

“the Administrator referred in his message last March as having responded to his appeal. They, however, with the approval of the Planters’ Association, handed us their report on labour and agriculture for us to put before you, thus signifying their confidence in the Citizens’ Committee now present.”

Only this morning I received a letter from the chairman of that committee to say that they had already attended to that matter. Prior to that it was intended for us to present it to the Administrator with their full consent.

*Hon. Minister :* Did not you repudiate that in a letter to the Administrator ?

*Mr. Nelson :* We handed it in as a request of the Planters’ Association because it had been prepared by them.

*Hon. Minister :* Your committee did not accept it, I understand.

*Mr. Williams :* I think we did not quite endorse that. We put it in as coming from them.

*Mr. Nelson :* “The last who resigned his position in the committee offered to remain on as honorary legal adviser, and he now attends as such. No further proof can be needed to show that the confidence of the people of Samoa in the original committee has not been shaken, despite all that has been said to the contrary. If a further demonstration of this were required, then the overwhelming victory of the people’s representatives at the elections of the Legislative Council last November should furnish it. So much for the European side of the committee. Of the thirty-three Faipule districts, the committee is supported by an overwhelming majority in thirty-one districts and a substantial minority in the other two. Altogether over 90 per cent. of the Natives support the committee, and we are prepared to demonstrate this to you at any time if the demonstrations already given you since your arrival here have not sufficed. This may all seem ancient history, as we have not failed to acquaint you of the real position in more ways than one, but you and your Government have refused to admit it. Even the results of the last elections have not been published in the New Zealand press, which proves to us that the public of New Zealand will never learn of the true state of affairs in Samoa, so far as the New Zealand Government is concerned.”

*Hon. Minister :* They will hear every word when I return. I know everything that is going on in Samoa : the Government did not send a fool here.

*Mr. Westbrook :* You have not come to deal with fools.

*Mr. Nelson :* Certainly the New Zealand press must have got information from somewhere about our last meeting—about Europeans walking out. There are some untruths published : I do not know the source of them.

“Sir, the representations of the Citizens’ Committee, as contained in the reports now before you, have been prepared by the wish of the people of Samoa ; they have been approved by them ; they were submitted to the Administrator last December with their knowledge and consent, and they are now handed to you on their behalf. Since they were prepared many events have taken place ; much correspondence by post and radio has been exchanged ; threats have been issued ; intimidation and coercion have held sway ; wild rumours have been circulated ; more oppressive legislation has been promulgated ; bad feeling has been incited, resulting in the whole country being dissatisfied, and all because the New Zealand Government have failed in their duty by the people of Samoa. You have broken faith with them. (1) You did not visit Samoa in October last, as promised by the Prime Minister, to investigate into the matters complained of. (2) You turned down their appeal for you to come in November. (3) You agreed to receive the delegation in January and then refused to meet the Native representatives. (4) You disregarded all representations made to you by post and radio, preferring to be guided by the Administrator and his nominated Council of Faipules. (5) You even stated that you were satisfied by official advices received from Samoa that an investigation was not required. (6) You heeded not the plea of the Citizens’ Committee in favour of leading Samoan chiefs against oppressive and arbitrary acts exercised against them by the Administrator. (7) The Fono of Faipules made insulting speeches against all sections of the people of Samoa. (8) The Administrator issued drastic and arbitrary orders to all and sundry in his official communiques, yet not a hand was turned by the New Zealand Government on behalf of the long-suffering people of Samoa. The Prime Minister, forgetting his sympathetic reception of myself, and later of Mr. Meredith, turned right against us and now leads the campaign to suppress the free expression of the wishes of the people of this country. Even the Governor-General, a non-party officer and representative in New Zealand of His Most Gracious Majesty the King”——

*Hon. Minister :* You have no right to refer to the Governor-General. I will not allow you to put that into the Native language. The same remarks apply to anything said against the Prime Minister and myself.

*Mr. Westbrook :* That is collusion.

*Hon. Minister :* I will get a straight run this time. I demand power to have a fair deal ; I am going to get it.

*Mr. Nelson :* Is it a fair thing that a statement should be made about the merchants paying £8 for copra and then selling for £20 ?

*Hon. Minister :* If it is true, anything is fair.

*Mr. Nelson :* Do you say that is true ?

*Hon. Minister :* I do not know that, it is the first I have heard of it.

*Mr. Nelson :* May I ask in what way we can defend ourselves in respect of the Governor-General’s speeches ? Have we to submit to the Governor-General’s charges ? Is that your ruling ? The Governor-General for New Zealand is responsible for what he says, and yet we must not answer direct charges made by him.

*Hon. Minister :* You are not going to pass strictures on the Governor-General in my presence.