VISIT TO SAMOA

THE AMERICAN SAMOAN COMMISSIONS

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Revel S. Moore & Joseph F. Farken

By

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WASHINGTON, D.C.
The main meeting house at Nauru. Note two large wooden gongs.

While the commission held hearings by a guard of honor.
PREPARING KAVA FOR CEREMONIAL DRINK

High Chief Tulele Translates the Address of Senator Bingham at

NUUONUU
Welcome
Samoa Commission--Carrillo, L. Beedy or Matane, Hiram Brigham

Three of the four congressmen who had served on the

on the report of the American Samoa Commission.

in the House the previous year. All these bills were passed

S.417 and to H.R.15989. A bill that had been introduced into

committee held hearings on H.R.9698, which was referred to

on insurance matters. In May, the insurance committee

S.417 passed the Senate and was referred to the House com-

duced S.417, which he drafted was exactly the same as S.562.

next year, during the 72nd Congress, Brigham intro-

Insurance Affairs.

without opposition, but it died in the House Committee on

considered and to American citizens. It passed the Senate

against the action of their lands by a clause that protected

so as to be independent of the governor, and protection

the president's, which Justice appointed by the president

wrote with a two-thirds vote subject to final approval by

a legislature that could pass a bill over the governor's

a bill of rights very much like the American Bill of Rights.

S.562 granted the Samoans American citizenship.
Samoan Rights

Samoans residing in Hawaii are neither citizens, aliens nor wards of the government. As they point out, an alien at least, has his country's consular service.

Supervisor George R. Sims has introduced a resolution which would request that Congress grant citizenship to Samoans living here. It appears to be a reasonable request. While Samoans feel they are able to "paddle their own canoe" without such attention, they would at the same time welcome American citizenship. As they say, it will do harm to no one if the request is presented to the national lawmakers.

Mrs. Erva Williams discusses the proposal in detail elsewhere in these columns today. She speaks from the viewpoint of a Samoan, an interesting viewpoint, informative, and worth reading.
Letters From the People

STATUS OF SAMOANS IN HAWAII AND RIGHT TO CITIZENSHIP

Editor The Advertiser:

Having been born in American Samoa, I am especially and vitally interested in the resolution introduced by Supervisor George R. Sims at Tuesday's meeting of the Board of Supervisors which purports to request the National Congress to grant citizenship to Samoans domiciled in the Territory of Hawaii.

The political status of Samoans who have settled here has long been a matter of uncertainty. It is quite clear, however, that we are not aliens and owe not a scintilla of fear to any foreign prince or realm; our loyalty and undivided allegiance is given to the United States and to the United States alone. Any tribal relations that affected our daily lives in Samoa have no efficacy here.

Furthermore, while it is true that in American Samoa we were subject to the regulations promulgated by the Department of the Navy and were in somewhat of a wardship category, the fact must not be lost sight of that the civil jurisdiction of the Navy does not extend to the Territory of Hawaii and, far from being made wards of the government, we take pride in our ability to stand on our own feet and have amply demonstrated that we are quite capable of forging to the front both economically and socially without asking special consideration or gratuities from either the Federal or Territorial government.

The treaty, under which American Samoa was ceded to the United States, did not grant American citizenship to Samoans any more than the original Act of Annexation granted American citizenship to Hawaiians prior to the enactment of the Organic Act. Furthermore, the provisions of the naturalization law which limits the benefits thereof to "free white persons or persons of African nativity or descent," effectively bars Samoans from earning citizenship through the process of naturalization and, if it should be remembered, Hawaiians would be shut out by that identical provision if Congress had not granted them citizenship en masse by the terms of the Organic Act.

Until a year or two ago it was erroneously supposed that we were citizens and we were permitted to register and vote in Territorial and City and County elections. When our true status was discovered, Samoan names were stricken from the voting lists and we now occupy the singular position of being neither a race nor a nation, a people without rights except those we can buy with our money, a silent and voiceless minority in a great republic.

Samoa, effecively barred by US Law

Voting
King Urges Citizen Status For Residents Of US Samoa

It will probably require another congressional party's visit to American Samoa next year before Samoans are granted American citizenship to which they are entitled, Delegate Sam King told members of the Loom's club yesterday at their regular luncheon meeting at the Loom's club yesterday.

Delegate Sam King, who was the principal speaker, declared that he is wholeheartedly for the granting of citizenship for Samoans despite the objection of U.S. Secretary of the Navy.

"Although I am a former naval officer and have considerable acquaintance, I am not afraid of an respectful issue with the Navy on this subject," he told the members.

The delegate explained that the Navy has taken a government position in American Samoa, explained to citizenship on the grounds that the natives were not highly educated and that the claim was not that of an American citizen, as he had not acquired from the government any American citizenship.

Samoan Americans have been nigher for the past year of the San Francisco without a delegate, King said.

Also in another context, the delegate explained that most of the Samoans are part of the United States, he said.

The four Samoans have American citizenship and are interested in the progress of the United States, he added.
SAMOA'S WANT CITIZENSHIP

By The Advertiser

Since the clean and strikingly beautiful Pago Pago Harbor on the island of Upolu in the Central Samoan group have been occupied by American forces, the Samoans have been working closely with the military authorities. The people of the island are requesting citizenship in the United States, a natural fit with the recent events in the region. The Samoan people see their future with the United States and hope that they too will be treated with the dignity and respect they have always enjoyed.

Requesting Citizenship

Charles Lyons and Harry Stevens

HONOLULU ADVERTISER
Nov. 14, 1943
Samoans Said Anxious For Citizenship

The Samoans in American Samoa seemed eager to become the citizens and participants of American society. On April 23, President Truman signed the bill declaring the territory a state, and Secretary J. A. King, said:

"...the people in American Samoa are anxious for the rights and responsibilities of American citizenship." The administration of the territory will be handled by the Interior Department.

Mr. Davidson delivered the Samoans their share of the administrative and political responsibilities. The request for more efficient administration was made by Secretary of State while the people in Samoa were waiting for a similar arrangement. The problem is one of integrating the local culture with the modern world.

The administration of the territory is now under the control of the Interior Department. Davidson's action is necessary for the advancement of the Territory.

While he praised the progress of the administration, he pointed out that the government of American Samoa has not yet reached the stage of being fully self-governing. The problem is one of integrating the local culture with the modern world.

Mr. Davidson, who was called to the President's office by the administration, said the problem of incorporating the territory into the United States government is one of integrating the local culture with the modern world.

The President's action is necessary for the advancement of the Territory. Davidson is now in charge of the Territory Administration.
MAN TO MAN
By Harold L. Ickes

Navy Withholds Samoan and Guam Petitions From Congress

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 16—The Guam congress, on January 4, unanimously passed a resolution that asked both for United States citizenship and an organic law. This was forwarded by Under Secretary of the Navy Sullivan hurried to Capitol Hill. It is not known what "the Honorable Governor of Guam" (a navy United States and to certain high federal official)

The neglect to forward this petition through Secretary Forrestal to the congress of the United States is an arbitrary denial of a fundamental political right possessed by the Guamanians.

Rep. Norris Poulson, of California, is a member of the public lands committee of the house. Recently, he accompanied Secretary of the Interior King on the trip that took him to Guam and Samoa on his way to Far Eastern travels. Upon his return to Washington, Mr. Poulson addressed his fellow-citizens as follows:

PETITION WITHHELD

"In Guam, which is ruled by a United States naval governor, I was told by certain of the people of the island—that by the naval governor—that they had petitioned the congress of the United States for full citizenship and the enactment of an organic act. I have in my possession a copy of that petition... Knowledge of that petition has been deliberately withheld from the congress by the navy department, James V. Forrestal, president.

IN AMERICAN SAMOA

"In American Samoa, the United States naval governor... told our party that the local inhabitants... had not requested a change in their form of government... At this moment, I have in my possession a true copy of an enactment of the 1945 General Fono of all the leading chiefs of American Samoa in which they proposed to the congress of the United States a form of organic act for... Samoa. That petition from the duly elected chiefs of 15,000 loyal Americans has not to my knowledge been presented to this congress... Knowledge of that request has also been deliberately withheld from the Congress of the United States by the navy department, James V. Forrestal, president.

The echo of Mr. Poulson's charges had scarcely died down when Under Secretary of the Navy Sullivan hurried to Capitol Hill. He sought out friends in both the house and the senate to stigmatize Mr. Poulson's remarks as one of personalities. He carried with him a letter from Secretary Forrestal. In commenting upon the

Forrestal letter, Mr. Poulson said:
"... Mr. Forrestal states that a petition for citizenship and an organic act... is in the possession of his naval subordinates and gives assurance that it will now reach the congress... He also acknowledges the adopting the General Fono of American Samoa... of a resolution requesting American citizenship and an organic act and gives assurances that the resolution will also reach the congress..."

NAVY HAD KNOWLEDGE

There is no doubt that the navy had knowledge of the action of the Congress of the United States on January 4 of the Guamanian congress. Moreover, it is difficult to credit Secretary Forrestal's statement that the peoples of American Samoa had not requested a change in their form of government. They did so in 1945, thus clearing that they had been pressing for many years.

The conclusion can not be escaped that the navy knew of these petitions and was determined not to keep them from reaching the congress. The latest, hand-picked group, headed by Dr. Ernest M. Hopkins, sent out by the navy with white wash buckets, could file its report defending the dictatorial naval rule of these two American possessions.

Rep. Poulson has introduced into the house bill granting to the Guamanians many basic liberties and rights that they have never enjoyed in their almost 30 years under autocratic naval rule.

Among these are the right of trial by jury, an end to taxation without representation, universal suffrage and the abolition of the naval governor power of absolute veto.

Secretaries Forrestal and Patterson, to say nothing of President Truman, eloquently profess their desire to maintain "democratic institutions" in Greece and Turkey, even if it costs the American people $400,000,000 to begin with.

It is difficult to understand why such champions of democracy should continue to overlook naval despotism in Guam and American Samoa.
Samoa and U.S. Citizenship

By JOHN C. HAY

(Special Editor, The New York Times, and President of the United States and a native of the United States of America, and a member of the United States Congress of Samoa. This article is the first part.)

Samoa Welcomes Citizenship

Samoa has always been noted for its natural beauty and for its friendly people. The islands are blessed with fine beaches, clear waters, and a mild climate. The people are noted for their hospitality and for their love of music and dancing. The government of Samoa is democratic and is based on the principles of democracy. The people are interested in education and are proud of their achievements. They have a strong sense of community and are willing to work together for the good of their country.

The People of Samoa

The People of Samoa are proud of their heritage and are determined to preserve it for future generations. They are proud of their language, their customs, and their traditions. They are determined to keep their culture alive and to pass it on to their children. They are determined to keep their islands beautiful and to protect them from pollution and other dangers. They are determined to keep their government strong and to protect it from corruption and other dangers.

The People of Samoa are proud of their achievements. They have made many contributions to the world, and they are determined to continue to do so. They are determined to keep their islands beautiful and to protect them from pollution and other dangers. They are determined to keep their government strong and to protect it from corruption and other dangers.

The People of Samoa are determined to keep their culture alive and to pass it on to their children. They are determined to keep their islands beautiful and to protect them from pollution and other dangers. They are determined to keep their government strong and to protect it from corruption and other dangers.

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(To be concluded)
American Samoans

Further Delay Is Protested in Granting Them Citizenship

The writer of the following letter, formerly Governor and Senator from Connecticut, is a lecturer and explorer. He served as chairman of the American Samoan Commission.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:

Now that the islands of the Pacific are so much in our thoughts, it is my hope that we may be willing to take the time and trouble to remedy a great injustice which has been done, albeit rather thoughtlessly, to some ten thousand generous people whose chiefs gave us their country together with one of the safest harbors in the world more than forty years ago. Our Navy has been glad to use that harbor, Pago Pago. Our airplanes have been happy to use Tutula as a base.

We know that the Samoans are of the same race as the Hawaiians, whom we had accepted as full-blooded American citizens before the Samoan chiefs invited us to Pago Pago, and who naturally thought they would be treated as fairly as their cousins in Hawaii. Yet we have denied the Samoans American citizenship. We rule them as the subjects of a benevolent despotism and not as they deserve to be treated.

They are true Polynesians, splendid members of a race of remarkable navigators who were exploring the widest reaches of the Pacific long before Columbus ventured across the Atlantic. They built ocean-going vessels, capable of carrying plants and animals across the Pacific from continent to continent.

Explorers and Patriots

They took the sweet potato and yam from South America and the taro and breadfruit of Asia to all the principal islands of the Pacific, along with such domestic animals as dogs, pigs and chickens. For sailing directions, enabling them to discover and colonize Hawaii, 2,000 miles away from the nearest inhabited group, they seem to have had the flight of the migratory plover that nest in the Aleutians and fly in a "beeline" to the nearest islands, thence to more lands, farther south, Tahiti, Samoa and Tonga. The Polynesians were intelligent agriculturists, tarring their fields and cultivating systems long before our ancestors thought of it.

They established patriarchal regimes, marked by courtesy and hospitality.

It is still true of them, as Robert Louis Stevenson wrote many years ago, that they are Christians, churchgoers, lovers of hymns at family worship. Important matters are debated in a fono, or native parliament, with its feasting and parade, its endless speeches and polite genealogical allusions. They are easy, merry, and pleasure-loving; the gayest of Polynesian, Games are popular. Conversation is largely political and the delights of public oratory fill in the long hours.

We wonder our Senators and Representatives who were members of a commission sent to Samoa on the cruiser Omaha, in 1930, found the people fully deserving of being granted American citizenship and a Bill of Rights. On their recommendation, a bill carrying these privileges was laid before the Congress. Twice it passed the Senate unanimously. Each time it failed to pass the House of Representatives. So the Samoans are still "subjects," but not "citizens," of the United States. It is a blot on our record for fair dealing and democracy.

Benevolent Rule

To be sure, our Navy, acting under Presidential orders, has governed American Samoa with patriarchal benevolence. Most native customs have been maintained, although some chiefs complained that in the fono, or council, their discussions were limited to matters proposed and approved by the Governor, a Naval officer. Several of the chiefs who testified before the commission, of which I had the honor to be chairman, urged that the term of service of the Naval Governors be lengthened from eighteen months, which was then the practice, so that the executive who had the sole power to make laws, judge of their observance and punish their infraction, might be more familiar with Samoan customs. They said they were at the mercy of his whims.

One chief, a representative of a large group of chiefs and the "District Governor of the Western District," requested the commission "to make a written order for the protection of myself and other people who are against the rule of the Navy, as I fear that when the commission is gone from Samoa it may be the Governor would do something to hurt us." Naturally, his fears were groundless. At the same time he expressed the thought that fundamental law of the land should be changed to be reasonable. With other chiefs he longed for the rights of American citizens which they thought they were going to get when they gave us their country.

Although the government of American Samoa, after forty-five years by our Navy has in general been admirable and benevolent, it has, nevertheless, been technically a despotism because the people have no Bill of Rights and actually are at the mercy of the Governor, the Commandant of the Naval Station. The Senate came to the conclusion a few years ago that the time had come to do away with administration of American Samoa by rules, regulations and Naval orders and to begin administering the islands under an organic act in which the functions of the Governor should be continued to the executive, the courts were aided by a chief justice independent of the Governor, and the legislative authority vested in an Assembly, of the people."

Various reasons, personal and official, have been given as to why the Samoans have been left out in the cold so far as citizenship and rights are concerned. None of these reasons is really adequate to cause further delay in doing justice to these loyal subjects.

We did not conquer their islands. They gave them to us. They had always governed themselves before 1900. They have never been conquered.

Their chiefs are courteous gentlemen of great personal dignity. They are Christians. Nearly everybody goes to church. Family prayer is the rule. Sunday is a day of rest. They are in no sense savages. They are intelligent, amiable and hospitable to a remarkable degree. The public school system consists of twenty-one schools with about fifty teachers. Education has been supposed to be compulsory throughout the fourth grade, but the schools are poorly equipped. Except for the expenses of the Naval Station with its magnificent harbor we have spent little on our Samoan friends. And we have not given them the rights to which they are entitled.

It is hard for us to realize that these ten thousand fine descendants of a great race are living under our flag without the right of habeas corpus, subject to rules made by a more or less temporary Governor, without the right to appeal to any court except one that is under his power, without the Bill of Rights which we have cherished as our most precious possession. Fortunately, the Naval officers who have been assigned the duty and privilege of making their laws and enforcing them have generally been men of their responsibilities and been benevolent. But that is no reason for denying citizenship and local self-government to our faithful and loyal subjects.

Hiram Bingham
Washington, Nov. 13, 1946
Glimpses of American Samoa

A Paradise That Presents a Problem

By RILEY H. ALLEN

(This is one of a brief series of articles by the editor of The Star-Bulletin, who returned a few days ago from an air trip to Samoa and a short stay there.)

XVI. NAVY ASKED TO REMAIN IN SAMOA

Prior to my recent trip to American Samoa I had heard that the Samoans were now asking for U. S. citizenship, or for civil administration.

The report had come from Douglas Lovelace, Associated Press correspondent at Honolulu, who visited Samoa a few weeks ago, and from George Weller, noted foreign correspondent of the Chicago Daily News. Mr. Weller was in Samoa even later than Mr. Lovelace.

They had told me that Samoans, so far as they express themselves, with naval administration continued. As this reported new attitude is quite contrary to the belief for many years, it was of special interest to me to visit the islands.

My recent visit to American Samoa, brief as it was, confirmed what the other two newspapers had reported. Not that I doubted the honesty of their observation or the sincerity of their reporting, but I was curious to see if the same sentiments would be expressed to me.

It was.

Not only did the Samoans say this privately—rather, said it publicly.

THEY SANG IT!

In fact, they sang it.

It was made the theme of one of the picturesque tableaux that were staged during an all-afternoon "fia" or dance, and entertainment.

This entertainment was something out of the ordinary, not out of the Occidental and sophisticated world as we know it.

As a throwback to ancient days, to the primitive Polynesians of a hundred or two hundred, or five hundred years ago, it was gorgeous and spirited and noisy—the fire, the unshaken physical exertion of a group of islanders whom Robert Louis Stevenson called the gayest of all the Polynesians.

Three times during this long afternoon of dancing and Polynesian pageantry, the great grass-covered parade ground of the U. S. Navy's station at Pago Pago, the visiting party was told formally that the American Samoans want no present change in their administration.

They expressed it in slightly different words, but the meaning was the same.

SENTIMENT PUBLICLY VOICED

The request was made by chiefs or village heads who appeared during the dancing and mass tableaux. It was first made in Samoa and then translated by a "talking chief" or interpreter into English.

In each case the speech was directed to Admiral Dewitt C. Ramsey, commander in chief of the U. S. Navy in the Pacific.

There was one song of welcome to the visiting party, special greeting to "Atumalga Lami" (Admiral Ramsey) and appreciation of what the navy has done for the Samoans.

It expressed also the hope that the navy will remain in charge of Samoan affairs.

As this song was sung by a group of brightly dressed villagers, it was translated for us by a Samoan who spoke excellent English.

CEREMONY OF GIFT-GIVING

Later, during a "talo" or gift-giving ceremony, the same sentiment was expressed.

This "talo" is very much like the Hawaiian "hookulu" or gift-giving ceremony—as indeed it should be, for the Hawaiians and the Samoans are closely related. Their customs and a great deal of the language are similar.

At the end of the gift-giving, with tapa mats, native foods and fruits piled in front of the admiral, the Samoan orator, Fanoa of Matautia county spoke as "talking chief" for the Maui'a (pronounced Maumau) high chief of that county.

He said:

"The navy has ruled these islands for 47 years. We wish to remain under naval jurisdiction until we are able to handle our own affairs."

AS TO U. S. CITIZENSHIP

Later still on that afternoon of Polynesian pageantry, the same sentiment was publicly voiced; and this time the following was added by the Samoan—another "talking chief."

"We favor American citizenship at a time when the navy considers we are capable of such a status."

On the following night, an elaborate Samoan dinner was given for our party in the great great "fale" or hall of High Talking Chief Tui-anaofo of the Eastern District.

Here, when the bounteous feast of mingled Samoan and "falegagi" (foreign) edibles and delicacies had been disposed of, there were some speech-making, interspersed with more of the superb and spirited dancing for which the Samoans are famous.

WISH NO CHANGE

Again at this dinner, the Samoans told Admiral Ramsey that they wish no change in their present relations with the U. S. Navy— until the navy feels they are capable of conducting a larger degree of self-government.

Short as was my stay, I heard sufficient such statements to believe that the fairly general sentiment is that it will change as well as future need to be discussed in a subsequent article.