aiga Tuimaleali'ifano, first for telling the Mau not to disperse after the Mau/Malo discussions and then for other minor 'offenses', was deeply resented by the Samoans, not so much because they objected to the measures pursued by government - they expected such measures in a conflict - but because although they appreciated the situation, they nonetheless could not reconcile themselves to high-ranking matai, including a Tama-aiga of old age, being manhandled and imprisoned by 'whites' whom they considered men of low breeding and no status. In responding to reports of what was happening in Samoa at that time, Nelson put in writing the characteristic Samoan reaction, 'Ae o ai fo'i ua tago lona ivi tufanua ia Tuimaleali'ifano. Tainoino ua anu-i-lagi'. (Who would lay his common hands on Tuimaleali'ifano. Despicable boors, they spat at the heavens.) As a consequence of this resentment, the effect of these measures was the opposite of what Allen was trying to achieve. As Tamasese wrote: 'Government obviously believe that this harsh and humiliating treatment will break the will of the Mau ... but not a chance'.

The Mau's response to Allen's aggressive policy was anticipated in New Zealand, and Allen was warned of fears held by some Cabinet members that the continuation of repressive actions, particularly against Tuimaleali'ifano, would be counterproductive to the resolution of the

74 Letter from Taisi, 3 May 1930; P.T. (Tamasese Meaole) to Taisi, 3 Apr. 1930; Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.
75 Ibid.
whole conflict. Allen however, asserted that by forcibly suppressing
the Mau, he had created a platform on which to build a constructive
reconciliation process, and he had already moved on to the second
objective of preparing for a representative fono which he hoped would
serve as the major instrument in bringing everyone together. 'Repression
of the Mau by itself will be useless, and the thoughts of the people
should be guided towards working together in harmony with the government'.
The problem, of course, was that Allen needed his repressive measures
strictly enforced even as this process of reconciliation was under way,
and the Mau flatly refused to be forced by such means to even consider
a settlement.

In New Zealand, Cabinet, after considering with Cobbe his report
on the situation in Samoa, decided to disband the Samoa military police
which had been in training at Trentham, and to replace forthwith the
marines left behind in Samoa by the Dunedin, with civil police from
New Zealand. With this decision, government appeared to have put
behind it the traumatic events of 28 December 1929, and their aftermath.
In Samoa though, several significant developments resulting from those
events had emerged and were already having an influence on the character
of the confrontation.

76 PM to Administrator, 5 Apr. 1930, A.O. 25/1-11; Berendsen to PM,

77 Administrator to SNA and Resident Commissioner, 18 Mar. 1930;

78 PM to Administrator, 20 Mar. 1930, A.O. 25/1-10.
VI

The principal one of these developments was the establishment of the women's Mau. On the afternoon of the Monday (10 March) on which the Mau men were forcibly removed from Vaimoso, about fifty women, mostly wives or relatives of Mau men, and prominent amongst whom were Paisami Tuimaleali'ifano, Fa'amu Faumuina, Ala Tamasese, Mrs R. Nelson (she signed her name in Mau correspondence as Paletua Samoana Taisi) and her sister Mrs P. Muench (she went by the name of Filoi Tuitogamaatoe) held a meeting at Vaimoso. They decided to contact villages outside Apia and requested the womenfolk there to gather at Vaimoso with the purpose of continuing the work of the Mau now that the men had been forcibly dispersed. The following day about four hundred women from the four Maufaitoto'a (seats) of Vaimoso, Lepea, Matautu and Apia, as well as from the surrounding areas, gathered at Apia village and decided to take up the case of the lawyer T.B. Slipper, who had been convicted of libel and defamation against Allen, and had been sentenced the previous week to three months in gaol and a fine of £105. Slipper had landed himself in that position as a result of a letter he had written on behalf of the women who had protested against the cruelties suffered by the women and children during day searches and night raids, complaints which were rejected out of hand by Allen. The women now wanted to publicise what they saw as the injustice of the penalty imposed upon Slipper on their behalf and they wanted to pay his fine.

Within ten days of the original message going out the women held their first general meeting with women from villages outside Apia, including Savai'i, participating. This meeting decided that the women

79 Braisby to Administrator, 11 Mar. 1930; Administrator to Minister, 12 Mar. 1930; Braisby to Sec. to Admin., 29 Mar. 1930: A.O. 25/1-10.
would organise a Mau of their own along the same lines as the men's Mau. They would wear as uniform a blue or violet dress over a lavalava of the same colour, and with a white border similar to the men's lavalava. Alternatively the dress could have the white border at the hem with a plain lavalava. They further decided to hold weekly meetings on Wednesdays, the meetings to be followed by cricket matches and other festivities. About a thousand women attended.

In the last week of March the first of these weekly meetings was held at Vaimoso. On the day the Mau women resident in the faitoto'a of Matautu and Apia congregated and marched to Vaimoso in their uniforms, much in the same way as the Mau men used to do. The following day, groups of up to five hundred women marched from Vaimoso and Lepea to Apia where meetings and entertainment were held and then marched back in the evening. Their processions were orderly and well conducted. The meetings themselves followed the normal procedures adopted by the women in the conduct of their affairs, with an 'ava preceding the discussions and the order and presentation of speeches following the ranking of the titles of their respective husbands in fa'a Samoa, while those without husbands took their place according to the ranks of their family titles. By the end of March, therefore, the women's Mau was firmly established and had made its presence felt.

From the outset Allen viewed the women's Mau with utter contempt. He believed it was something engineered by Mrs Nelson and Mrs Muench in conjunction with Slipper. He doubted that it was of any real importance in keeping the Mau alive, and in fact felt that it could be of assistance
to government because he thought the Mau men found the women's activities an embarrassment. Allen, however, did not let go of the matter there; he repeatedly referred to the women as prostitutes, 'the immoral class of women' whom the dispersal of the Mau from Apia 'had left without occupation'. Mrs Nelson and Mrs Muench were charged with aiding the Mau, an illegal organisation, and were convicted and discharged on the condition that they disassociated themselves from any activity connected with the Mau. This had no effect on the women's Mau.

The assault by Allen on the women's Mau appeared quite in keeping with his character. In this case his frustrations were greater because he seemed quite impotent at dealing with women in any positive constructive way. He wrote that 'I confess I have no solution and merely expect that if they are left alone they will tire of it. It will be strange if women can run anything for themselves ...'.

This was yet another example of Allen's abysmal ignorance of the Samoans and their way of life. Samoan women in fact operate within a social and political structure parallel to that in which men conduct their affairs and together they run their communities. They are interdependent and each is a necessary component of the machinery responsible for the overall welfare and efficient conduct of their society. Neither group is subservient to the other, rather each holds a position of authority and respect which, disregarded, would lead to the deterioration of the vitality and standing of their respective

---

81 Administrator to Minister, 2 Apr. 1930; Administrator to EA, 3 Apr. 1930: A.O. 25/1-11; Administrator to Minister, 17 Mar. 1930; Administrator to EA, 28 Mar. 1930: A.O. 25/1-10.

82 Allen to Berendsen, 23 Apr. 1930, A.O. 25/1-11.
communities. At the same time the ability of the Samoan women to organise and implement projects, even more than the men at times, was a well-established fact of Samoan life.

The women's Mau, however, did not undergo the same explosive growth as experienced by the Mau in its various stages. A great many factors contributed to this situation, but it appears that the principal ones were firstly, that the Mau was far from finished, particularly in the villages, and the need for the women to take over the struggle completely was not seen by many as necessary in these circumstances. Secondly, many Mau men had just returned to their families and villages after being away for lengthy periods and it was natural for the families to be in no hurry to see others of their members disappear to Apia, or even to be too occupied with matters outside the family. Thirdly, Samoa was experiencing the effects of the depression and it was essential that as many members as possible of each family worked in their plantations to try to offset the dramatic drop — to about half of what they had been getting — in the price of copra. Also the food crop production, which the women and young people had had to look after in addition to their own normal responsibilities, had suffered, as indeed had other facets of life, and this was the opportunity to try and straighten these matters out. It was surprising that the women's Mau was as alive and as active as it was under these conditions.

Another significant development during this period was Allen's increased attempts to hurt Nelson. In early March, immediately after dispersing the Mau from Apia, he raised with the Minister the subject of taxation and the need for some kind of system to replace the personal tax which he had suspended in 1928. The thrust of his suggestions,
however, involved the introduction of a heavier tax on companies. But he made it quite clear that he wanted only Nelson's firm to be subjected to such a scheme and he did not want the other 'British companies' such as Burns Philp and Morris Hedstrom to suffer. The Minister turned down Allen's suggestion - '... you will no doubt agree that until it is clear that Nelson and his associates definitely refuse to accept the present more promising condition of affairs it would be unwise to take this step'.

Allen, like Richardson before him, had consistently asserted that Nelson would never accept any conditions which did not include his being in control of the country and now Allen - further angered by what he believed were efforts by Nelson's relatives and friends in Samoa to sustain the conflict - set out to demonstrate beyond doubt this contention. A series of police searches was initiated against the premises of Nelson's wife, his relatives and on the houses of several leading Mau members most of whom were in prison at the time. Similar searches were also conducted on hotel rooms of visitors who were friendly with Nelson's relatives. The aim was to obtain correspondence from Nelson which Allen was confident would show that Nelson did not accept 'the present more promising condition' and would also confirm Allen's firm belief that but for Nelson's exertions, the Mau would now be over and the whole conflict settled once for all.

The searches uncovered several letters between the Mau and Nelson (and vice-versa) but their contents were not as Allen had believed.

---

83 Administrator to Minister, 12 Mar. 1930; Minister to Administrator, 25 Mar. 1930: A.O. 25/1-10.

84 Braisby to Sec. to Admin., 2 May 1930, 15 May 1930 and 24 May 1930; Administrator to EA, 16 May 1930: A.O. 25/1-11.
Nelson's letters, while exhorting the Mau to be strong and resolute, were taken up largely with descriptions of the work done in New Zealand on behalf and in support of the Mau. These in themselves were of little magnitude, almost trivial, and had even less effect on the official policy on Samoa. More important, if anything they were discouraging to the Mau. Often these letters conveyed almost despair: 'I am just so worried and afraid that any predictions of better things to come are being judged by you in the light of greater atrocities by the New Zealanders rather than improvements'. And the petition to the King by the Mau leaders had been rejected. He vowed, however, always to stand by the Mau and the 'god-given rights' of the people of his country of birth. On the other hand letters from the Mau komiti as well as from Mau individuals conveyed unrepentant pride and defiance; we have suffered, even unto death, but we won't give up, indeed we are not even discouraged. There was little doubt that both the Mau and Nelson derived strength from one another, but it seems clear that Nelson needed it more, particularly at that time when everything was going against him, not only with his family and firm but also with his attempts to protect the interests of the Mau in New Zealand.

Meanwhile preparations for the fono of district representatives were going ahead and Allen reported to New Zealand that the Mau 'has shown no sign of life whatever' for several weeks since their dispersal to the villages. By 'life' Allen obviously meant dramatic demonstrations in Apia, crowded fono at the Mau seats around Apia, mass exodus into the

---

85 Letter from Taisi, 3 May 1930, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.

86 A great deal of the correspondence between the Mau and Nelson during 1928 to 1935 is found in the Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.
bush and the like, which of course had ceased. But the Mau was
certainly alive and during this period Mau parties were being continually
harrassed and Mau fono broken up by his armed forces. At the same time
reports from the districts, especially from Savai'i throughout this
time, informed of increased Mau activities at the village/district
level. The Resident Commissioner in Savai'i went so far as to declare
that Allen's tough proclamation regulating the movement of people between
Upolu and Savai'i was 'a farce' because inter-island visits by Mau
people, in breach of that proclamation, were as heavy if not heavier
than before the proclamation was promulgated.\(^87\) At the same time the
refusal of the Mau to participate in the fono of district representatives
that Allen had so strongly promoted, contradicted Allen's assertion.

Whatever life Allen admitted to as persisting in the Mau he
blamed on 'outside influence' without which, he said, 'the Mau would now
completely collapse'. The refusal of the Mau to participate in his fono
was blamed squarely on Nelson's orders. 'Strict orders have gone out
to them [Mau people] from Apia, emanating from Nelson, that they must
not take part and they are frightened at present to disobey'.\(^88\)

Nothing could be further from the truth. Nelson in fact had
repeatedly advised the Mau to nominate candidates for this fono and the
Mau had just as stubbornly rejected his advice. This was indeed the
first major issue since the outbreak of the confrontation over which
Nelson and the Mau had held such strong opposing views. In the past,
the Mau had always taken Nelson's advice very seriously - as indeed they

\(^{87}\) Report from Resident Commissioner, 1 Apr. 1930; District Officer
(Tuasivi) to Administrator, 2 Apr. 1930; Administrator to EA,
3 Apr. 1930; Administrator to Minister, 12 May 1930: A.O. 25/1-11.

\(^{88}\) Administrator to Minister, 12 May 1930, A.O. 25/1-11.
did in this case too - and in the vast majority of cases that advice was adopted. In the few instances where the Mau saw matters differently Nelson had invariably deferred to the Mau decision without further argument. When he repeatedly told the Mau that his opinions were given as advice but that the final decision always rested with the Mau, he was not in any sense being modest about his role. He was merely articulating what in fact was the practice, and moreover the practice which, as a man who knew Samoans and the way they thought and acted fully realised, was the only way acceptable to them.

In this case however Nelson, although reiterating his acceptance of the Mau decision, kept on returning to his views that the Mau should put up candidates and participate in the Administrator's fono. He went to some length to explain his reasons - there were people in each village and district who would participate and government would claim a representative fono, but if the Mau participated it could possibly get in thirty out of thirty-three representatives and, because these people could dictate matters in the fono, the fono would be a Mau fono and all the world would see the real strength of the Mau. 89

The Mau, however, would not be moved from the unanimous decision of the Mau komiti not to participate. They argued that to ask their supporters to put up candidates for the fono would be taken by those people as a betrayal of the objectives of the Mau and would cause dissension and destroy the movement. They insisted that without concessions from government over Mau grievances, participation in such a fono would be a meaningless exercise. 'Samoa would still be without

89 Letter from Taisi, 16 Apr. 1930 and 3 May 1930: Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.
authority or power to negotiate with government over the affairs of Samoa in the future. It would be just as before and as exists now where Samoa is not consulted over anything such as finances, laws and so forth, when after all this country is the country of the Samoans'.

And so the fono of district representatives was held without Mau participation. Allen, however, reported that in several districts 'former' Mau matai joined in meetings that chose the representatives but declined to sign their names on the nomination papers. This development, in Allen's view, was another demonstration of the improvement in the general state of affairs in the country. Other favourable indications, he pointed out, included increased payment of outstanding taxes - though he had ordered payment of taxes as a condition for the granting of travel permits within the country - the increase in numbers of children attending schools, the attendance of Mau people at the Lands and Title hearings, the decrease in incidents of intimidation by the Mau, the improvement in copra cutting and beetle catches and the apparent relaxation of Mau restrictions on its members concerning the stores to which they could sell their copra. There was also growing harmony within villages/districts, Mau and Malo people increasingly working together in village affairs.

The situation in Samoa at the time was in a general sense as

---

90 Mau letter to Taisi, n.d., this letter was seized at Mrs Nelson's house during the police search on 15 May 1930; Reports of Mau fono proceedings encl. in Administrator to Minister, 22 May 1930; A.O. 25/1-11. Other reports of the proceedings of weekly fono of the Mau komiti (new representatives had been chosen to represent those in prison) normally held inland of Lepea, are found in the same file A.O. 25/1-11.

91 Administrator to Minister, 12 May 1930; Administrator to EA, 7 June 1930: A.O. 25/1-11.
Allen had put it. However, it is doubtful this improved situation had resulted from the Samoans abandoning the Mau as Allen asserted and that whatever residue remained was due wholly to white influence, both inside and outside of the country. In fact as argued earlier the Mau was very much alive, particularly in the villages/districts, and the return of those who had been in Apia strengthened rather than weakened the movement. On the other hand the process of reconciliation in the villages had been going on since after the first few months of the Mau emerging. The harmony in the villages now proclaimed by Allen was the result of that lengthy process of reconciliation which grew out of the village environment and the nature of the Samoans themselves, and certainly not from an overnight change of heart, as Allen implied. This process had been at work all the time, as we have seen, and Allen had failed to notice it because he had been too preoccupied with the more spectacular Mau activities in Apia. That he could see it now was due to these Mau activities ceasing, allowing him a broader view, rather than because forcibly dispersing the Mau from Apia had persuaded people to abandon the Mau and effect a reconciliation with the non-Mau people in their villages/districts.

The fono of district representatives was held in the first week of June. The main issue put up by Allen for consideration was the reconstitution of the Fono a Faipule. He proposed basing the new fono along the following lines: the Faipule to be chosen by their own districts; the term of appointment to be one year initially, and consideration to be given to making it three years later; the Faipule not to exercise any executive functions in their districts; a reduction in the number of Faipule districts and therefore of Faipule themselves. He suggested finally that the new fono should commence its sittings
before the end of the year. All the proposals were adopted by the fono except for the proposal to reduce the number of Faipule districts. The fono decided to leave those as they were. 92

Although this fono was disappointing for government in that the Mau declined to be involved, it still made a contribution - albeit in a way calculated to prevent the Mau claiming success - towards a settlement. That contribution was a positive one in that it included decisions to introduce fundamental changes to certain practices which were among the principal grievances raised by the Mau right from the outset. Two in particular were the method of choosing Faipule and the exercise by the Faipule of executive powers in the villages/districts.

So much had happened between the early stages of the Mau and mid-1930 that it appeared as if the issues of Faipule selection and Faipule authority in the districts had ceased to be relevant. This was not so and they had remained amongst the most crucial issues because they were practices which contained a serious threat to the working of the fa'a Samoa in the villages, that is a threat to the Samoan system at its heart.

Dealing with these two matters was a more constructive approach than suspending the Fono a Faipule because it was essential to have Samoan representatives involved at the national political level. These measures taken together with the cessation of banishments and removal of titles since Allen's arrival - the powers to impose such punishment however remained - as well as with the suspension of the measures to

92 Proceedings of fono between nominated Samoan representatives and His Excellency the Administrator, held at Mulim'i'u, June 1930; Administrator to Minister, 10 June 1930: A.O. 25/1-11.
individualise land and administer the Samoans through district and village councils, effectively removed the last of the immediate threats to the proper functioning of the fa'a Samoa as the Samoans saw it.

The problem for government was that the Mau wanted more than the removal of these threats. They wanted more say in the affairs of the country at the national level. They rightly felt that the Mau would have been for naught if all it achieved was the removal of these objectionable measures. The Fono a Faipule would still be muzzled by the Administration and the Samoans would still have no say in the affairs of their country. Through the Mau they had forced the New Zealanders to take notice of them and their claims to a right to exercise control of their own affairs. As the Mau spokesmen told Cobbe and Allen, the 'Mau was Samoa'; it was the effective means through which the Samoans could communicate with government in a way which government could not ignore. And they intended to maintain that position until there were changes to policies and official institutions which would give the Samoans an effective say in the conduct of the affairs of their country. The 'concessions' made by Allen were welcome but they were clearly not sufficient, and they did not undermine the resolve of the committed Mau supporters - although they probably made a significant impression on the majority of the people, most of whom held the view that so long as government did not intrude in the conduct of their lives in the villages/districts, it was acceptable.

For this reason and others suggested earlier, the general

---

atmosphere in the villages/districts looked much more promising—particularly to government—than it had appeared over the previous three years. Allen still found the women's Mau a nuisance—convicting Mrs Nelson and her sister and fining them for promoting a seditious organisation had done little to dampen the enthusiasm of the women in their Mau— but he dismissed it as an insignificant political force. His optimism at this period was due largely to his experience on his malaga throughout the country during June and July. He found that the 'hostility of the Mau had largely ceased and that they are beginning to resume their part in village and district life'. Although a certain section still held aloof, he reported, 'It is quite evident in every district that the Mau has ceased to exist as an active force and native speakers everywhere asserted it is over'. Moreover, he continued 'There seemed also to be a great sense of relief and a very genuine pleasure everywhere at "the end of the Mau"'. He believed that what remained to be done to effect 'complete union and harmony' was the persuasion of that section of the community which still refrained from cooperating with government to resume their usual place in the affairs of their villages/districts. This task, he believed, could best be done by the individual matai who now cooperated with government, and he was actively encouraging these matai to perform it.

Although Allen did not give it the credit it deserved, the centenary celebrations to commemorate the arrival of the missionary John

---

94 Administrator to Minister, 10 June 1930, A.O. 25/1-11.

95 Administrator to Minister, 24 July 1930, A.O. 25/1-11.

96 ibid.
Williams in July 1830, was an event which had greatly influenced the Samoans into assuming the appearance of cooperation and harmony between themselves. By 1930 the church had become an integral part of the life of the Samoan, and religious allegiance often transcended political divisions. Virtually all the aiga in Samoa were connected in some way to the L.M.S. church and so they all joined the celebrations, whether they were of a different religious denomination, and regardless of whether they were Mau or Malo supporters.

In these conditions, Allen was predictably angry at being informed by the Prime Minister of a possible conference in Wellington between himself, the Fautua and four Mau leaders including Nelson, to settle the matter. Allen responded immediately that 'such a meeting as suggested in Wellington would be absurd in my opinion in present situation. The plain fact is the Mau is quite dead and action is not called for and indeed would tend to destroy confidence and revive the Mau for which purpose the suggestion is probably intended'.

The suggestion for the meeting had been put to Prime Minister Forbes by Mr Patrick Fitzherbert, a lawyer recently deported from Samoa by Allen because 'he is becoming a focal point for the Mau'.

Fitzherbert had practised in Samoa - he went at Nelson's instigation - for two months before his deportation; he represented members of the Mau after Allen had removed Slipper's licence. During a lengthy interview with the Prime Minister, Fitzherbert had pointed out that the Samoans had absolutely no faith or trust in Allen and would never deal with him - hence the necessity to exclude him from the suggested talks.

---

97 Administrator to Minister, 17 July 1930; Minister to Administrator, 17 July 1930; Administrator to Minister, 24 July, 1930: A.O. 25/1-11.
in Wellington. After receiving a record of the interview, Allen, as was his customary reaction to criticism, dug up sordid details of Fitzherbert's private life while in Samoa, information which he passed on to the Prime Minister with an expression of dissatisfaction at his taking Fitzherbert seriously. With uncharacteristic restraint he wrote: 'May I venture with the greatest respect to point out the apparent strangeness of a penniless adventurer, after two months of revel in Samoa, being able to elicit a statement of policy from the New Zealand Government?'. That was the end of that suggestion of settlement.

Between this time and the time Allen left Samoa in May the following year, his reports to the New Zealand government all told of an improving situation. 'There are no administrative difficulties now, either in enforcing justice or in the general work of government,' he wrote in October. He went on to point out instances where men prominent in the Mau were working alongside others who had supported the Malo in the administration of their villages/districts and even at national institutions such as the Land and Titles Commission, where some of those men prominent in the Mau in the previous years were sitting as komisi (Samoan assessors).

The changes were even more dramatic in the villages themselves; referring to a malaga recently conducted by the Resident Commissioner in Savai'i, he repeated that 'At Sala'ilua where for two years there was

98 See record of the interview encl. in Secretary of External Affairs to Secretary to Administration, 29 July 1930, A.O. 25/1-11.
99 Administrator to Minister, 24 July 1930, A.O. 25/1-11.
100 Administrator to Minister, 13 Oct. 1930, A.O. 25/1-11.
no single loyal chief and no meeting was possible, the whole of the
chiefs of the village as well as all from the adjoining village of
Gaga'emalae assembled, fales (sic) were decorated for the meeting and
for the Commissioner to live in - and the same sort of thing occurred
generally right round the island'. He concluded confidently - 'The
foregoing evidence will be stronger proof that the Mau is over, than
any unsupported assertion of mine would be. I say no more therefore
except that so far as I can judge there is now great peace and harmony
throughout the territory. The Mau has ended as swiftly and imperceptibly
as it began'.

While there were grounds for Allen's optimism, he had greatly
exaggerated them. When the reconstituted Fono a Faipule met in November,
only two former Mau matai, Saipaia and Asiata Iakopo of Satupaitea, out
of the thirty Faipule, entered the Fono. The Mau komiti had decided
that the Mau would not participate and although there was disagreement
amongst Mau supporters as to the wisdom of this decision, particularly
with Nelson strongly against it, the decision was accepted. At the
same time Saipaia and Asiata were never so very influential in the
movement, so that their entry into the Fono was not a significant setback
for the Mau. In the second place, reports continued to come in
concerning Mau activities in villages and Mau consultation at district
and national level.

The Mau leadership had indeed kept in touch, views had been

101 Ibid.

102 Administrator to Minister, 20 Nov. 1930, A.O. 25/1-11.

103 Braisby to Sec. to Admin. 30 July 1930, and 16 Sept. 1930; McCarthy to Administrator, 26 Nov. 1930: A.O. 25/1-11.
exchanged and decisions taken and relayed back to the villages. Since July Mau activities had increased, particularly with regard to money collections. With the difficulties encountered since the end of 1929, the Mau lafoga (money contributions) had largely fallen into disarray but with the settled situation and with the majority of Mau people back in the villages it had been revived on an organised basis. This step was necessary to enable the Mau to respond positively to a plea for financial assistance from Nelson, who was facing difficulties in New Zealand, especially in keeping the New Zealand Samoa Guardian in production. The newspaper had started printing a Samoan supplement through which Nelson would communicate with the Mau in lieu of reports and letters which government had begun seizing off the boats, and it was therefore even more important now that the newspaper be kept going. Notwithstanding this, though, the fact that people contributed to Mau funds during a period of severe economic depression and other vital requirements - thousands of pounds would have gone to the L.M.S. centenary celebrations - was certainly a sign of life in the Mau at the very least.

As the year went by, too, other Mau activities became more evident. Allen himself enquired of the police several times about Mau leaders from the outer districts, including Savai'i, whom he had seen in Apia, and also about fono(p) being held at Vaimoso 'without attempt at concealment and obvious to anyone passing on the road'. Under the pretext of attending Samoan and religious functions, prominent Mau leaders had regularly obtained travelling permits and travelled in large groups between islands and districts and consulted other Mau

---

people. On the other hand, activities conducted by the women's Mau such as the commemoration service on 28 December for those who died on the same date the previous year, kept the confrontation to the fore within Samoa.

Police, however, managed to arrest Mau matai who had visited various centres to coordinate a demonstration in Apia on Allen's departure and Allen was able to leave without disruption from the Mau. Even then the Mau had the last word. Its leaders rejected an invitation to participate in arrangements for a farewell to Allen and had already taken steps to prepare themselves to continue the struggle with the new Administrator when he arrived.

---

105 Braisby to Administrator, 21 Mar. 1931, A.O. 25/1-12.
CHAPTER 6

RESURGENCE, DECLINE AND SETTLEMENT: 1931-1936

On 1 May 1931, Brigadier-General H.E. Hart arrived in Samoa to replace Allen. It was a change-over which adherents of the Mau were happy to see; for although they would rather there were no more Administrators from New Zealand, they nonetheless appreciated the reality of the situation, and they preferred any replacement to Allen whom they despised. Also, apart from relieving Samoa of Allen, the advent of a new Administrator would give the Mau fresh opportunities for development.

Hart was born in 1882 and like Allen had studied law and practised as a Barrister and Solicitor in a small country town - Masterton in this case - on the North Island of New Zealand. Like Allen too, he had a notable military career and had earned his rank during the War. In his work as a lawyer, Hart had often appeared as advocate before the Native Land Court which dealt specifically with Maori land disputes. In personality, the Samoans found their new Administrator a very different man from Allen. With them, he was indulgent yet firm, frank and direct yet sensitive and understanding, accommodating but not gullible - in Samoan eyes, a man with a 'good heart'.

---


2 Most of the Samoan informants for this study - Toluono Lama and Taulealea Taulauniu are examples - who participated in the Mau, remembered Hart and Richardson as men with 'good hearts' and Allen as a man who lacked human compassion.
As far as the Mau was concerned, Hart from the beginning refrained from making a major issue of it, and instead approached it as just another problem in the administration of the Territory. In line with this attitude, the enforcement of restrictions on travel, payment of taxes, Mau gatherings and such like, was relaxed. Within Mau ranks, these changes were welcome, although it was debatable whether they assisted the cause of the Mau. In any event, it was the duty of the Mau leaders to exploit these changes in personalities and policies to the advantage of the Mau, and judging by the letter they delivered Hart on the day he arrived in Samoa, they had been awake to their responsibilities.

I

The Mau message which greeted the new Administrator on his arrival defined once again the conditions which the Mau required the New Zealand government and the Samoa Administration to meet as a prerequisite to meaningful discussion on the settlement of their confrontation. It would be necessary, the Administrator was told

... to release all those who are banished or deported to other countries; remove all the laws restricting the Mau; remove the laws preventing our freedom of movement in our own country without a permit; restore freedom for our social gatherings and fonos [sic] according to our social system; allow us freedom to use any means we choose to select our representatives to that fono; suspend the use of firearms and the duties of the military police; the government should also give us the assurance that we may raise for discussion in that fono any subjects that we like without being punished or in any way intimidated.³

³ Tuimaleali'ifano, Tamasese, Alipia, Pulepule, Faumuina to Administrator, 1 May 1931, A.O. 25/1-12.
They did not want 'those Samoans who are said to be contented with New Zealand' to participate in such a fono; they would have nothing to contribute being satisfied with the existing system. At the end of the letter it was revealed that they expected the fono to discuss 'a new constitution to restore to us our proper status according to our heritage ...' That heritage was one of a people in control of their own affairs. This public declaration of the principle that they retained the right to control of their own affairs was tempered by the rider that the status sought was as recognised in treaties between Samoa and certain major powers in the past - a clear indication that some major power was accepted as playing a role in certain areas of Samoa's affairs.

Hart was in no great hurry to leap into the complexities of the Mau/Malo conflict; he wanted time to familiarise himself with the situation before deciding on what to do with the matters raised in the letter. In any case he was convinced that the letter was written in Auckland by Nelson, which belief, in the established fashion of the New Zealand officials and politicians, meant that the letter did not represent the views of the Mau and so was not to be treated seriously. Hart had met Nelson briefly in Auckland just before sailing for Samoa and the latter had said that he had no regrets or apologies for the part he had played in the controversy. He had also expressed views concerning the 'birthright of the Samoan people' and other opinions very similar to the ones put in the Mau letter.  

In New Zealand Nelson sent a copy of the Mau letter to the Prime Minister and in an accompanying note said that:

---

the letter cannot but be taken as an earnest [attempt] on the part of the Samoan leaders to co-operate with the Government to end the present deadlock by seeking to establish the only conditions which can be acceptable as an equitable basis for negotiations towards a much desired end. It now rests with your government to prove its bona fides by assisting and allowing the new Administrator to make way for the opening sought by the Samoans towards a rapprochement which if handled in a spirit of equity and conciliation might well tend to bring about an honourable and lasting settlement of this long-drawn struggle.5

He followed this up next day with another lengthy letter in which he reiterated the Mau's case in comprehensive terms. Once again, though, the official view that Nelson could not and did not speak for the Samoans in the Mau brought this initiative to a dead end.

While the official attitude towards Nelson could be understood in terms of the policy of non-involvement of whites in Samoan affairs and vice-versa, it was an unrealistic one in the circumstances. Whatever government believed, the fact remained that the Mau had appointed Nelson as its representative. In this role the Mau saw Nelson in the same light as Samoans regarded people they chose to represent them over any issue. He was told of the consensus of those he represented and he was expected to abide by that consensus or risk being dismissed. Nelson knew the requirements and followed them to the letter; he could not afford to do otherwise.

On the other hand the Mau also saw Nelson as their adviser, much in the same sense as they would regard a lawyer. They instructed him, paid for the work done, and they expected results. They also expected advice and guidance, particularly in those spheres outside their own experience such as dealing with the New Zealand government or the

5 Nelson to PM, 12 May 1931, A.O. 25/1-12.
League of Nations. At the same time, as their adviser and representative he was expected to use his discretion to promote their interests, especially in matters where responses were necessary before such matters could be referred back to the Mau for a decision. But of course the Mau expected more from Nelson because he was one of them, an afakasi who had risked his wealth and congenial existence in siding with the Samoans as a Samoan. The Mau had trust and confidence that Nelson would represent them to the best of his ability, and Nelson's unremitting efforts on behalf of the Mau fully justified that faith.

At this time, though, and as frequently before, the most significant activity concerning the conflict was again being played out amongst the Mau Samoans themselves. In Savai'i, Safotulafai and Sale'auala met in July and contemplated ending the conflict by proposing a fono between the Mau and the new Administrator. Reverting to the practice at the time when Pule meant Safotulafai and Sale'auala, these two centres dispatched messengers to the other four centres - former Itu - declaring a fono of all Savai'i and leaving it to the other centres to call in representatives of various districts and subdistricts as was the practice in the past. The aim was for this fono to discuss the Safotulafai/Sale'auala proposal, after which Pule would travel to Upolu and discuss its decision with Tumua. Understandably, the other centres turned down the call for a fono. Probably angered by this response, Safotulafai and Sale'auala pressed ahead and in the last week of August a malaga party of about two hundred matai and taulelea from these two Pule groupings left Savai'i in four fautasi (longboats) to consult with Tumua in Upolu.  

6 District Officer (Tuasivi) to Resident Commissioner, 6 July 1931; Brasiby to Administrator, 2 Sept. 1931: A.O. 25/1-12.
The first call was made on Leulumoega. The Savai'i party, however, did not receive a cordial welcome, Leulumoega objecting that the malaga comprised only two instead of six Pule and therefore could not speak on behalf of Savai'i. Instead of discouraging the Savai'i party, this reception provoked them to continue with their mission. They called into Afega and Malie, regarded to some extent as the Tumua centre for Tuamasaga district, but once again their reception was less than satisfactory. The Savai'i malaga then proceeded to Lufilufi, where they expected a better reception because the Lufilufi orators in the Mau had themselves raised the possibility of a Mau meeting with the new Administrator.

The proposal put to the Tumua matai was simple and straightforward - the Mau should now meet the Administrator in a fono and try to work out a settlement, not wait until Nelson's return. Lufilufi did not see its way clear to accept this proposal immediately, but asked the Savai'i party to give Tumua time to consider the initiative. It was clear though that although the Lufilufi orators had been more civil in their attitude towards the Pule proposals compared to the other Tumua centres, Lufilufi was firm on its insistence that the Mau should wait for Nelson, and that the other four Pule centres should be included in any Mau consultations - conditions on which the other Tumua had earlier insisted. The Pule visitors were outraged and threatened to abandon the Mau and effect a conciliation with the Administrator if Nelson was not back in Samoa by October that year to account for his efforts overseas on behalf of the Mau.

---

7 Braisby to Administrator, 2 Sept. 1931, A.O. 25/1-12. As usual, Braisby's memorandum recounted faithfully reports from the field, complete with detailed lists of the names of Mau people involved in the episodes he was reporting on, as well as full verbatim accounts of discussions and especially of speeches.
The Savai'i party thus failed to bring the Mau and the Administrator to the conference table. But in the process of pursuing this initiative, Safotulafai and Sale'aula had bluntly brought the delicate issue of Pule hierarchy to the surface. When their call for a fono of Savai'i was rebuffed by the other centres, the two decided to proceed anyway, and when Tumua insisted that the other Pule centres had to be involved before an initiative could be recognised as a legitimate Savai'i wish, the orators of Safotulafai and Sale'aula declared that the two of them were the Pule in Savai'i and they did not recognise the other four centres as Pule. This attitude in itself was probably a significant factor in the cool welcome proffered by Tumua to the visitors, for it was Tumua that was instrumental in raising the standing of the other four Savai'i centres to full Pule status, and within the Mau, Tumua enjoyed closer ties with these four than with the two original Pule. It is significant also that the strongest tangible support for the Mau, particularly in terms of money contributions, came from the four Pule groupings which refused to join the malaga. At the same time, Tumua did not want to be part of a suggestion which could send Savai'i and hence the whole country into civil war. Safotulafai and Sale'aula, however, were left in no doubt that if they inflamed the Pule issue, they would find themselves isolated against the rest of the country.

There were other reasons for the rejection of the Safotulafai/Sale'aula proposal. In the first place it was widely believed amongst the Mau that it was an initiative undertaken at the instigation of Malietoa through his Safotulafai connections. The feeling was that Malietoa wanted to discredit the leading titleholders in the Mau - Tuimaleali'ifano and Tupua Tamasese - as well as Taisi, whose titles
all belonged to the major lineage of Sa Tupua. The other reason involved Nelson. While the Mau trusted Nelson to be doing his best on their behalf, there had been a growing desire amongst the Mau supporters to see more tangible results. They knew of the petitions and they had read the newspaper (the *New Zealand Samoa Guardian*) telling, for example, of letters and interviews with the Prime Minister; but the question being raised was, what has been achieved? These questions were most often asked when the Mau leadership requested more money to enable Nelson to continue with his work. Many now said, wait for Nelson before meeting the Administrator, out of the genuine belief that Nelson would advise the best route to take and also out of the feeling that Nelson had been loyal to the Mau and he should not therefore be left out, but there were others who argued that the Mau should wait for Nelson because he had been paid to carry the Mau's case and he should earn his money.

While the Safotulafai and Sale'auala had used the time since the forced dispersal from Apia to work out a reconciliation plan, the Mau in other districts had expended their time in strengthening the Mau organisation in their local communities. In the villages/districts where the Mau influence was dominant, local matai fono brought in measures to clean up villages, improve the crop plantings and the general upkeep of plantations; and generally adopted resolutions which were seen as beneficial to their people. The Mau leaders strongly encouraged members to put their weight behind these measures. The

---

8 See Pasia's speech at Lufilufi, reported in Brailsby to Administrator, 2 Sept. 1931, A.O. 25/1-12; information from Levao Malifa of Sale'auala.

9 See speeches made during the Pule/Tumua fono held at Lufilufi (3 Aug. 1931), reported in Brailsby to Administrator, 2 Sept. 1931.
people were persuaded to accept that even without the government officials they should still keep their villages clean and their plantations adequately planted and regularly weeded. They were also urged to cooperate with the village fono in the recording of births and deaths. Many of these villages appointed a man to carry out functions usually performed by the pulenu'u and also the village fono designated certain matai to inspect the plantations. On a wider scale, village representatives joined together to form a committee which inspected plantations and villages throughout the district.

A'ana district was perhaps the most well-organised along these lines in 1931. With Alipia, the highest ranking orator of Leulumoega, providing forceful leadership, it was not too difficult to organise this populous district. While Hart was on his first malaga around Upolu in early July, the Mau leaders of A'ana conducted a plantation inspection tour of the district. Some sixty matai from villages throughout A'ana led by Alipia made the tour of a district which was officially designated wholly as a disturbed area. Because of Hart's relaxation of the restrictions on the Mau and because the Commissioner of Police was sold the story that the malaga intended to make contact with Hart's party and initiate discussions in a Samoan setting in a village with a view to settling the conflict, the Mau party was not interfered with. In the event, the Mau party covered the whole district without making any overtures to the Administrator's party for a meeting. In the course of their tour they collected contributions from Mau supporters and held several fono in which their members were encouraged to remain firm in the Mau.  

10 Report by Const. L.J. Bernard re: Mala...
In New Zealand, meantime, Nelson on receiving the customary non-committal response from the Prime Minister over his representations in connection with the Mau letter to Hart, once again looked beyond New Zealand for possible relief. This time a petition was prepared from the 'accredited representatives' of the Mau to the governments of Great Britain, U.S.A. and Germany. The petition was based principally on the ground that these major powers contracted treaties with the government of Samoa during the second half of last century and in these treaties - specifically the Berlin Treaty 1889 - the three Powers recognised the independence of the Samoan government and the right of the Samoan people to choose their form of government according to their own laws and customs: the Powers were now called upon to 'fulfil their guarantees' in the light of the actions of the mandatory power which were claimed to be denying the Samoans those rights guaranteed in the Treaties. The petition was ignored.11

A little more needs to be said about this claim by the Mau as it had been advanced several times since New Zealand established its civil administration in Samoa. The issue is a complex one, particularly when legal points involved are examined in detail. But when stripped down to its essentials, the argument runs as follows: the central claim was that Samoa was an independent country, specifically so proclaimed in the Berlin Treaty 1889; that the 1899 agreement between the three powers, under which Samoa was partitioned and Germany established her administration in the western islands of the group, did not negate that independent status and, when New Zealand took over from the Germans and was granted the mandate, these changes did not affect the fundamental

11 A copy of this petition - copies of other Mau petitions as well - is found in the Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.
independence of Samoa and the Samoans. It is not intended to discuss here the legal issues involved in this matter. Sufficient it is to note that while a case could be argued along the lines advocated in this petition, it was a naive submission in the circumstances of colonialism which subsisted at the time, quite apart from the fact that it appeared that a stronger case could be made to counter it. 

This aspect of the matter was probably appreciated by Nelson and the lawyers who assisted him in drafting the petition. At the same time Nelson, doubtless recognised the utility of such a petition in keeping the Mau a live issue both in Samoa and in other parts of the world. He was fully aware of the improving conditions in Samoa and the general trend, even amongst Mau people, to settle back in their local communities now that the threat to their control of local affairs had been removed. The Samoans, he knew, would be impressed by the petition and the legal complexities it contained, and it would bring home to them very forcibly the message that the fight was still on. On the other hand he would have been anxious to counteract the newly-adopted official attitude of not giving too much credence to the Mau and proclaiming to the outside world that it had ceased to be a major issue in a Samoa where life had returned to near normality.

Of course the fate of the Mau depended primarily on developments in Samoa, not least within the Mau itself, rather than on Nelsonian propaganda, and during 1931 and 1932, the Mau took several initiatives which generated a resurgence of interest in itself and its activities on a national scale. The most notable of these initiatives came from the

---

women's Mau.

On 28 December 1931, the women's Mau, as it did the previous year, commemorated the fatal clash between the Mau and the police two years earlier with a parade through Apia, followed by a religious service at Tamasese's graveside near Lepea. Over 500 women participated.13 As a result of the unsatisfactory attendance at this ceremony by the women of A'ana and the sub-district of Anoama'a, they were called on by the leaders of the women's Mau to account for their lack of support in special meetings to be held in their respective districts. On 10 February 1932 the Anoama'a fono took place at Solosolo village, and four weeks later the A'ana fono was held at Leulumoega. At both these meetings, members of the women's Mau in those areas, demonstrated their strong support for their organisation by turning out in large numbers - over 400 in Anoama'a and over 800 in A'ana - and by staging impressive displays of ceremonial food presentations and paying their lafoga (money contributions).14 At the Leulumoega gathering though the occasion was soured by the failure of the Aana women to honour Polatau, wife of Pulepule who was one of the prominent titleholders of Atua, with a ceremonial food presentation due her rank. As a consequence of this insult, Pulepule's village of Solosolo threatened to abandon the Mau, and Pulepule apparently gave serious consideration to becoming a Faipule - it would have been a tremendous victory fa'a Samoa for government - a post which Malo supporters, including the sitting Faipule in his district were keen for him to occupy.15 After withdrawing from

---

13 Braisby to Administrator, 29 Dec. 1931, A.O. 25/1-12.
15 Braisby to Sec. to Admin., 7 Apr. 1932, A.O. 25/1-12.
Mau activities for a time, Pulepule and his village returned and resumed their leading role in the affairs of the Mau.

When members of the women's Mau in Anoama'a had gathered for their fono in February, the Mau leaders in that sub-district had also congregated in Solosolo on the pretext of offering tapuai (spiritual encouragement) to the women in their deliberations and took the opportunity to hold a fono of their own to organise their activities. On this occasion they instructed their members to clean their villages, roads and plantations and they appointed parties of matai to conduct inspection tours to follow up these instructions, and to fine those individuals and villages which failed to carry them out.\(^{16}\) A few months earlier, this same group of Mau matai had considered the idea of inviting Mau representatives from villages throughout Atua to reside at Falefa village in Anoama'a so as to facilitate consultation and decision-making amongst the Mau people in their district.\(^{17}\) The idea did not bear fruit, but the fact that it was seriously considered clearly indicated a more aggressive approach to Mau affairs by the Mau leadership in Atua - demonstrated further by the resolutions of the Solosolo fono - and pointed to a desire on the part of Lufilufi and her district to take a leading role in the Mau.

Encouraged by the success of their gatherings at Solosolo and Leulumoega, the leaders of the women's Mau now embarked on a more challenging project; a major fa'a Samoa malaga through two areas of Atua district - Falealili and Aleipata - where support for the Mau was weak in comparison to the rest of Upolu with the exception of Manono.

\(^{16}\) Police operative to Inspector of Police, 12 Feb. 1932; Brasby to Sec. to Admin., 18 Feb. 1932; A.O. 25/1-12.

\(^{17}\) Brasby to Sec. to Admin., 26 Oct. 1931, A.O. 25/1-12.
On 14 April 1932 the malaga commenced at Salani village in Falealili. In this sub-district, the forceful leadership of its Faipule, Tuatagaloa, had kept the majority of the people out of the Mau. On this occasion though, practically the whole of Falealili, men and women, turned out to welcome the women's Mau malaga and when the taalolo was presented it was led by the three leading taupou of Falealili, including one from Poutasi, Tuatagaloa's own village. The women of the malaga did without male orators and spoke on their own behalf during the ceremonies and fono in the villages they visited. The leading orators of those villages and sub-districts, invariably delivered the speeches on behalf of their people, including the women's Mau in their areas.

There were several reasons for this favourable reception. In the first place, the malaga was led by Fa'amu - Faumuina's wife - who was Malietoa's sister and therefore a lady of the highest standing in the fa'a Samoa. She could not be ignored. At the same time, Falealili had a special relationship to the Malietoa title, being one of the eight Aiga which supported that title in times of war. Also Fa'amu's brother Malietoa was married to the daughter of one of the highest ranking matai of Poutasi village, while one of the leaders of the women's Mau malaga was a daughter of Tuatagaloa himself.

The malaga continued on through Lotofaga - Faumuina's village - Lepa and Aleipata, drawing large crowds and enjoying enthusiastic receptions which included both Mau and Malo supporters as happened in Falealili. Only the village of Amaile, seat of the Mata'afa title - Mata'afa had replaced Tuimalali'ifano as Fautua - refused to participate in these receptions, but this was only a minor incident in

---

18 See reports by District Officer D.M. Grant, 16 Apr. 1932 and 22 Apr. 1932: A.O. 25/1-13, for details of this malaga.
a brave venture in which Samoan women had asserted their traditional right to participate in the political life of the country at the highest level, and elicited a response which showed conclusively where the hearts and minds of the Samoans lay.

While the women's Mau was conducting its successful malaga through Falealili and Aleipata, developments were occurring in Savai'i which threatened further the solidarity of the Mau on that island. Towards the end of March the Fa'asaleleaga district fono decided to dispatch a malaga party to the Tumua centres in another attempt to persuade them to agree to the Mau meeting the Administrator instead of waiting for Nelson's return. After several meetings with the Atua Mau parties, however, the Fa'asaleleaga group which was led by Namulauulu decided that the opinion of Tumua over the matter had not changed since the Safotulafai/Sale'aula visit the previous year, and they therefore returned to Savai'i.19

At the same time that Fa'aseleleaga was considering sending a party to Upolu, representatives of villages from throughout the Palauli district were called to a meeting at Vailoa village - one of the three villages which comprised the seat of the Palauli Pule centre. In this fono the Palauli matai took the unilateral decision to establish the headquarters of the Mau in Savai'i at Vailoa village.20 Even if this was the substance of the decision, it was probably an exaggeration of the intention of Palauli, for the matai concerned would have known that the other Pule centres would be unlikely to accept that decision, especially as they were not consulted, and Safotulafai and Sale'aula

were certain to reject the proposal out-of-hand. It is more likely that the decision was made with the primary intention of undermining the attempts by Safotulafai and Sale'aula to effect a reconciliation with the Malo, and to let everyone know that Palauli was prepared to go it alone in Savai'i if necessary.

In the event the other Pule centres did not in fact recognise Vailoa as the Mau headquarters in Savai'i. Palauli however proceeded with its scheme, styling Vailoa as a Mau faitotoa similar to one of the four Mau faitotoa around the Apia area. The Mau organisation within the district was tightened up and the collection of Mau contributions was strongly promoted. As a result, Mau funds collected in this district improved while the other districts were struggling with their collection efforts. The matai of Palauli district were plainly contemptuous of these futile efforts by the other districts and pointed out that the unsatisfactory situation which existed elsewhere resulted from weak matai leadership and a breakdown in fa'a Samoa conventions. To underline this attitude Palauli refused to hand over its money to be deposited with the rest of the Mau funds in Apia, preferring to keep the money in Savai'i.  

II

As the end of 1932 approached, the major topic of interest to both the Mau and the Malo became Nelson's return, scheduled for December. In the second week of April the Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. G. Forbes, who

21 Ibid.
was also responsible for the portfolio of External Affairs, wrote to
the Administrator concerning the possibility of extending Nelson's
term of exile: 'I am convinced myself that Nelson's activities in
New Zealand during the last two years are amply sufficient to warrant
an extension of his period of deportation if this should be considered
the proper course to adopt in our own interests' (his emphasis).22
But he then went on to say that after careful consideration, he believed
that it would not be advisable to extend the terms of exile, being
himself inclined to the view which Hart had previously expressed that
Nelson might reasonably be expected to settle down after he returned to
Samoa. Because he doubted whether Nelson could control the activities
of 'certain sections of the Samoans' Forbes suggested extra precautions
and extra police to cater for any unforeseen circumstances of Nelson's
return. He enclosed the written legal opinion from the Solicitor-
General which stated that there was no power under the existing
legislation to prevent Nelson and Gurr from returning to Samoa at the
expiry of their period of exile.

In response to the Minister's letter Hart wrote that while
Nelson's exile 'had from twelve to eighteen months to run I would have
been willing to approve permission being granted for his return', he
would not do so now.23 Instead he was 'of the emphatic opinion that
Nelson should not be permitted to return in December next, nor for a
period of two years from the time he ceases his present activities and
even then subject only to the giving of satisfactory guarantees for his
future conduct'.24 If Nelson was allowed to return anyway, the

22 Minister to Administrator, 14 Apr. 1932, A.O. 25/1-13.
24 Ibid.
Administrator considered that an additional force of twenty-five policemen from New Zealand would be required to reinforce the existing force of twenty-two policemen he had in Samoa. As for the lack of legal powers to extend Nelson's exile, Hart urged that the necessary powers be obtained forthwith, and suggested that the powers under the Samoa Immigration Order 1930 which applied to people of Nelson's legal status should be expanded and used to achieve his recommendation.²⁵

Hart's change of mind was due to certain articles published in the Samoan supplement of the New Zealand Samoa Guardian in which Nelson was alleged to have pledged his life and his funds to achieve the removal of the New Zealand Administration from Samoa. In addition to these articles Hart also had extracts of two letters allegedly written by Nelson to the women's Mau, which he considered offensive and calculated to inflame the situation in Samoa. These letters were read to the gatherings of the women's Mau mentioned earlier and had been noted down by police operatives. In one letter Nelson was alleged to have written 'You must all be strong as I am going to see you this year with great victories. The present soldiers who are now in Samoa will all be deported, and the Government of New Zealand will leave Samoa. Samoa will then have a self-government'.²⁶ In the second letter Nelson was said to have written that the New Zealand government was poor and weak, and he urged the Samoans to be strong and steadfast in the Mau for soon all its demands would be granted.

None of the recommendations made by Hart were accepted by the New Zealand cabinet. In the opinion of the Ministers, after expected demonstrations at the arrival of the exiles, there should be no further

---
²⁶ See A.O. 24/1-13, for the police reports which contained extracts of alleged letters from Nelson.
troubles emanating from them for they 'would be largely powerless to cause trouble even if they wished to do so'. However in the event of subsequent trouble emerging, Nelson and Gurr could again be deported or imprisoned. The power of imprisonment, commented the Prime Minister, was 'the key' to the whole question, because he believed that 'a period of gaol to a man like Nelson would of course be a very different thing from his five years of luxury and notoriety in Auckland'. Again, Cabinet considered that Nelson's return without the victory which he led the Mau to hope for would cost him considerable loss of prestige and therefore favour within the movement. The biggest difficulty however for Cabinet over this matter was its belief that public opinion would be against it, if it tried to introduce legislation empowering government to extend Nelson's term of exile.  

Hart did not share the optimism of his political superiors. 'I do not think Nelson is powerless to cause trouble, but on the contrary, particularly owing to the power and the authority of the chiefs over their people and Nelson's influence with the chiefs, it would be exceedingly simple for him to cause great trouble without being found out'. He reported that although the organisation and the numbers of Mau supporters were being maintained, the enthusiasm and morale amongst the members were not being similarly sustained and he believed that if that position could be held, even for one year, Nelson would not be able to revive it when he returned. But even with this favourable existing situation, and notwithstanding Mau/Malo people cooperating over village and district affairs, each village, he wrote, 'is like a smouldering fire requiring very little to stir it into a substantial

blaze'. 29 An exaggeration, plainly, given the cooperation evident amongst the people in most villages and districts; Hart, however, had to make his point with the optimistic members of Cabinet.

This further attempt by Hart to persuade the New Zealand government to reconsider its decision not to extend Nelson's term of exile failed. And the Prime Minister told him to take that decision as final. Cabinet, however, agreed to send policemen from New Zealand - in small lots - to boost the Samoan Constabulary to thirty-five by Christmas and it also agreed to the formation of a reserve force locally. In addition, it approved the return from holidays of the complement of one cruiser over the Christmas break in case assistance was needed in Samoa on Nelson's return. In this communication the Prime Minister stressed that New Zealand could not at that time afford a loss of prestige over the Mau issue and clearly indicated that he expected Hart to act decisively to ensure that the Mau did not defy government and the laws. 30 While accepting the decision as final, the Administrator was clearly unhappy and he therefore sought a conference in New Zealand with the Prime Minister. His request was granted and he left for New Zealand towards the end of September.

Government leaders, however, were not the only people who looked with apprehension upon the approaching termination of Nelson's exile and his subsequent return to Samoa. Nelson himself was in a difficult position and was anything but elated at the prospect of being free to return to his homeland. On one hand it was imperative that he return to Samoa as soon as he was free to do so for business reasons.

29 Ibid.
As he had admitted to Harry Holland, his firm had been 'very hard hit' by the depression, bad management, his long absence and 'the heavy expenditure of fighting my case ...'. He expressed fear that his company might need to go into voluntary liquidation to satisfy the court, which early in 1931 had imposed on it a fine of £5,600 after finding it guilty of aiding and abetting the Mau, a seditious organisation. Holland's view that Judge Luxford's decision, especially in the matter of penalties, was 'one of the gravest legal scandals in the history of New Zealand and that is saying a good deal'; and that he was 'suspicious of everything connected with the judiciary in Western Samoa' where proceedings 'are so clearly taken for personal and political reasons', would not have offered Nelson much consolation, even though these views supported what he had always felt and sometimes said.

The grave state of his business affairs notwithstanding, Nelson declared that his highest priority remained the attainment of the 'best terms which the Samoans can get for their rightful claim to autonomy or at least a substantial and effective say in their own affairs'. It was because he felt that such terms had not been achieved that he was unable to look forward with happy anticipation to the end of his exile. Nelson's difficulties in this connection centred round two major points - fears that under existing laws in Samoa another fatal shooting incident might occur on his arrival as it did on Smyth's return at the end of 1929, and recognition that he had little of substance to offer the Samoans in terms of successes resulting from his work as their representative in the last five years.

33 Nelson to Holland, 22 July 1932, Nelson Papers, Apia.
To meet the first contingency, Nelson, in the several months prior to December 1932 - the last month of his exile - made a concerted effort to wring from the authorities, both in New Zealand and Samoa, assurances that a fatal clash similar to that which occurred on 28 December 1929 would not be repeated. He drafted a series of letters for the Mau leaders in which the Administrator was requested to grant the Mau freedom to welcome its representative according to Samoan practices and guarantee that the police would not interfere. In New Zealand the message was conveyed to the Prime Minister. The only assurance given by the authorities, however, was that there would be no police interference if the law was obeyed. And herein lay the heart of the problem faced by Nelson and to an extent by the Mau. The fact was that if the laws that existed in Samoa at that time were to be strictly observed, no Mau welcome for Nelson was possible. The Mau was still a seditious organisation and it was unlawful for anyone to take part in any function attributed to that organisation, and at the same time Samoans required permits from the authorities to travel within the country. Under Hart, the enforcement of the laws aimed specifically at the Mau had been relaxed, but as Nelson reminded the Prime Minister in an interview in late November, the Administrator or the police could at any time apply these laws just as the breaches were being ignored. And if these requirements were enforced on the occasion of his arrival - Nelson considered that they would - then the police could provoke another fatal clash with the Mau and he and Gurr would be offenders without having any say in the matter. After all, while he had some influence on the Mau, he did not control the decisions or the actions of

its members.  

The immediate request therefore was for the authorities in Samoa to refrain from applying the law on the occasion of the exiles' arrival. But the real thrust of these representations lay in the logical extension of that request - the removal of these laws. This tied up with Nelson's second difficulty of lacking a 'victory' to present to the Mau on his return. If the New Zealand government would remove even one of the objectionable laws he would at least have a tangible success to show for his efforts and the expenses - both his own and the Mau's - incurred in the course of his work.

Although Richardson's scheme of local government had been abandoned by his successors, thereby removing the threat from village and district autonomy, and although Hart's relaxation of restrictions on the Mau and individual Samoans had removed many of the immediate causes of complaint, Nelson had been careful not to claim those as 'victories'. He would have been aware that the laws pertaining to those matters still existed and that if he claimed their relaxation as a success and government responded by again enforcing them, he would be in much greater difficulties. He chose instead to refute claims by government that the situation in Samoa had improved dramatically and that life in the territory had largely reverted to normal, asserting that improvement could only be achieved through the removal of the objectionable laws.

When Hart arrived in New Zealand in early October to confer with government Nelson was hopeful that he would be invited to Wellington to discuss Samoan affairs with the Prime Minister and the Administrator. When that did not eventuate he began to express doubts about proceeding

---

with plans to leave for Samoa on 20 December 1932. He told the Mau that such postponement would actually strengthen his resolve to see 'the objective of this struggle settled and Samoa recover her inheritance from God, that is the freedom and the control of our country in our accepted ways and the regulation of our lives according to the customs, usages and traditions of Samoa'.

During the last week of September the Mau, as had been the practice since the beginning of 1930, took the opportunity of the dedication of the L.M.S. church at Leauva'a village to gather and held what was claimed to be the most representative Mau fono since the December '29 shooting. Even Pasia and Lofipo, who had led the attempts by Safotulafai and Sale'aula to seek a reconciliation with the Malo without waiting for Nelson, were present. The main topic for discussion was Nelson's return. After some heated exchanges, it was decided to await developments arising from the exchange of letters between the Mau komiti and the Administrator, before details of the reception were finalised. This was a compromise resolution between Autagavaia, who had argued strongly for the whole Mau to be present in Apia when Nelson came ashore, and others who cautioned that this could place the lives of Mau members as well as that of Nelson in jeopardy.

As to Nelson's actual date of return, it was decided to leave this up to Nelson. When by mid-November no definite word had been received from Nelson, even after the Mau president had asked him to 'tell us straight without further evasion' his plans of return, the Mau leadership, perturbed by the rising tension amongst its members

---

36 Letter from Taisi, 8 Oct. 1932, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.
37 Matau Karauna to Taisi, 3 Oct. 1932, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.
because of the uncertainty, informed Nelson that the 'true opinion of
the Mau' was for him to stay on in New Zealand if no favourable word
was received from the Prime Minister regarding requests of safe
conduct for Nelson and the Mau. On 23 November Nelson met Forbes,
who was again unprepared to guarantee safe conduct, whereupon Nelson
informed the Mau that his departure had been postponed until February
the following year.

Nelson's worries would have been heightened by letters he had
received directly from Mau district fono urging him to remain in New
Zealand until 'everything was cleared up'. Although these messages
explained that the district decisions were due to the desire that no
harm should come to Nelson and also out of the realisation that without
him the Mau would be left adrift without direction, the Samoans in
their own subtle expressions left little doubt that the main reason
behind the decisions was that they would be unhappy for Nelson to
return without a tangible 'victory'; this would place them in a
position of shame in their relationship with the other Samoans. Nelson
knew just how that aspect was so important to a Samoan.

Hart had made the situation more difficult for Nelson. On his
return from New Zealand he called a fono a Faipule and when the
inevitable topic of the Mau came up and views were expressed as to the
need to end it quickly, particularly in view of Nelson's imminent
return and the prospect of the Mau coming to a head again, Hart told
the Faipule, as he did others during separate Samoan gatherings, not

38 Mau representatives to Taisi, 15 Nov. 1932, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.

to be too harsh on the Mau for after all they were fellow Samoans. He encouraged the Faipule instead to take time to reconcile their differences with the Mau, otherwise let them be. As to Nelson's return and the likelihood of his providing fresh encouragement to the Mau, the Faipule were assured that Nelson had failed in all his efforts on behalf of the Mau and when he returned he would not be permitted to stir up trouble again.  

Tuatagaloa of Falealili, one of the most influential of the Faipule, took the Administrator up on his word. He asked that the Faipule be given the authority and the opportunity to attempt to settle the conflict through fa'a Samoa means, adding that if these efforts went well the Administration should really let the Samoans be, by removing the restrictive laws and curtailing oppressive police activities. Hart agreed. He however turned down the Faipule request to remove forthwith the district officers and reinstate the Fa'amasino Samoa (Samoan judges). But he saw to it that the enforcement of the restrictive laws as well as police activities - already greatly relaxed - were scaled down even more, to the extent that the Mau reported to Nelson that government and police were doing '... absolutely nothing. Everything is peaceful. The Resident Commissioner in Savai'i Watson is being very friendly to Mau people and so do government people in Apia. Even the papalagi policemen are friendly and smile at us now'.

In early January 1933 the effects of this situation were spelled out for Nelson by the Mau komiti. The Mau people were now not abiding

40 Tuimavave to Taisi, 28 Nov. 1932; Matau Karauna to Taisi, 7 Dec. 1932: Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.
41 Ibid.
42 Matau Karauna to Taisi, 23 Jan. 1933, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.
by earlier decisions by the Mau leadership to boycott government departments, the courts and especially the Lands and Titles Commission. Government had also subdivided Trust Estate land at Vaivaseuta near Apia and any Samoan could obtain a 15 acre piece of freehold land there. Samoans now also had easy access to dynamite for killing fish. Restrictions on travel were 'totally gone' and only offenders over the old poll tax were being selectively imprisoned. With regard to the sensitive area of village life, an official Mau letter recorded that:

Samoa is now free from so many of the restrictions imposed by government in the past such as beetle searches every Monday, inspections by village komiti (as government ordered) every day of the week or every month, district fono where the Faipule resided, village fono where the Pulenu'u lived and many other things. All those things are now done under the control and direction of the Ali'i and Faipule [the matai collectively], everything is fine, there is now an abundance of food in every village, peace is now being maintained in villages and districts (except for those who have title and land cases), individuals and villages now have time to do things over which they should properly spend their time. That is the reason why so many villages are now able to build churches whereas these major projects had been impossible to undertake in the past.  

Certainly not a situation out of which one could reasonably hope to provoke Samoans into revolt. At the same time, while there was clearly a sense of relief at this state of affairs, both the Mau and Nelson - and particularly the latter - were sceptical about the motives behind the changes. The feeling was that the satisfactory situation was being deliberately created so that any disharmony amongst the Samoans and any resurgence in Mau activities which might surface after Nelson's arrival could be more easily blamed on him, making it a

43 Matau Karauna to Taisi, 18 Jan. 1933, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.
simple matter to punish him again, even perhaps by imposing another term of deportation. However, while these views were justified in the circumstances, the fact remained that the situation became what it was because the Mau people had accepted the changes.

On 21 January, Nelson wrote to the Mau and told them of the serious crisis facing the New Zealand government, and the 'real possibility' that it would be replaced by a government which was sympathetic to the Mau. He decided to stay on in New Zealand and await the outcome of the crisis in the New Zealand parliament, which if favourable would enable him to return with the 'victory'. On the other hand he mentioned for the first time that he did not intend to stay long in Samoa but planned to return to New Zealand to continue the struggle if the Mau agreed because 'although we now see the whole thing (mea atoa - meaning Samoa's rightful claim to independence) for Samoa, New Zealand still holds the validating documents over that status'. So Nelson postponed his return further. But when the parliamentary session ended without a change in government and without a change of attitude towards Nelson and the Mau, he finalised arrangements to depart from New Zealand in the first week of May.

For several months the issue of Nelson's reception had been a major topic of discussion in Mau fono. In the last week of December '32, the Mau had written to the Administrator informing him that on Nelson's arrival, sixty decorated fautasi would be in Apia harbour and a procession of six thousand matai would be in town to welcome him. Nelson had been

44 Letter from Taisi, 21 Jan. 1933, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.
45 Letter from Taisi, 9 Jan. 1933, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.
46 Faumuina to Administrator, 29 Dec. 1932, A.O. 25/1-4.
most unhappy with this action, pointing out to the Mau that there were only 8500 tax payers (matai and taulelea) in the territory and that such a proposal was a flagrant invitation for disaster. The Mau leaders retorted that the information conveyed to the Administrator resulted from a decision of a full-scale Mau fono and no-one could argue with that. However after many heated discussions and many pleas from Nelson for a low-key reception, it was finally decided that four Mau leaders would meet Nelson when he landed at Pagopago while the women's Mau was given the task of providing the reception party in Apia. Mau men from throughout the country, however, were asked to come in for the occasion but were designated villages east and west of Apia where they were to remain and await developments. A large reception with ta'alolo and all other Samoan observances for such important functions was planned, but in deference to advice from some of the prominent Mau leaders as well as Nelson's pleas for caution, it was decided to see how matters stood after Nelson's arrival before proceeding with the full-scale welcome.

III

On Tuesday morning (16 May) Nelson, accompanied by his five daughters, landed at Apia and was greeted by a party of about 1500 members of the women's Mau. It was a quiet affair without fanfare or public speeches. The whole group proceeded to Vaimoso, where a religious service was held followed by a royal kava ceremony prepared by the aumaga from Palefa village - a section of Tupua's aumaga. The

---

47 Brasby to Administrator, 10 May 1933, A.O. 25/1-14.
Mau leadership was gathered at Vaimoso together with several members from each village/district. These men, however, did not participate in the welcome except in the formal activities such as the presentation of the royal kava and certain exchanges of speeches. In the afternoon the women's Mau provided a large feast followed by dancing. Responding to this welcome Nelson, after the appropriate thanks, said that there were many things he would like to say, but he was not free to say them. And it was left at that - for the time being anyway - with the Lufilufi orator replying on behalf of the Mau that they were just happy to see him again in good health after so long an absence. About 2000 people were present at Vaimoso during the festivities. 48

On the following day the women presented a ta'aloalo led by Fa'amu, Masiofo Paisami Tuimaleali'ifano and Masiofo Ala Tamasese wearing tuiga (ceremonial headdresses), making the occasion a royal one indeed. In presenting the ta'aloalo formally, Fa'amu exercised the right of an Ali'i to speak (she was To'oa, Malietoa's taupou and therefore possessed a status similar to that of the Malietoa title) and declared that the women's Mau stood prepared and ready to finish the work of the Mau. Nelson in response referred to the concept of Pule na lua (dual authorities) which the women had used to define their place in the Mau, and agreed that if the men failed to 'uphold the rights of the Samoans' then the women must carry that responsibility. The ta'aloalo presentation was followed by more dances and songs performed by members of the women's Mau from different villages/districts, including some from Savai'i. About 3000 people were present on this day at Vaimoso. 49

48 Braisby to Administrator, 17 May 1933, A.O. 25/1-14.
49 Braisby to Administrator (progress report), 18 May 1933, A.O. 25/1-14.
Over the two days, the behaviour of the Mau people was 'orderly and civil' and the few policemen on duty received ready cooperation. Although the Administrator had not formally suspended laws for Nelson's arrival, the failure of the police to make any arrests of Mau people blatantly breaking the laws by being present in a 'disturbed' area and participating in Mau functions meant that in effect these laws were suspended. This development, however, was not a dramatic one because for several months before Nelson's arrival these laws had not been enforced. The restraint on both sides resulted in this potentially explosive occasion passing without incident.

This peaceful scene, however, did not reflect the turmoil which was brewing in the councils of the Mau. The point at issue was the non-committal attitude shown by Nelson since his arrival. Some of the leaders - notably Autagavaia of Palauli and Fa'ifa'i of Lufilufi - who had been strong advocates of the view that the Mau should await Nelson's return before meeting the Administrator to thrash out a settlement, now demanded a more specific statement from Nelson as to his activities on behalf of the Mau, the results achieved and the money spent. Most immediately, though, they wanted an indication of how the whole struggle stood, particularly as related to responses and initiatives from the New Zealand government, the League of Nations and the outside world: did these indicate a 'victory' for the Mau or did they not?^{50}

That Autagavaia and his district of Palauli were at the forefront of this discontent was particularly serious because that district was where the organised support for the Mau was strongest. This was clearly the major reason behind Nelson's agreement to meet the Mau komiti much

^{50} Braisby to Administrator, 18 May 1933, A.O. 25/1-14.
earlier than he probably considered desirable. The meeting took place at Vaimoso two days after his arrival. About fifty Mau manava were present to hear Nelson and not surprisingly - he did not have any concrete 'victories' to present the Mau - he used the rhetoric of the bible to convey his message.

Samoa, God has received our desire before him, therefore, may Jehovah live! Jehovah hears our prayers. The Lord hears our desires and although we are still confronted with suffering we are not forgotten by God. I exhort our people to let our hope in God remain firm, for he is all powerful. Let us not have any longer the slightest doubt or suspicion regarding our country for God does not desire a divided heart. God is concerned over his chosen people. The love of God for our islands of Samoa has not departed.51

A typical speech commonly used by Samoans either as opening remarks or in the main body of an address, conveying the clear message that one has nothing concrete to offer or that it was not politic for one to be more specific, leaving it up to the others to confirm one's message in specific terms as they see appropriate.

Autagavaia and Tuimaleali'ifano, who responded to Nelson's address, both seized on the positive aspects of the lauga (address, speech, sermon) and claimed that 'victory' for the Mau had been confirmed. Yet they differed on what they meant by that expression. To Autagavaia that 'victory' was conclusive: 'The spirit rejoices that you have come with the victory and the manuia [blessing]'; but to Tuimaleali'ifano it was something yet to be fully achieved: '... soon we shall rest in great relief'.52 Again a typical response within the boundaries of Samoan oratory, and very useful in uncertain situations.

51 Quoted by Braisby in his report on the meeting: Braisby to Administrator, 23 May 1933, A.O. 25/1-14.
52 Ibid.
For the time being, the fono between the Mau leaders and Nelson soothed the discontented. This however was but temporary relief, particularly for Nelson, because the Mau now awaited tangible demonstration of his statement indicating the manuia for Samoa. It appears that the idea of the Mau being placed on an efficient organisational basis with a view to conducting the affairs of its supporters was suggested at this time. In any case the question of re-establishing the Mau headquarters at Vaimoso was discussed in village/district fono and the consensus was in favour. And so a week after Nelson's arrival, representatives from throughout the country began arriving in Vaimoso to represent their people in the rejuvenated Mau komiti which was to operate from the old established Mau headquarters.

While documentary evidence is lacking and oral testimony hazy over who initiated this move, it is not unreasonable in the circumstances to suggest that this was Nelson's response to the Samoan demand for results. For both Nelson and the Mau leadership, there were not many options left in the way of initiatives which would appeal to the people. Indeed the establishment of a Mau government was probably the only viable one - apart from trying again to negotiate with government - available at this stage, given that they had exhausted the other alternatives, such as petitioning overseas governments as well as the League of Nations, without success.

As the Mau representatives started arriving in Apia, the police moved in and began arresting some of the leading personalities such as

53 Braisby to Administrator, 29 May 1933, A.O. 25/1-14.
Alipia and Tagaloa for being present in a 'disturbed' area without permits. The arrests brought an immediate reaction from the Mau, which objected in a letter to Hart that this same law had been frequently broken in the recent past without any police action and pointed out also that the Mau meetings had been peaceful and orderly. The principal message in the letter, however, was a proposal that the Administrator meet Mau representatives 'to discuss with you all the matters at issue between your government and the large majority of our people who are dissatisfied with your Government's method of administration'.

Towards that end Hart was requested to suspend police operations, release the imprisoned Mau leaders for the proposed fono and guarantee freedom to both sides to choose whoever they wanted to represent their respective interests in the proposed conference.

Since the beginning of the confrontation in late 1926, this was the first time that the Samoans had directly asked for a fono with the Malo with a view to finding a settlement. Consequently Hart jumped at the opportunity to meet the Mau leaders. He promised to release the imprisoned Mau leaders to attend the fono; and although he did not mention suspending police operations, the enforcement of the laws relating to travel permits and illegal meetings ceased, and the police issued travel permits to Samoans without question. On the other hand, he informed the Mau leaders that he did not intend to call any representative to assist him and therefore he thought they could do the same, knowing full well that the Mau request over representatives had been made with the specific objective of including Nelson in the delegation.

54 Faumuina to Administrator, 5 June 1933, A.O. 25/1-14.
55 Administrator to Faumuina, 9 June, 1933, A.O. 25/1-14.
Over the next two months, Hart and the Mau leaders held several meetings and exchanged numerous letters, as they tried to resolve the matter of Nelson's participation. In the end, they failed to find a solution as the Mau persisted in its demand for Nelson to be a member of its delegation, and Hart on the other hand equally firm in resisting that demand. To break the deadlock, Nelson had urged the Mau leaders to hold a fono without him, but his offer was rejected.

There were several reasons behind the Mau's stand over this issue. During negotiations with Hart, they had argued that Nelson should attend on behalf of the Mau because he had sacrificed and suffered for the Mau case; because the authorities had allowed him to represent the Mau at other times such as in supporting the petition to the New Zealand parliament in 1927 and during the Royal Commission hearings of the same year; and because he was standing by his Samoan blood and was therefore one of them. But there were other reasons. In the first place, they felt that because Nelson knew more than they did about what had been happening within the New Zealand government and parliament, within the League of Nations and within other overseas countries with regard to the Mau they needed him there to ensure that they were not misled on such matters. Also they needed his general advice and guidance. Secondly, there was a strong opinion amongst the Mau that because Nelson had been paid to advise and represent it over its dealings with governments and outside institutions he should participate in a substantive fono with the Administrator in order to fulfil his obligations to the Mau. Thirdly there was a keen desire in the Mau ranks to see a direct confrontation between Nelson and the Administrator:

56 See A.O. 25/1-14 and A.O. 25/1-15 for the relevant correspondence and the minutes of the meetings on this episode.
The Government persists in the charge that Taisi's aims are selfish, and we have been misled and wrongly influenced by him. We therefore think it due to him, to us, and to the Government that he should be given this opportunity to prove his professions of goodwill to Samoa and the Samoans, and for you to prove the Government's allegations of selfish motives against him. This would either clear or discredit him for all time and much would be achieved thereby.\(^{57}\)

But perhaps the most important reason was the Mau's consciousness of its own position as demonstrated by its repeated reminders to Hart that the planned fono had to be one organised and conducted on a 'basis of equality' in all respects. To allow the Administrator to dictate the composition of its delegation was to compromise the status of the Mau as an organisation which was accepted and upheld by a large number of Samoans to pursue their interests and one which the government should recognise and treat as such. After all, at the basic level, government and the Mau were but two organisations contesting the control of the affairs of the Samoans. This was a fundamental premise, and if the Administrator did not know it or chose to ignore it, then there was no point in holding a fono. The preliminary discussions finally ended on 18 August without agreement on a substantive fono and Hart told the Mau representatives that the laws would be enforced again particularly in relation to travel permits and unlawful presence in 'disturbed areas'. Both parties had maintained a friendly and respectful attitude throughout the talks and Hart had shown good judgement - as compared to his two predecessors - in keeping an open mind and desisting from lecturing the Mau delegates.

As these discussions progressed, contacts between Nelson and the Mau leaders who had been meeting almost daily at Vaimoso to direct

\(^{57}\) Faumuina to Administrator, 25 July 1933, A.O. 25/1-15.
the negotiations with Hart, became increasingly open, until komiti members were calling at all times on Nelson either at his office or at his home in Tua'efu. At the same time Faumuina told Hart that the Mau had been making use of Nelson's advice since his return, but he emphasised that this was at the instigation of the Mau and Nelson was merely supplying advice as requested. Hart, however, thought differently - Nelson, he reported, had again 'assumed control of the movement and directs it through Faumuina and the committee ...' and he was 'steadily developing the activities of 1926-1929'. He felt that Nelson's activities had gone far enough - given the Prime Minister's warning not to let the situation get out of hand after Nelson's return - and he suggested that proceedings should now be taken under 'The Samoa Seditious Organisations Regulations, 1930'. He was confident that he possessed ample evidence to convict Nelson. The Solicitor-General, however, advised the Prime Minister that the material collected up to 18 August was insufficient to bring a charge and in any event the Prime Minister felt that nothing that occurred while the preliminary discussions were in progress should be used against Nelson or the Mau, otherwise government's professions of goodwill and good faith would be seen as meaningless.

As if anticipating this move by the Administrator, Nelson advised the Mau komiti to be more cautious in contacting him; advice which displeased the Mau leaders who felt that, after their rejecting the chance of a possible settlement by upholding his interests, Nelson should not be frightened and leave the Mau by itself to take the brunt of any

60 Minister to Administrator, 9 Oct. 1933 and 14 Oct. 1933: A.O. 25/1-15; PM to Administrator, 8 Nov. 1933, A.O. 25/1-16.
punitive measures that the Administrator might bring down. Such measures were indeed likely, given the Mau's decision to keep the peace but remain in Apia without the required permits. Others however, such as the Palauli representatives, pressed for a more aggressive approach, even violence. As a compromise it was decided that the Mau office would be reopened and the Mau revert to the central administration of its affairs from Vaimoso as occurred in 1928 and 1929. As happened before 'Black Saturday', as Saturday 28 December 1929 had become known, the Mau komiti would remain in Apia and it would conduct its affairs, including fono and other functions, openly. At all times though members were instructed to keep the peace and submit quietly to arrest. In pursuing these decisions, the Mau leaders expected Nelson's full assistance.

Nelson clearly appreciated the inevitable result of being involved in Mau affairs. He had said that such involvement could result in fifteen more years in exile and that it was up to him whether that would happen. His plea for caution was therefore understandable, as were his contingency plans to continue his work for the Mau overseas where he would be more effective because he would have greater freedom of movement and expression. The Mau leaders, however, held a different opinion. They wanted him to stay on in Samoa to assist them and to justify his prediction of the manuia for the Mau being at hand. Furthermore, they wanted his involvement with the Mau to be in the open so that they would all be equally exposed to any government reprisal. Nelson had little choice but to agree.

---

Despite government warnings that laws would be enforced fully, the Mau supporters were in fact left alone. They therefore proceeded with their reorganisation and their other activities. During September and October large reception functions - including ta'alolo and sua presentations - were held at Vaimoso by Atua and A'ana districts as well as by Palauli and Safotulafai. These were the receptions which were planned for Nelson's arrival but were cancelled at that time for fear of provoking police reaction. The Administrator, the Fautua and senior officials were invited but declined. Many other leading whites in commerce and the professions, however, attended. In each of these functions Nelson was present and participated fully in speech and other ceremonial exchanges.  

At the same time as these festivities were being organised the Mau leaders stepped up their efforts to encourage increased contributions and to instill in the Mau supporters a sense of unity and commitment. Village/district committees were encouraged to come into Apia to see the reopened headquarters office at Vaimoso and bring the Mau lafoga to be deposited therein. The office itself was equipped with new typewriters and other equipment and an application for a telephone was also put in.  

While these developments gave a strong impression of vitality, they were clearly moves initiated by the Mau leaders in Apia and they lacked the authentic support which village/district people would give to proposals which emanated from amongst themselves. This was clearly demonstrated in several instances at this time. In the first place, the drive for improved Mau contributions had met with little success.  

---

64 See A.O. 25/1-15 for numerous detailed police reports on those functions.  

While it was true that the copra price was abysmally low—6d. per 100 lbs. — there was little doubt that the Mau lafoga would have increased significantly, as occurred in the past under comparable economic conditions, if the hearts of the people were wholly behind the decisions of the Mau komiti. After all they were building bigger and more churches in the midst of the depression.

Secondly the villages/districts were not united in the functions which took place in their names: the Atua reception was virtually a Anoamaa one; the Fa'asaleleaga ta'alolo was ill-prepared (small pig and insufficient chickens, taro, etc.) and their speech and whole demeanour was disrespectful; the A'ana reception was delayed several times because allocated food contributions were not being met; and even the ta'alolo from Palauli district was made without the participation of the populous villages of Gataivai, Taga, Salailua and Gaga'emalae.66

Thirdly, villages/districts were most reluctant to hand over whatever money had been collected to the Mau office at Vaimoso. They were clamouring for an explanation of where monies they had contributed previously had gone — they wanted a clear statement on what Nelson did with the money sent him by the Mau, an account of the Mau money held by the late Tamasese, and they wanted the komiti in Apia as well as their own local komiti to account for all the money that they had contributed to the Mau.

The case of Palauli district offers an illuminating example. Due to the efficient administration of the Mau in this district, particularly after unilaterally establishing itself as a Mau faitotoa,

funds - mainly from fines - rapidly grew. By October these had exceeded £1000. Nelson and the other Mau leaders asked Autagavaia to remit this money to Apia to be deposited with Nelson so that it could gather interest, and the Palauli representative sent for the money several times. Each time, though, the messenger returned empty-handed. The same thing happened when Autagavaia personally went himself. Before he went to Savai'i though, Autagavaia had told Nelson that Palauli would not part with their money without some kind of security. He had suggested shares in Nelson's firm or land on the Nelson plantation at Palauli, but Nelson had refused to guarantee the money personally. Palauli district retained its money in Savai'i. 67

Notwithstanding these difficulties, the Mau leaders, in conjunction with Nelson, decided to establish an administrative structure, covering the whole span from the village level to the leadership body in Vaimoso, through which the affairs of those belonging to the Mau would be administered. The Mau of course had tried to administer the affairs of its members before, but there were some dramatic differences between what was being attempted now and what existed in the earlier period. Previously the Mau supporters had simply used Samoan institutions and organisational practices to organise their support for the movement. There was no attempt to depart from what they were used to - meaning that flexibility and freedom of choice were the governing characteristics with the structure of the organisation and chain of command not being formalised.

Now, however, under the guidance of Nelson, a man who insisted on efficiency in his business affairs and whose lifestyle was predictable

because it followed an orderly and organised pattern, the organisation of the Mau was brought under a more formal and structured hierarchy. At the national headquarters in Vaimoso four divisions of authority would operate: in descending order the Fa'atonu (Director or Adviser), the President, the representatives of the four faitotoa, and finally the village/district representatives who would reside in the Apia area. In the villages and districts - in descending order again - the District leader who was to be the head of the faitoto'a or headquarters which had been designated for each district, the village guardian, who held a similar role to the pulenu'u, the village committee, and finally, the village people. The Mau directive summed up the procedure to be followed by the Mau thus: 'The village section to the committee. The committee to the Village Guardian. The Village Guardian to the District Leader. The District Leader to the Office of the Mau'.

The Mau had come up with exactly the same structure of village/district administration Richardson had tried to establish.

This formal Mau organisation was never put into operation, which was probably just as well for the Mau. It is almost certain that it would have been ignored in every respect which did not conform with normal Samoan practices. Indeed the Malo plainly did the Mau leadership a great favour by intervening and stopping this structure from being put into use; the Mau leadership would most likely have suffered the same rejection - perhaps even a worse fate - as the Malo had experienced earlier.

During October and into the first weeks of November, activities amongst Mau leaders at Vaimoso intensified, and Nelson was kept busy in

---

68 Mau circular (8 Nov. 1933), A.O. 25/1-17.
trying to induce order and regularity into certain decisions taken by the Mau komiti to avoid confusion and clashes. One of these decisions was for two delegations made up of Mau leaders to travel throughout Upolu and Savai'i to discuss Mau matters with villages and districts concerning the formation of the Mau government. When the decision was conveyed to Nelson, he discovered that, true to their practices, the Samoans had only settled on the numbers of the delegations - twenty-six each - but neither names of the delegates nor the objectives of their malaga were specified. He advised the Mau representatives that he considered ten delegates in each party sufficient and that it was imperative the parties conveyed the same message or 'confusion will result and it is important that such a malaga does not go'. He then offered to prepare a draft of messages to be conveyed by the parties for the consideration of the Mau komiti.

This advice was accepted with a few variations - the malaga parties, for example, numbered more than ten each - and the parties set out from Vaimoso on 15 November. The specific objectives of the malaga were to inspect villages and plantations; but the principal message was that the Mau leaders in Apia had established an organisational structure through which the affairs of those people who were dissatisfied with the Malo and would not accept guidance from that quarter would be administered. Apart from advising the local supporters on the different aspects of the structure to be used and helping with the appointment of office holders, the malaga parties were especially emphatic on the crucial need for more money contributions if the Mau government was to succeed.70

69 Note on 'Circuit round country' signed T. and dated 7 Nov. 1933. Going by its contents, this note was unmistakably one from Nelson to the Mau leaders; A.O. 25/1-17.

70 Brasby to Administrator, 2 Nov. 1933; Mau circular letter (25 Oct. 1933) from Faumuina; Extract of Nelson to Mau letter in Brasby to Administrator 10 Nov. 1933; A.O. 25/1-16.
Unbeknown to the Mau leaders, though, Hart had decided some time earlier that the departure of the malaga parties would be the signal for his move. He told the New Zealand government that he would arrest some Samoans and execute searches at Vaimoso, Tuaefu 'and other necessary places'. He also planned to arrest Nelson, being confident that he already possessed sufficient evidence to bring down a conviction decision in court. On 16 November Hart put his plan into operation. Searches were conducted at the Mau headquarters office at Vaimoso, Nelson's residence at Tuaefu (twice on the same day) and at Rudolf Kruse's residence at Mato'otua. The search at Tuaefu proved most rewarding in terms of incriminating material uncovered. Documents found confirmed Nelson's intimate connection with the Mau and they confirmed also the identity of the malaga parties as messengers working on behalf of the Mau.

A police contingent was despatched to Luatuanu'u village on the Northeast coast of Upolu where the Upolu malaga party was gathered. Eight members of this party were enticed by the police into returning to Apia on the understanding that they were to meet the Administrator and afterwards return to continue with their malaga. They were arrested on arrival in Apia, charged with being present in a 'disturbed' area without valid permits and were remanded and held in custody at Vaimea prison. On 21 November, Nelson was arrested on the charge of associating with the Mau. He was immediately released on bail on grounds of ill-health but his bail was subject to very strict conditions.

71 Administrator to EA, 9 Nov. 1933, A.O. 25/1-16.

72 See A.O. 25/1-16 and A.O. 25/1-17 for detailed reports on these searches and the material uncovered.
forbidding any contact with the Mau. On the following day the members of the Upolu malaga party were convicted of being active members of the Mau and Autagavaia, the leader of the party was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment while the rest received six months each. The six principal members of the Savai'i malaga party were arrested on 1 December and two received six months' imprisonment terms, two three week terms, while two were discharged. Fa'alava'au, one of the two Mau clerical secretaries who was the only person at the Mau office when the police raided it, was sentenced to nine months' imprisonment. In the second week of December the Administration's case against Nelson commenced.  

On the day following the conviction of the members of the Upolu malaga party, all the Mau members gathered in the Apia area were advised that they had twenty-four hours to disperse or face arrest. A general fono was convened and it reaffirmed the message carried by messengers dispatched to villages/districts the previous day to send more people into Apia where they would all await any new initiatives from the Malo. This fono then turned to the crucial issue of planning a course for the Mau in the light of the recent developments. The discussions lasted through the whole afternoon and continued into the early hours of the following morning when the consensus was reached that the Mau would seek a meeting with the Administrator to settle the whole conflict. In the meantime the Mau would request that leniency and consideration be extended to Nelson by the Administration because of what Nelson had done and suffered on its behalf, and would undertake that it would neither agitate on behalf of his pending court case nor would it now insist on his presence in a substantive fono with the

73 See A.O. 24/1-16 and A.O. 25/1-17.
The immediate problem facing the Mau was the police order to disperse from Vaimoso by 10 a.m. on 24 November. Coming on top of the imprisonment of the Mau leaders two days earlier, such a dispersal would not only be disastrous to the survival of the movement but, even worse, it would mean shame for the Mau supporters. It was imperative that the police order be foiled, or a repeat of the events of March 1930 was inevitable. These considerations were probably foremost in the minds of those that attended the lengthy Mau fono on the night of 23 November, as much perhaps as the realisation that Nelson and his assurances that all would be alright so long as they kept the peace, were again proven wrong. At about 7 a.m. on the morning that the police order would become effective Faumuina, Pulepule and Mata'u Karauna travelled to Vailima to advise the Administrator of the decision of the Mau fono. Hart delayed discussing the matter till later in the morning in his office. In the meantime the Mau messengers successfully persuaded the Administrator to order the Inspector of Police to suspend his dispersal instructions, thereby affording the Mau leaders breathing space to prepare for the next stage of a strategy aimed at enabling them and others in the movement to emerge - if the Mau was to end - at least with dignity.

Hart was pleased with the Mau decisions. He however decided that owing to court rules, discussions as suggested by the Mau could not be properly conducted while Nelson's case was before the court. In any event a delay, said Hart, would give time for all concerned to

---

74 Braisby to Administrator, 24 Nov. 1933 and 25 Nov. 1933: A.O. 25/1-16.
75 Braisby to Administrator, 25 Nov. 1933; Edward Stehlin to SNA, 24 Nov. 1933: A.O. 25/1-16.
cool down and evaluate in calmer moments the recent events and the pressing need for the confrontation to be brought to an end. This response thwarted the designs of the Mau leaders, whose purpose in suggesting a fono was apparently more to give them an excuse to prevent the Mau from being dispersed than to find an end to the Mau. The delegation was forced to ask directly for permission for the Mau to remain in the Apia area - 'the real object of the petition and the truth ...' It was a crude attempt and Hart had easily seen through it. However, he believed that the Mau mission - again consisting of Faumuina, Pulepule and Mata'u Karauna - were in fact genuine in their desire to effect a settlement and he therefore agreed to their amended request for representatives (five from each village/district) to remain in Apia, to discuss, according to Faumuina, matters to be raised in a fono with the Administrator, if one took place. Faumuina told the Administrator that the representatives would not be involved in '... any conduct that would cause anger in your heart Sir - for instance - another government to be formed or officials to run the place - there will be nothing of that sort'. And Hart had responded by urging the Mau 'to drop Mau matters - just be patient and do nothing till the trial is finished'.

The Mau received the report of its delegation with joy, and immediate steps were taken to put the agreed arrangements into effect. As a result of the message conveyed to the Mau supporters in the villages two days earlier, Mau numbers at Vaimoso, which had begun increasing since the Upolu malaga party was arrested, had swelled dramatically from about three hundred a week earlier to an estimated

---

76 'Minutes of meeting between ... Administrator and Mau Representatives, 24 November 1933', A.O. 25/1-16.
three thousand. Now all started returning to their respective villages, leaving behind about two hundred representatives.\textsuperscript{77}

Before Nelson's case began, Hart predicted that it should not take two or three days, so conclusive was the evidence; for the same reason he assumed a conviction would result. A conviction indeed was obtained, but the case lasted until the first week of March the following year. Disagreement over assessors, Nelson's sacking his lawyer (M. Klinkmuller) and conducting the case himself, Nelson's being sick and the Chief Justice's being laid up in hospital for four weeks from a coral cut poisoning, and the proceedings being conducted in two languages - until near the end when the Chief Justice ordered only English to be used to speed matters up - all contributed to the protracted hearing. In the main, though, the case took time because after Nelson took over his own defence he questioned closely every piece of evidence and information presented by the prosecution.

It was all in vain. He was convicted of contravening 'The Maintenance of Authority in Native Affairs Ordinance 1928' by participating in unauthorised functions by Samoans and he was also found guilty of associating with the Mau - a seditious organisation under 'The Samoa Seditious Organisations Regulations 1930'. He was sentenced to eight months' imprisonment and ten years in exile. On 8 March, the day after the sentence was announced, Nelson left Samoa for New Zealand to serve his sentence. In New Zealand, Nelson appealed his conviction and sentence and the Court of Appeal reduced his sentence to the period already served, but left his exile term untouched.

It was now the turn of the Samoans. On the day that Hart told

\textsuperscript{77} Braisby to Administrator, 25 Nov. 1933, A.O. 25/1-16.
the Mau delegation to await the end of Nelson's case before again raising the prospect of a settlement conference, he wrote to the Prime Minister that 'the time is now opportune to obtain finality' on the Mau/Malo conflict. He renewed his suggestion made earlier in the month to invoke 'The Samoa Amendment Act 1927' and deport some of the more important members to the Tokelaus, 'unless they definitely and finally cease their activities'. The Prime Minister supported Hart's suggestion but advised that his government 'would wish to avoid the necessity for this course if possible ...' In the same communication Hart was reminded not to overlook Faumuina and Mata'u Karauna if deportation was imposed on Mau leaders, and he was also asked for his views on the 'practicability and desirability of simultaneously offering appointment as Fautua to Tamasese'. In the event no Mau leaders were deported and Tamasese was not appointed a Fautua at that time.

While Nelson's case was in progress the Mau representatives clashed in open confrontation. Representatives from the Pule centres and from Leulumoega openly accused Faumuina of betraying the Mau and being responsible for all the setbacks they had suffered in recent months. Faumuina responded that all he was interested in and all that he had worked for was the prosperity of Samoa; and the accusers were not able to produce any concrete evidence of Faumuina's alleged misdeeds when they were asked to provide proof for their allegations.

At the same time the repeated counsel from Faumuina and Tuimaleali'ifano for the Mau to follow what was agreed between the

78 Hart to Forbes (personal), 24 Nov. 1933, A.O. 25/1-16.
79 EA to Administrator, 5 Dec. 1933, A.O. 25/1-16.
80 Braisby to Administrator, 1 Dec. 1933 and 8 Dec. 1933: A.O. 25/1-16.
Administrator and the Mau delegation on 24 November, to keep the peace and prepare for a combined fono was regarded by the representatives of Pule led by Pasia of Safotulafai and Alipia of Leulumoega as a sign of weakness. These orators bluntly told Faumuina and Tuimaleali'ifano to leave the Mau, as they were really powerless, and to hand over control of the movement to Tumua and Pule, who were the groups with the power in Samoa.⁸¹ Lufilufi, however, favoured the conciliatory approach and in the end these clashes did not result in any dramatic changes within the leadership of the Mau. An interesting aspect of these suspicions as to who betrayed Mau plans to government concerned rumours which circulated after Mata'u Karauna died in January 1934. The rumours alleged that the Mau secretary was murdered because he was involved in the betrayal of the Mau, but in fact he died from an acute kidney complaint.

Although the Mau supporters had remained quiet during all the time since government action commenced in November, Hart feared that the conviction and remand-in-custody of Nelson on 3 March would bring a violent reaction. The Mau indeed reacted, and strongly, but it was a reaction of compassion rather than violence. During the four days between the conviction and the sentencing, concerted efforts were made by the Mau, the women's Mau, Nelson's firm and family as well as other firms in Apia for Nelson to serve whatever sentence was passed on him in Samoa which ironically was what the New Zealand government had wanted. These efforts were all in vain as Hart informed the petitioners that the matter still rested with the court and he could not interfere.⁸²

---

⁸¹ Ibid.
⁸² See A.O. 25/1-17 for copies of letters and petitions as well as records of interviews concerning this issue; Hart to Forbes (private), 8 Mar. 1934, A.O. 25/1-17.
Sympathy for Nelson grew rapidly amongst the Samoans - due largely to the efforts of his daughters - and even one of the leading Faipule, Tuatagaloa, joined the Mau leaders in requesting that Nelson remain in Samoa. These efforts culminated on the day Nelson was to leave Samoa - 8 March - when the Mau leaders, accompanied by Malietoa and Tuatagaloa, travelled to Vailima and offered an ifoga - the highest form of apology which in Samoan society sufficed for the greatest offence - to the Administrator with a prayer, made by Malietoa, for Nelson's retention in Samoa. Hart, however, told the ifoga party that he could not vary the court sentence, although he would be prepared to meet the Mau leaders to discuss their grievances. 83

Long before the sentence was passed on Nelson, it had been arranged that he would serve his time in New Zealand if his sentence amounted to six months or more - the law provided for this. Forbes had not been keen on Hart's suggestion over this arrangement, the Prime Minister being of the view that a more cogent example would be made if Nelson served his time in Samoa with the other Mau prisoners. Hart, however, had argued strongly that there was a significant desire amongst many Mau leaders to effect a conciliation, but with Nelson in Samoa, even if in prison, there would be little likelihood of this growing desire for a settlement bearing fruition. The Prime Minister finally agreed with the Administrator. 84

83 Braisby to Administrator, 9 Mar. 1934, A.O. 25/1-17.

84 EA to Administrator, 5 Dec. 1933; Hart to Forbes (personal), 20 Dec. 1933; A.O. 25/1-16; EA to Administrator, 4 Mar. 1934, A.O. 25/1-17.
With Nelson's case completed, Hart invited the Mau leaders to a *fono* as he had promised the previous November. Despite disagreements amongst the Mau as to the appropriateness of attending such a meeting, the leaders - with some inducement from the Fautua - attended the Administrator's *fono* which included the two Fautua as well as Tuatagaloa as representative of the Faipule. Following through an informal suggestion from the Fautua that the Samoans in the Malo were willing to effect a conciliation amongst all the Samoans, Faumuina asked for an opportunity to discuss this amongst the Samoans themselves.

It is a primary point with us that the whole of the Samoans should be united first before we attend a discussion of the grievances ... We want a full and complete settlement. We have been informed of the wish and desire of the two Fautua Malietoa and Mata'afa and also Tuatagaloa who represents the Faipule that there should be a settlement between the natives and that after that we may discuss with your Excellency various matters which would best be adopted. The Samoans who are dissatisfied await the wish of Malietoa and Mata'afa for a settlement.85

Hart agreed to this procedure and the Samoans immediately set about arranging a *fono* of conciliation. *Savali* (special messengers) were sent out by both the Mau and the Malo groups to inform the people throughout the country of the impending *fono* and to convey an open invitation to anyone who wished to attend to do so. 86

Although news of the likely conciliation amongst the Samoans was received with mixed feelings in the villages/districts, it appeared that it was generally welcomed and supporters of the Mau and the Malo flocked to Apia for the *fono*, which took place at Vaimoso on 23 March.

It was the first fono in eight years in which all sections of Samoan society were properly represented. Because the Mau leaders had agreed to Malietoa's desire for a conciliation - expressed in an informal meeting prior to the fono with the Administrator - the Vaimoso conference was brief. Mata'afa, speaking on behalf of the Malo, said that a reconciliation should be effected and then all could work together with the Administration in trying to resolve the Mau grievances. Faumuina, for the Mau, responded, 'Let us make a reconciliation today, and as to the matters of dissatisfaction of this section, let the burden be carried by all Samoans together and put before the Governor'. Specifically, the Mau wanted assistance from the Malo leaders over the request for the release of the imprisoned Mau leaders and for the return of Nelson. Goodwill being expressed on all sides, Mau and Malo representatives shook hands, embraced and expressed satisfaction that the Samoans had been reconciled after such a lengthy period of time. They decided to see the Administrator the following week.

There was, however, a group of Mau leaders which did not appear overjoyed with the reconciliation. This group was led by Pule (i.e. Savai'i) Leulumoega and apparently Tamasese, who although he had not taken any noticeable part in either internal Mau affairs or Mau/Malo negotiations up to this stage, was an important figure to win over. This group tried to undermine the progress made by procrastinating on the fono with the Administrator, but the other Mau leaders, headed by Tuimaleali'ifano, Faumina, Pulepule and Lufilufi orators went ahead with the arranged meeting. During this fono held on 27 March and

88 SNA to Administrator, 25 Mar. 1934, A.O. 25/1-17.
subsequent ones - attended by the full komiti - the Mau leaders supported by the Fautua and the Faipule representative made two requests, the determination of which they said would end the Mau. The requests were for the release of the imprisoned Mau leaders and the return of Nelson. As for the grievances already before government, Faumuina said that Hart could take them up with the people now the Samaons were reconciled in the proper fa'a Samoa way. 89

The Administrator replied that the first request could be granted - the Chief Justice in fact had recommended in court during conviction of Nelson the release of the Samoan prisoners and had repeatedly asked for this to be done - but the second was beyond his powers. He however offered a lame concession that if a complete settlement of the Mau dispute was effected he would suspend or repeal the laws under which travel by the Samaons was restricted. He would moreover reopen four schools which had been closed due to political activities and three further dispensaries staffed by Native Medical Practitioners (N.M.P.) would be opened in those districts without such facilities. In addition the Estimates dealing with Samoan finances would be published in Samoan, and at the same time he was prepared to reduce the export tax on copra by a further 10/- per ton - a similar reduction was made the previous November - and he would guarantee the return on copra to the Samoans to increase by 6d. per hundred pound lots. 90

The Mau leaders, however, insisted that a final settlement could not be made until their requests on the prisoners and Nelson's return were met. The Fautua and the Malo Samoans were not happy with this

89 'Notes of fono of representatives of all Samoa with ... the Administrator at Mulinu'u, 27 March 1934', A.O. 25/1-17.

90 Ibid.
attitude because they had agreed to support the Mau representations to the Administrator on the understanding that all would abide by whatever decision the Administrator made. Still, they did not go back on the reconciliation they had made with the Mau Samoans, perhaps because they realised that it was unrealistic for the Mau leaders to give up too easily after such a long struggle and with their pride and dignity at stake. The Mau leaders had made it clear that while they appreciated Hart's patient and respectful approach to them, they nonetheless objected to what they considered to be an indecent hurry to end the Mau before he departed for New Zealand at the end of the first week of April. And so Hart, who had volunteered to have his term - it would have expired in March - extended in the hope of bringing about a settlement, left for his leave in New Zealand with the Mau issue still largely unresolved.  

The deadlock meant that the tactics adopted by each side had failed. The Administrator had thought that removing Nelson from Samoa would persuade the Mau leaders to end the movement. On the other hand the Mau leaders had hoped that reconciling with Malo Samoans and getting their support for Mau demands would bring success. They now had to reconsider their positions. For government Hart still had the option of deporting certain Mau leaders while on the Mau side an attempt was made to exploit the reconciliation of the Samoans as against government. The Mau leaders sent out messengers to spread the word that since the Samoans had reconciled it was now a matter between the whole of Samoa as against the New Zealand-controlled Administration. This message accompanied efforts in the villages and districts to win over Malo supporters and unite all Samoans in the cause of the Mau.

91 See A.O. 25/1-17 for details of the fono (5) between the Administrator and the Samoans.
These efforts failed. The process whereby Samoans in the villages/districts had resumed their normal lives after the upheavals, bitterness and separations of the early years of the Mau had progressed to a stage where people were largely immune to blandishments from both the Mau and the Administration. If anything, news of the reconciliation at Vaimoso assisted more in speeding up this normalisation process rather than promoting the cause of either the Mau or the Malo.

It was the harmony and the peace that existed in the Samoan community which decided Hart against deporting Mau leaders. This decision marked a backdown by Hart from his earlier intention of ending the Mau once and for all when he made his move in November the previous year. He had lowered his expectations to peaceful co-existence, hoping perhaps that time and lack of grounds on which the Mau could base their discontent would see it die out. Lacking any dramatic developments, however, the demise of the Mau appeared a long way off. C.R. McKay, who was the official closest to the Samoans not only because he was Secretary of Native Affairs but also because of his long period in the country - he arrived in 1919 and had been there continuously apart from the normal leave breaks - saw it this way:

The real reason for its [the Mau's] continuing existence is not in any 'grievances' (the first request in the fonos [sic] with His Excellency was that replies to the grievances should be deferred) nor is it any sympathy for Taisi, but purely a materialistic concern on the part of the Mau leaders as to what would become of their personal notoriety if they were to give it up. The Mau today is not what it was; it is now a handful of chiefs whose names in the past have been prominent, others are unpopular with their own people and even where not actually banished from their districts find living in Vaimoso more congenial and for these reasons they prefer the Mau should continue.92

92 SNA to Sec. to Admin., 1 May 1934, A.O. 25/1-18.
There was certainly something in this view; perhaps best demonstrated by the abysmal response to calls – appeals, demands, personal representations – for money: the real test of support. On the other hand, reports from all parts of the Territory, told of Samoans conducting their lives in their communities in peace and harmony, and paying little attention to the Mau/Malo conflict.\textsuperscript{93}

For the remainder of the year and up to the time of the general elections in New Zealand in November 1935, the Mau issue dropped from the limelight that it had occupied with such prominence since late 1926. Even the Mau leaders showed little enthusiasm and several times scheduled \emph{fono} were cancelled or postponed because members of the \emph{komiti} failed to turn up. Many of the representatives returned home of their own accord. Response from people in the villages continued to deteriorate, even to \emph{malaga} conducted personally by people of rank. In late 1934, for example, Fa'amu led a large women's Mau \emph{malaga} appealing for money in Savai'i, where sympathy for the Mau was strongest, and where incidentally her Malietoa connections would have been most powerful. Only \pounds 18 was donated.\textsuperscript{94} At the same time, the commemoration service on 28 December 1934 drew only fifty people; in the previous four years, this service had invariably attracted over 400 participants.

This general trend of decreasing interest in the Mau was reflected in Nelson's letters from New Zealand. He was subdued and downhearted about his own position. He was desperate to return to Samoa and indicated that he would do anything towards that end except

\textsuperscript{93} Ibid.; W.R. Fell to Administrator, 12 Nov. 1934; Eddie Stehlin to Resident Commissioner, 8 May 1934: A.O. 25/1-18.

\textsuperscript{94} Braisby to Administrator, 31 Dec. 1934, A.O. 25/1-18.
ask the Samoans directly to give up the Mau struggle. The reasons
for this attitude were clear: he had literally run out of money to
resume his activities of the earlier period and even to take care of
himself and his children; his business had been run down to a point
almost of collapse; the daughters whom he had cared for were now
rebelling and those he had left in Samoa had gone to their mother
rather than stay at Tuaefu as he had ordered; and he was physically
aging. As he repeatedly said himself, the spirit was strong but the
body and the resources were just not up to the demands required of
them. He told the Mau leaders that if he returned to Samoa he wanted
to be left alone, without anything to do with the Mau. He however
urged the Mau leaders to be strong and steadfast in their struggle.
It was not that he was weakhearted or backed down from the Mau
objectives, it was just that there was nothing more he could do for
the Mau.

Nelson was very confident that he would be allowed to return to
Samoa before the end of 1934. The grounds on which he based this
faith, though, showed the naivety of his idealism. He interviewed the
Prime Minister and asked that he be allowed to return to Samoa, saying
that he would not associate with the Mau on his return and that he was
prepared to abide by any written conditions placed on him by government.
And he sincerely believed that making those concessions would lead to
his return. But as Hart observed, it was quite unbelievable that Nelson
should imagine that his just apologising for what he had done would put
everything right after all the troubles and the expenses which the Mau

94 Taisi to Paumuina, 26 July 1934; Taisi to Atoa, 26 July 1934;
Taisi to Seu, 5 Aug. 1934; Taisi to Atoa, 6 Aug. 1934: A.O.
25/1-18.

95 Ibid.
had placed the New Zealand government in, during the last eight years.\textsuperscript{96}

In Samoa, the Mau komiti continued to hold meetings and pass resolutions which were conveyed to the people in the villages/districts; but it was obvious that, amongst the Samoans, there was very little interest left in the Mau. On the other hand, Hart was content to allow the situation to develop without official interference - no threatening proclamations, and no enforcement of the laws specifically aimed at curbing the Mau. Without outside pressure and interference, the Samoans resumed their normal lives, conducting their affairs their own way; the autonomy of their society secure. Such was the peace and harmony which prevailed, that Hart removed the names of all the districts of Upolu, except Vaimauga and Faleata, from the list of 'disturbed areas'.\textsuperscript{97}

In reporting this measure to the Minister, Hart wrote '... the elements of a disturbed area at the present time are non-existent, nor are there any circumstances indicating any likelihood of a recurrence'.\textsuperscript{98}

In November, the Labour Party won the general elections in New Zealand, and although Nelson had despaired of getting relief from a Labour victory - he had pinned his hopes on Labour gaining power too many times in the past, and his friend Holland had died - he greeted Labour's success as victory for the Mau. His optimism was not misplaced. The Labour government terminated his exile and sent a mission, comprised of F. Langstone, Minister of Lands, and J. O'Brien, M.P., to Samoa to negotiate a final settlement of the Mau/Malo conflict.\textsuperscript{99}

\textsuperscript{96} Hart to Forbes (private), 31 July 1934, A.O. 25/1-18: A record of Nelson's interview with the Prime Minister in Wellington (31 May 1934) is also found in file A.O. 25/1-18.

\textsuperscript{97} Braisby to Administrator, 11 Mar. 1935; Administrator to Minister, 18 June 1935: A.O. 25/1-19.

\textsuperscript{98} Administrator to Minister, 18 June 1935, A.O. 25/1-18.

\textsuperscript{99} Minister to Administrator, 8 Apr. 1936, A.O. 25/1-18.
The Labour victory revived interest in the Mau amongst Samoans, in dramatic fashion. Due to a perception generated in earlier years of the confrontation that a Labour government would favour the Mau in a settlement of the Mau/Malo conflict, there was a feeling amongst Mau supporters that the new Labour government in New Zealand would not only satisfy their complaints but would also look to them, instead of their countrymen who had remained supporters of the Malo, for advice and assistance in matters concerning Samoans. Mau supporters and sympathisers therefore not surprisingly took up the cause again with renewed vigour at the news of a Labour victory. As a result of this perception though, they were disillusioned when it was announced that the mission would hold discussions with all sections of the community, and Nelson had to reassure them of the goodwill of the New Zealand government towards them before they agreed to cooperate with the mission. On 23 June 1936, they joined Malo supporters in a ceremony to welcome Langstone and O'Brien, thereby ending their non-cooperation with government authorities, after a period of ten years.

With everyone back in the same stream, Mau supporters quickly gained overwhelming dominance in the Samoan side of government. Tuimaleali'iifano was reappointed as Fautua to replace Mataafa who died in early 1936, and in the elections for the Fono a Faipule held in September later the same year, 35 of the 39 seats were filled by Mau matai; mostly individuals who at one time or another had represented

---

100 See: Faumuina's speech at Vaimoso (copied verbatim), 16 Nov. 1929, A.O. 25/1-8.
102 Taisi to Faumuina, 7 May 1936, A.O. 25/1-18.
103 Langstone to PM, 23 June 1936; Administrator to Minister, 24 June 1936: A.O. 25/1-18.
their respective districts on the Mau komiti. This was the first Faipule election under a new system whereby Faipule were elected every three years. At the same time, three of the four Samoans appointed to the Legislative Council were Mau supporters and the fourth, Malietoa, voluntarily resigned his place which was subsequently filled by another Mau matai; though only for a short period before it reverted back to the senior Fautua. This trend continued throughout the whole administration of Samoan affairs so that most of the other official positions, from pulenuu at the village level to komisi at the Lands and Titles Commission, were also filled by Mau supporters, while Faumuina, the Chief Executive of the Mau, was appointed as Supervisor of Native Police.  

On the other hand, Langstone's mission had initiated steps which led to the repeal of laws which had been enacted specifically to counter the Mau. As for the wrongs which had been perpetrated by the indiscriminate use of orders imposing banishment and removal of matai titles during Richardson's term, most of those had been corrected through the normal working of the fa'a Samoa, as government since Richardson's time had simply ignored to follow up those orders; while the inequities which remained were investigated and corrected. 

In terms of harmony amongst Samoans, this ending was probably the best which one could have hoped for in this conflict. Through the repeal of the objectionable laws and through their own successes in

---

104 See: A.O. 25/1-18 and A.O. 25/1-19 for information on these changes.

winning such an overwhelming number of official positions, Mau supporters escaped the stigma of defeat and were able to enter government and give up the Mau while retaining their personal dignity and upholding the status of their titles, aiga, villages and districts. On the other hand Malo supporters were not shamed either, for the Malo had remained and it was the Mau which had been abandoned. Thus in terms of dignity and status - of crucial importance to Samoans - the Mau/Malo conflict had ended without damage to the standing of any section of Samoan society and therefore without injury to the fa'a Samoa. This situation enabled the complete resumption of normal life in the villages and districts to be effected in relative calm.

VI

In a letter to the Mau in October 1932, Nelson summed up what the Mau was about when he wrote that he was keen to see the conflict settled, 'and Samoa recover her inheritance from God, that is the freedom and the control of our country in our accepted ways and the regulations of our lives according to the customs, usages and traditions of Samoa'. In the sense that Mau supporters agreed to give up the Mau before full control of government had been assumed by Samoans, the Mau had failed. Yet it is negative and unhelpful to assess the Mau and the Samoan opposition prior to it merely in terms of attainment of this one objective.

In the first place, it is important to consider what Samoans

106 Letter from Taisi, 8 Oct. 1932, Mau Papers, PM's Dept., Apia.
meant when they talk about controlling their own affairs. For most Samoans this meant freedom within the aiga, and autonomy within their villages. These things had been seriously threatened by Richardson's plans to individualise Samoan land and to change the system of administering the affairs of villages and districts. Those plans had been abandoned as a direct consequence of the Mau so that the sanctity of the aiga and the autonomy of the villages were maintained, and Samoans were able to live their lives 'according to the customs, usages and traditions of Samoa'. On the other hand, Samoans as seen above are extremely sensitive about the issue of representation. To them, representatives are people who are controlled by those whom they represent and it was due to this attitude that they objected to the Faipule whom government had not only treated as representatives of the Samoan people, but had also given roles and powers to which representatives were not entitled, regardless of who they were. Through the Mau, the position of the Faipule had been altered so that now they would be subjected to the will of the people in the villages and districts, instead of being chosen by the Administrator.

Samoan opposition though should be seen primarily in terms of Samoans exercising their prerogatives in pursuit of the obligation to try and regain a control to which they had an inherited right. 107

Looking at Samoan opposition between 1920-1936 and particularly in the last ten years of that period in this way, it can be said that it was most successful as demonstrated by the fact that during the ten years when the Mau was active, a majority of Samoans - 95% of the Samoan

107 See Chapter 1 for an exposition on this point.
population according to the Mau, and 70% according to government\textsuperscript{108} ignored the authorities and conducted their own affairs. This demonstration also left the authorities - from the Samoa Administration to the League of Nations - in no doubt as to the desires of the Samoans concerning future control of their country.

For the Samoans too, the Mau had brought a greater awareness of a national unity in the political sphere, which was something different from the cultural unity to which they were used. Above all though, the Mau provided the Samoans with a dramatic expression of their own attitude that it was their inviolate right to control their own lives; in keeping that spirit strong and bright, the Mau played a large part in sustaining political pressure which saw Western Samoa in 1962 become the first island country in the Pacific to attain full independence.

\textsuperscript{108} See 'Report of Royal Commission ...', pp. iii-vi; 227/228 and 357/358.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. MANUSCRIPT SOURCES

I. Official

Abbreviations

A.O. Administrator's Office series (Samoa): held at the Prime Minister's Department, Apia.

G. Governor-General's series: held at the National Archives of New Zealand, Wellington.

IT Island Territory's series: held at the National Archives of New Zealand, Wellington.

Note: Due to each despatch being numbered differently in the Governor-General's series, it is impracticable to list separately documents from this source. With the IT series a select list of files consulted for this thesis is given, mainly as an aid to future researchers.

Samoa

A.O. 25/1 (24 portions starting in October 1926 and ending in 1946) Political Agitation: General

A.O. 6/8/51 Fitialo: Inquest On

A.O. 6/8/52 Molia: Inquest On

A.O. 34/8/1 Naturalisation: Appln. of O.F. Nelson for registration as British subject.

A.O. 34/37 The Samoa Guardian

New Zealand

IT 1/23/8 (24 portions starting August 1926 to 1939) Mau Agitation: General

IT 1/23/11 (2 portions) Mau Agitation: Riot of 28 Dec. 1929

IT 1/7 Garrison: Samoa
| IT 1/10 | Administration: Report by Col. Logan (8 July 1919) |
| IT 1/12 | Administration: Information gained by Dr Pomare whilst in Samoa |
| IT 1/16 | Administration: petition from residents (18/12/1915) that Samoa be placed under Colonial Office |
| IT 1/17/8 | Native Dept/: Annual and Quarterly Reports |
| IT 1/18 | Samoa Administration: Criticism of |
| IT 1/27 | Administration: Information for Prime Minister |
| IT 1/28 | Administration: Internal Economy |
| IT 1/29 | Visit by Hon. E.P. Lee in 1921 |
| IT 1/29/1 | Lee's visit: petition from residents |
| IT 1/33 | Monthly despatch from Administrator |
| IT 1/33/1 | Private correspondence between Richardson and Sir Francis Bell |
| IT 1/49 | Messrs Vershaffelt, Park and Berendsen: Visit to Samoa Dec. 1928 |
| IT 1/57 | Administration: Notes by Col. S.S. Allen |
| IT 2/1 | Administration - Colonel Logan: petition from Natives |
| IT 2/9 | Administration: Reports on Samoan Affairs |
| IT 2/11 | Policy: Samoan Affairs |
| IT 4/10 | Native Taxes |
| IT 8/10 (3 portions) | Samoa Epidemic Commission 1919 |
| IT 24/9 | Copra: Purchase by Administration on behalf of Natives |
| IT 25/1/23 (3 portions) | Permanent Mandates Commission: Discussion on Samoan Reports |
| IT 37/14 | Mau publications: General |
| IT 39/2 | Occupation of Samoa: Instructions to Col. Logan re |
| IT 61/19 (8 portions) | Reparation Estates |
IT 63/1 (3 portions) Parliamentary Tour of Pacific Islands 1920
IT 67/12/1 Samoa: Retention by the British
IT 67/12/2 Constitution of Samoa
IT 67/12/3 Constitution of Samoa
IT 69/44/3 Samoa Offenders Ordinance 1922: Appeals Against Banishment Orders
IT 79/19 Edwin Gurr: General Correspondence
IT 79/2/1 Nelson O.F. - Samoa: General Correspondence
IT 79/76 (2 portions) Col. J.W. Hütchen: Personal Correspondence
IT 79/78 General Richardson: Private Correspondence
IT 82/2 Firms: Merediths
Toeaina Club
Trading Aspirations
IT 88/3 (4 portions) Fono of Faipule
IT 88/5 Native Unrest
IT 88/6 Petition: to H.M. King George V
IT 88/7 Natives: Attitude towards British Rule - Destiny of Samoa
IT 88/12 Arrest of Tamasese and imprisonment in New Zealand

II. Unofficial

Samoa

Mau Papers (uncat.): held at the Prime Minister's Dept., Apia.

Nelson Papers: held at family home at Tuaefu.

New Zealand

Baxter, F.D., 'Collection of material relating to the Mau disturbances in Samoa, 1926-1935': manuscript held at the Law Library, Auckland University.

Braisby, A.L., A documentary record and history of the Lauati rebellion in Western Samoa - 1909 (3 vols.): held at the National Archives of New Zealand, Wellington.

Gurr, E.W., Papers: held at Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.
Tate, R.W., Papers: held at Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.


Australia

Gilson, R.P., Papers: held at Pacific History Library, A.N.U., Canberra.

London Missionary Society - Samoa District: Correspondence with New Zealand Administration, Samoa, 1915-1946: recorded in Pacific Manuscript Bureau microfilm 144; Pacific History Library, A.N.U., Canb.

Riddell, E., Papers (includes an account of Samoan history up to 1918 by Te'o Tuvale): held at the Mitchell Library, Sydney.

B. PRINTED SOURCES

I. Official


European War: (correspondence relating to) Occupation of German Samoa by an expeditionary force from New Zealand, (Wellington, 1915).


Savali, 1905-1940.

Western Samoa Gazette, Apia.

II. Newspapers and magazines

Samoa Times, 1915-1930.

Samoa Guardian, 1927-1928.

New Zealand Samoa Guardian, 1929-1934.


Pacific Islands Monthly, 1934-1940.

III. Books, Articles, Dissertations and Pamphlets

Abbreviations

JPH Journal of Pacific History
JPS Journal of the Polynesian Society


Buck, P.H., Samoan Material Culture, (Honolulu, 1930).

---------, Vikings of the Sunrise, (New York, 1938).


--------, Samoa mo Samoa, (Melbourne, 1967).


Ella, S., 'The ancient Samoan government' in Report of the 6th Meeting of the Australian Association for Advancement of Science, (Sydney, 1895).

-------------, 'The war of Tonga and Samoa', JPS, Vol. 8, 1899.


Freeman, J.D., 'The social structure of a Samoan village community' (unpublished manuscript, 2 vols., 1948).


-------------, Pacific Islanders under German rule, (Canberra, 1978).

Henley, Sir Thomas, A Pacific cruise, (Sydney, 1930).

Hogbin, H.I., Law and Order in Polynesia, (London, 1934).

Hogbin, H.I. with Hiatt, L.R., Readings in Australian and Pacific Anthropology, (Melbourne, 1966).


-------------, Samoan Village, (New York, 1974).


__________, *South Seas in the Modern World*, (New York, 1945).


Kennedy, P.M., *The Samoan Tangle*, (Dublin, 1974).


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


Maude, H.E., Of Islands and Men, (Melbourne, 1968).


----------, Social Organisation of Manu'a, (Honolulu, 1930).


Moors, H.J., With Stevenson in Samoa, (Boston, 1910).


----------, Leadership in Fiji, (Melbourne, 1975).


Pisa, Iiga, 'Mau of Pule', typescript in author's possession.


----------, *Grass Huts and Warehouses: Pacific Beach Communities of the Nineteenth Century*, (Canberra, 1977).


----------, *I, the very bayonet*, (Canberra, 1973).


Schultz, E., 'The most important principles of Samoan family law and laws of inheritance', *JPS*, Vol. 20, 1911.

----------, *Proverbial expressions of the Samoans*, (Wellington, 1953: translated by Brother Herman).


Stair, J.B., *Old Samoa or Flotsam and Jetsam from the Pacific Ocean*, (London, 1897).

Stevenson, R.L., A Footnote to History: Eight Years of Trouble in Samoa, (London, 1892).


Trood, T., Island Reminiscences, (Sydney, 1912).


-------------, Samoa 100 Years Ago and Long Before, (London, 1884).


Williams, J., A Narrative of Missionary Enterprises in the South Sea Islands, (London, 1838).


Wright, Q., Mandates under the League of Nations, (Chicago, 1930).


### Glossary

Note: The Samoan 'g' is pronounced 'ng' as in singing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aiga</td>
<td>family; kin; descent group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ali'i</td>
<td>chief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ali'i ma faipule</td>
<td>chiefs and orators of the village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aualuma</td>
<td>village organisation of unmarried women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aumaga</td>
<td>village organisation of untitled men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fa'a Samoa</td>
<td>Samoan custom; the Samoan way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fa'alupega</td>
<td>ceremonial address which lists the chiefly titles and lineage connections of a village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fa'amasino</td>
<td>Samoan judge (without formal legal training)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faife'au</td>
<td>church pastor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faipule</td>
<td>Samoan Councillor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fale</td>
<td>house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fautua</td>
<td>highest ranking official adviser</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fono</td>
<td>assembly; meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fono of Faipule</td>
<td>assembly of Samoan Councillors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gafa</td>
<td>descent line; genealogy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ie toga</td>
<td>finely-woven ceremonial mats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ifoga</td>
<td>ceremonial apology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>malaga</td>
<td>journey; party of travellers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malo</td>
<td>Government; State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mamalu</td>
<td>dignity; honour; prestige</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>matai</td>
<td>general term for chief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nu'u</td>
<td>village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pule</td>
<td>authority; power; right of control or disposal; decision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pule honorific title held collectively by the orator chiefs of certain important traditional centres in Savai'i - see Tumua

Pulefa'ato'aga agricultural inspector

Pulenu'u mayor of village

sa forbidden; prohibition

saofa'i ceremonial installation of a matai

suli moni heir by descent

tama'aiga holder of one of the four highest titles today

tafa'ifafa holder of the four pāpā which conferred titular supremacy

taule'ale'a untitled person (plural taulele'a)

tautua service; serving

tulafale orator chief

Tumua honorific title held collectively by the orator chiefs of certain important traditional centres in Upolu - see Pule

tupu (now) sovereign; king