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SAMOA COMES OF AGE

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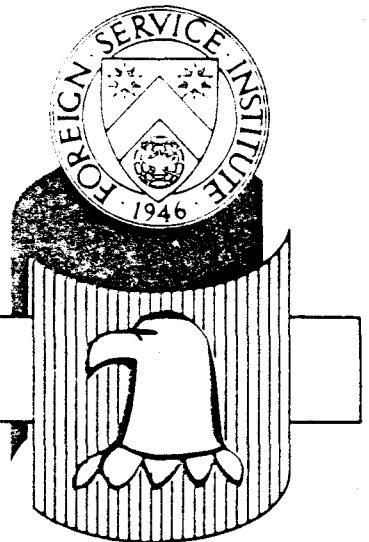
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NINETEENTH SESSION

SENIOR SEMINAR IN FOREIGN POLICY

DEPARTMENT OF STATE



1976 - 1977

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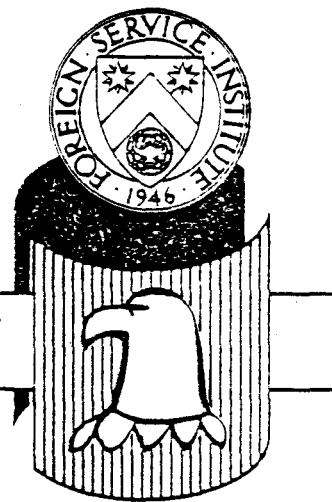
SAMOA COMES OF AGE

Case Study by JAMES K. BISHOP

NINETEENTH SESSION

SENIOR SEMINAR IN FOREIGN POLICY

DEPARTMENT OF STATE



1976 - 1977

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SAMOA COMES OF AGE

By

James K. Bishop

SUMMARY

Seven tropical islands 2,400 miles southwest of Hawaii, American Samoa was annexed by the United States at the turn of the century during America's brief imperial phase. Left largely to themselves throughout fifty years of naval administration, inhabitants of the territory preserved their traditional culture until the 1960's. Then greatly increased spending by an embarrassed U.S. Government brought affluence and social change. Respect for traditions hallowed by a three thousand year history, and unwillingness to jeopardize their federal subsidy, kept American Samoans behind their neighbors in moving toward self-government. But by 1976, an economic crisis and dissatisfaction with the behavior of recent appointed governors finally persuaded Samoans to approve what they had rejected in three earlier plebiscites - the election of their own governor.

Local issues, primarily economic and social, are expected to dominate the gubernatorial campaign. The voters are split roughly in two groups. Those who favor the old style politics of family and regional contests for the honor of electing a member or ally to prestigious position are pitted against modernists, who are more concerned about the competence and impartiality of the candidates. As American Samoans move toward responsible government they are united in their opposition to independence and little attracted by the possibility of reunification with Western Samoa. Statehood is viewed as impractical. Commonwealth status has appeal, but the incompatibility of the U.S. constitution with essential elements of Samoan culture is an impediment.

U.S. national interests in American Samoa are minimal, but Washington does have obligations to assist the territory's economic and political development. While generous, American assistance has had numerous perverse effects, which threaten Samoa's culture and the well-being of many Samoans. After encouraging Samoans to adopt greater self-government, United States officials are reluctant to transfer some fiscal and other powers.

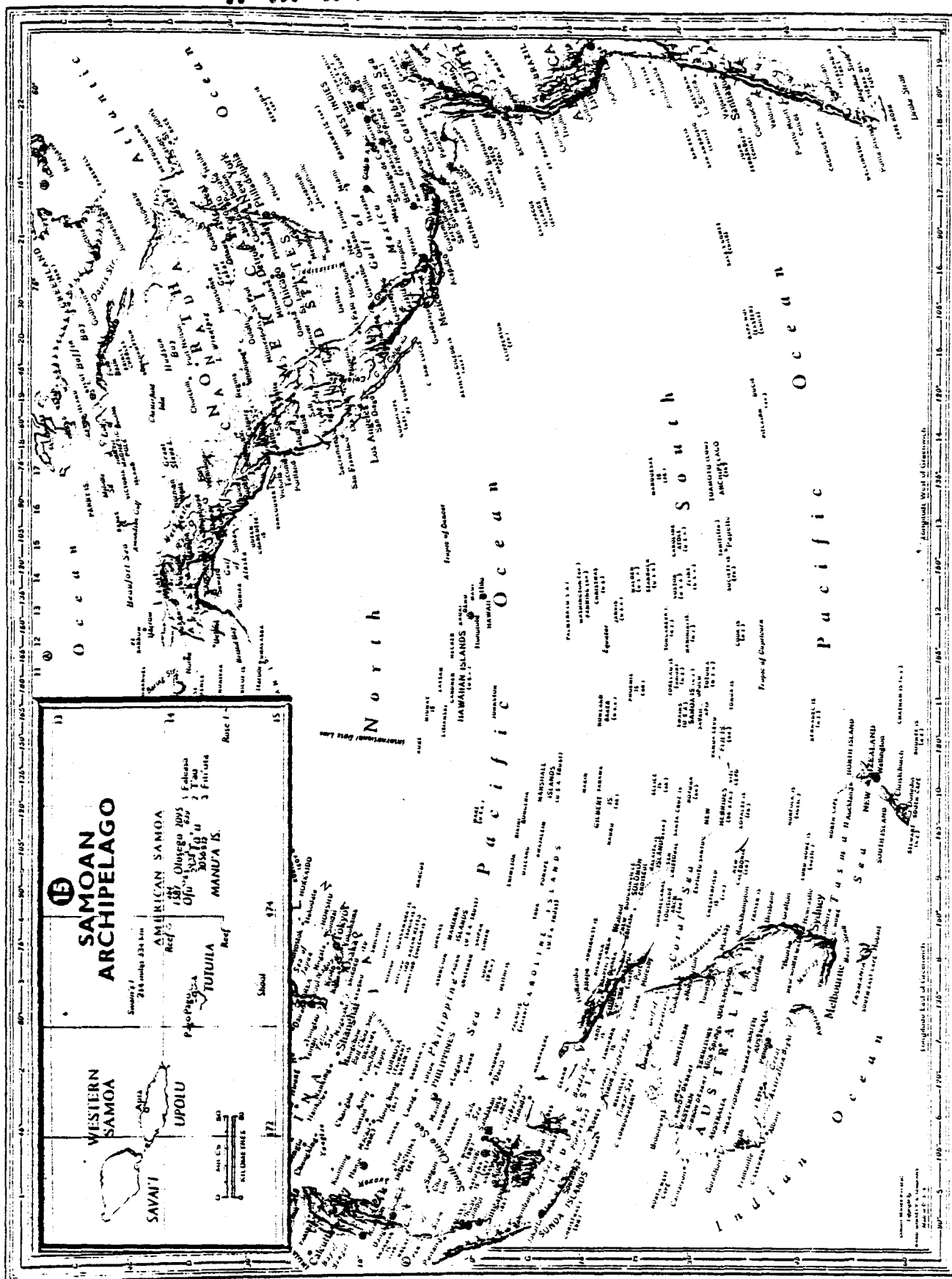
There is a need to re-examine the federal government's policies toward American Samoa. Numerous recommendations are made which might improve the administration of the territory and prepare its inhabitants to live more comfortably in an environment where custom and change are in conflict.

Senior Seminar in Foreign Policy
April 1977

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WORLD MAP



WORLD MAP

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Introduction

Red and blue no longer extend across large portions of the maps of Africa and Asia marking the expanse of the vast British and French colonial empires. New colors very recently replaced that indicating Portugal's African empire. America's overseas territories, long insignificant in comparison with the foreign areas subservient to London, Paris and Lisbon, have become more visible to those seeking the total eradication of colonialism. American ambassadors expend great energy and diplomatic credit heading off recurrent attacks on the United States for alleged domination of foreign peoples in areas controlled by the United States but not included within the fifty states. Remembering that Britain, France, and the other colonial powers insisted that their subjects abroad supported their respective empires, representatives of the colonies which have achieved independence listen skeptically to Washington's claims that the inhabitants of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Northern Marianas prefer the American flag to those of their own design. Indeed these counter currents to the winds of change are anomalous.

This paper examines the motives which have led one territory, American Samoa, to reject the sovereign status sought throughout most of the Third World. With American Samoans moving hesitantly into their first gubernatorial campaign, the paper describes the candidates and the issues. Looking forward, the options for a future relationship between American Samoa and the United States are examined from a Samoan standpoint. U.S. national interests in Samoa are described from a Washington perspective. An analysis of some of the problems troubling the territory is followed by recommendations intended to be corrective.

The substance of this paper reflects the guidance of the authors identified in the bibliography as well as the opinions of seventy persons formally interviewed and those of several dozen additional informants questioned more casually. Research was conducted in the United States and on the Samoan islands of Tutuila, Ta'u, and Upolu. Gratitude is expressed for the patience and hospitality of Samoan sources, as well as for the cooperation of officials of the U.S. Department of the Interior and of the Government of American Samoa.

Samoa and the United States

Early Relations

Located a little further than halfway on the route south from Hawaii to New Zealand, the Samoan Islands were first populated by Polynesians who entered the south Pacific from southeast Asia. Establishing themselves in Samoa before the Christian era, these Polynesians were conscious heirs of a civilization with a thousand year history. The first recorded contact with the west occurred in 1722 when a Dutch expedition visited the eastern islands. The whalers and missionaries who brought western culture to Polynesia arrived in Samoa the following century.

The exploring expedition of Lieutenant Charles Wilkes, USN visited Samoa in 1839, and an American Consul was appointed provisionally the same year. His duties related mainly to visiting American whalers, while his British and German colleagues represented the interests of their merchant compatriots. These were competing for the Islands' coconut oil and copra exports and sometimes also siding with Samoan factions engaged in the leadership struggles which provoked perpetual turmoil in the Islands.

Seeking to expand America's commercial and political influence in the south Pacific, the Grant administration focused on Samoa. Instructed by the American Minister at Honolulu to promote U.S. interests and enterprises by all

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legal and proper means, Commander Richard W. Meade of the U.S.S. Narragansett arrived in Pago Pago on February 14, 1872. Three days later he drew up an agreement with Chief Mauga of Pago Pago promising American protection for his people in return for the exclusive privilege of establishing a naval station in Pago Pago's superb harbor. Although the Senate, preoccupied by the problems of reconstruction, shelved the agreement, its existence helped discourage claims by the British and Germans in the Pago Pago area.

State Department Special Agent Steinberger

William H. Webb, a prominent New Yorker with Pacific shipping interests, persuaded President Grant to appoint a mutual friend, Colonel A.B. Steinberger, as Special Agent of the State Department to assess conditions in the Islands and return, it was hoped, with a report which would prompt the Foreign Relations Committee to act favorably on Commander Meade's agreement. Arriving in August 1873, Steinberger was asked by war weary chiefs, who were fearful of losing their lands to Europeans, if the U.S. would extend its protection over them. In October some of them wrote to the President endorsing the concept of union between Samoa and the United States.

Following his return to the United States in December, Steinberger was unsuccessful in his efforts to shake loose the Meade agreement. He arrived back at Samoa in April 1875 aboard a U.S. naval vessel with a vague response from President Grant expressing the hope that Samoan unity and independence would remain inviolable. Clearly exceeding his instructions, Colonel Steinberger soon established a new Samoan Government in which he occupied the key position of Prime Minister. Within a year his power so antagonized the British and American Consuls that, with the assistance of British naval officers, they arrested and deported him.

International Rivalry

Fearful a German protectorate might be imposed on Samoa, the legislature Steinberger had established again sought the protection of the United States, which was considered more benign than Germany. This time the Senate agreed to a treaty of friendship and commerce, which was signed by President Hayes on February 8, 1878. This agreement gave the United States the right to establish a coaling and supply station at Pago Pago Harbor. For its part, the United States pledged the use of its good offices to help resolve any differences which might arise between the Samoan Government and that of any other nation on friendly terms with the United States. Within eighteen months the Germans had persuaded the Samoans to sign a similar treaty, and the Samoans had negotiated a third with the British, to whom they were looking for protection given American reluctance to go beyond a treaty of friendship and commerce.

In an effort to restore peace to Apia, Samoa's principal town and their residence, the Consuls of the United States, Great Britain and Germany signed a convention on September 2, 1879. It did limit violence in Apia, but rivalry among the three powers continued throughout the following decade. The Germans became particularly aggressive in pursuit of their ambitions after Bismark adopted an imperialistic policy in 1884. American policy opposed the annexation of Samoa by any power. The British were ambiguous, torn between the desire to get along with Germany, whose help might be needed should Russia threaten India, and the firm opposition of Australia and New Zealand to any expansion of German influence in the south Pacific. By the late 1880's the British had decided to accommodate German ambitions in return for German cooperation elsewhere. During the subsequent decade, the struggle consequently pitted the United States and Germany against each other, with the bitterness it provoked to influence American attitudes toward Germany through the debate on entry into World War I.

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Negotiation

At American initiative a tripartite conference opened in Washington on June 25, 1887 to try to resolve differences over Samoa. It failed a month later when the United States rejected British and German demands that the latter be awarded temporary control over all the Islands. In subsequent months the combat between rival Samoan claimants for authority became more violent. As they had on previous occasions, the three powers dispatched warships to Apia to protect their nationals. The crews of these vessels occasionally participated in the military operations ashore.

By 1889 Bismark's enthusiasm for Germany's Samoan adventure had cooled, and in January he invited his rivals to Berlin, where he proposed to reconvene the aborted Washington Conference. Acceptance was received from London and Washington the following month. On March 14-15 a violent hurricane struck Apia. Eight of the nine warships the three powers had stationed in the harbor floundered or went ashore. One hundred and fifty naval personnel were lost. The three governments pondered the cost of their south Pacific rivalry.

The Berlin Conference convened on April 29, 1889. U.S. objectives were a tripartite system to permit joint intervention when and if needed, as well as expansion of its treaty rights to Pago Pago, so that the United States would have exclusive use of this harbor. Signed on June 14, 1889, the Berlin Treaty satisfied only the first American objective. It designated a king whom the absent Samoans were expected to accept and a foreign chief justice with more authority than the Samoan king. A de facto condominium was created in which the three foreign states shared authority.

Within months of their adoption, several of the provisions of the Berlin Treaty had become inoperative, and violence again had prompted the dispatch of warships. By the end of the decade, American and British marines, with their governments now acting in concert, had disembarked to take the field against the Samoan faction backed by Germany, and a joint Anglo-American bombardment had damaged the German Consulate.

Partition

Germany's ambitions in the Pacific revived when Bismark was forced from office in 1890 and von Bülow took responsibility for foreign affairs. The Caroline and Mariana groups were purchased from Spain. In 1898 the British were asked by Berlin if they would agree to a division of Samoa between the United States and Germany in return for American and German acquiescence to Britain's annexation of the Tonga Islands. Rebuffed three times, the Germans proposed instead in March 1899 that commissioners be sent by the three powers to stop the fighting raging in the Islands. This time the British, concerned about Germany's position as war with the Boers approached, agreed.

In a report submitted in July, the commissioners recommended that the three powers acting together exercise greater authority in the Islands. Two dozen Samoan chiefs concurred. However, the next month a German special envoy proposed to Secretary of State John Hay that the Islands be divided among the powers. America was in the grip of its brief imperial phase, and President McKinley's response was positive. The Germans then negotiated an arrangement with the British by which the latter renounced all their claims in Samoa in return for the award of all German rights in Tonga, all German islands in the Solomons to the east and south of Bougainville, several concessions in German territories in West Africa, and German renunciation of extraterritorial rights in Zanzibar.

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On December 2, 1899, a tripartite convention was signed in Washington. By its terms, all claims to the islands were renounced except those of the United States east of 170° longitude and Germany's west of the same line. Ratifications were exchanged the following February. The partition established the German position in the two largest islands, Upolu (1114 sq. kilometers) and Savai'i (1820 sq. kilometers) and seven much smaller islands with a combined area of a single square kilometer. The islands east of 170° were Tutuila (137 sq. kilometers), Ta'u (45 sq. kilometers), Aunu'u (1.5 sq. kilometers), Olosega, Ofu and uninhabited Rose Island.

Deeds of Cession

Without any reference to the Samoans, President McKinley signed an executive order on February 19, 1900, instructing the Navy to take the steps necessary to establish U.S. authority in the eastern islands and to extend American protection to their inhabitants. 1/ The Navy complied promptly, and on April 17, 1900, the chiefs of Tutuila signed a deed ceding their island to the U.S. The ruler of the three islands forming the Manu'a group (Ta'u, Olosega and Ofu) at first refused to sign, and it was July 1904 before a separate deed of cession was concluded with him. Swains Island, a privately owned coral atoll, became part of American Samoa by a joint resolution of Congress on March 4, 1925.

Congress was not to accept the deeds of cession until a joint resolution to that effect was passed on February 20, 1929. President Roosevelt nevertheless recognized the Tutuila cession by executive decree, awarding medals, and inscribed silver watches to the signatory chiefs.

No record exists of the negotiation of the deeds. They specified that the U.S. assumed responsibility "for the promotion of the peace and welfare of the people of said islands, for the establishment of good and sound government, and for the rights and property of the inhabitants of said islands." 2/ The U.S. pledged to "respect and protect the rights of all people dwelling in Tutuila to their lands and other property." 3/ Chiefs were entitled "to retain their individual control of the separate towns, if that control is in accordance with the laws of the United States concerning Tutuila." 4/ It also was agreed "that there shall be no discrimination in the suffrages and political privileges between the present residents of said islands and citizens of the United States dwelling therein, and also that the rights of the chiefs in each village and of all people concerning their property according to their customs shall be recognized." 5/

-
- 1/ His action ignored the fact that the tripartite convention did not award the U.S. title to the islands - it merely specified the renunciation of British and German claims. However, as mentioned earlier, Samoan chiefs earlier had petitioned both the U.S. and the U.K. to either annex their islands or extend protection to them.
 - 2/ Cession of Tutuila and Aunu'u to the United States Government, April 17, 1900.
 - 3/ Ibid.
 - 4/ Ibid.
 - 5/ Cession of Manu'a Islands July 14, 1904.

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Naval Administration

The Navy, with funds only for the operation of a coaling station, largely left the governance of the Islands it administered to the chiefs. They continued to be guided by Samoan custom (fa'Samoa). The Navy prohibited alienation of Samoan land. The Navy also provided some medical care. To the extent it existed, education remained the responsibility of the missionaries. The Navy's efforts to secure funds to improve Samoan living conditions were rebuffed by the Treasury.

World War I brought a change in the administration of Western Samoa when New Zealand troops, transported by British and French naval ships, overwhelmed the small German militia in a bloodless invasion. New Zealand was awarded the Islands as a League of Nations Mandate, which became a United Nations Trusteeship after the Second World War.

When Congress in 1929 belatedly accepted the cession of the Islands, it conferred on the President authority for their administration pending further delegation of authority by the Congress. A congressional commission visited American Samoa in 1930 to investigate inter alia the demands for civilian government being made by the Mau Movement - a political force which was to have much greater influence in the political evolution of Western Samoa. However, most of those who testified before the commission requested the continuation of naval administration, and the Mau Movement lost its modest force once it appeared likely there would be an organic act for American Samoa. However, subsequent efforts to obtain passage of such legislation failed in the House in 1933 and in the Senate four years later. Indeed, Congress never has passed further legislation regarding governance of the Islands. In 1951, when the naval station was closed, President Truman transferred governing authority to the Department of the Interior, which continues to exercise this responsibility.

Indirect rule, benign neglect, and the prohibition on the sale of land to non-Samoans helped preserve Polynesian culture in American Samoa during the Navy's administration. That culture was remarkably adaptive, e.g. it had accepted Christianity quickly and without disruption, the Samoan pastors being accorded the status of honorary chiefs. A bill of rights was enacted, but most authority remained securely in the hands of the chiefs.

World War II was a major shock. The population doubled as marines and soldiers arrived to defend the Tutuila, train in its jungles, and use it as a base for strikes against Japanese forces to the west. Tutuila's physical infrastructure was greatly improved, and hundreds of Samoans went overseas as volunteers in the U.S. military services. American mores intruded more forcibly on fa'Samoa than ever in the past.

Administration by Interior Begins

Closure of the naval station was a body blow to the economy. Approximately 2,000 Samoans left for Hawaii with the Navy or during the following year as the economy contracted. Expenditures remained very modest under Interior's administration. In 1956, a Samoan employed by Interior, Peter Tali Coleman, became the first Samoan to be appointed Governor. A tight budget limited his ability to improve living standards.

Washington Pays Attention

The sixties brought criticism of the U.S. administration of Samoa in the United Nations and in the American media. A congressional committee composed of Senators Long of Hawaii and Gruening of Alaska, each of whom had served as

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territorial governor of his respective state, visited Samoa. They reported that:

"Anyone visiting American Samoa today and seeing the delapidated condition, both of the physical plant and of the government, and of the economy itself, might well question whether their /the Samoans'/ faith in our Christian nation has been fulfilled." 6/

The two Senators cited an urgent need for additional federal funds in public works, health and education. They also called for assistance to agriculture and for the extension to American Samoa of federal legislation providing the states with assistance in numerous sectors.

The stage was set for initiatives which were to have profound influence on fa'Samoa. Congress increased appropriations for American Samoa from \$1.3 million in 1959 to \$13 million by 1963. Under the energetic direction of a vigorous young Governor, H. Rex Lee, a capital investment program was implemented. Roads were improved, and a jet airport and a first class hotel were constructed to attract tourists. The world's first large scale educational television system (ETV) was introduced, and new schools were constructed throughout the territory. ETV and the new schools were an ambitious effort to leapfrog the educational barriers created by the marginal english and rudimentary formal education of Samoan teachers.

Greater federal spending and the payrolls of the two large American fish canneries which began operating in Pago Pago Harbor in the late fifties and early sixties further transformed Samoan life. Network television soon was bringing American values and problems into the Samoan home. The thatch-roofed open-sided fale in which Samoans had resided for two thousand years frequently was replaced by homes of concrete or wood. In these new structures the nuclear family continued many of the folkways sanctioned by fa'Samoa, but others became less relevant, and the bonds of the aiga, or extended family, loosened. Many younger Samoans, better educated than their elders, resented the authority of the matai - the aiga heads who comprise Samoa's aristocracy. To escape the levies of the matai, and the demands of unemployed aiga members, many Samoans left for Honolulu or West Coast cities. Others joined the military services. Samoans travelled more frequently, returning home with new interests and tastes.

Political Structure Liberalized

In the post-war years a political structure patterned on the American model was established. Although the high chiefs retained great influence, Samoan society gradually became more democratic. In 1948 a bicameral legislature replaced the advisory body formed early in the Naval administration. Also called the Fono (or meeting) its membership included in the upper chamber the twelve high chiefs with whom the Naval Governor had consulted. But a House of Representatives to be elected from among lower ranking matai also was instituted. Four years later the secret ballot was adopted for election to the House, non-matai became eligible for election, and suffrage was extended to all adults, including those without titles.

6/ Study Mission to Eastern (American) Samoa Report of Senators Oren E. Long, of Hawaii, and Earnest Gruening, of Alaska, to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs of the United States Senate, pg. 14.

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The Fono mandated a constitutional committee in 1954. Six years later American Samoa had its first constitution. Revised in 1966, it incorporates the civil rights guaranties of earlier legislation and sanctions the existing tripartite form of government. Although the Fono had responsibility for allocation of locally generated revenue and eventually was to participate in preparation of the entire budget for the territory, there was little delegation of real authority. The Governor retained a veto, which he exercised frequently. Although the Fono could appeal to the Secretary of the Interior to override the Governor's veto, the Secretary was unlikely to question the Governor's decisions.

Political Status Examined

American Samoa's political status appeared anachronistic when compared in the late sixties with movement toward self-government elsewhere in Polynesia. Tonga had retained its independence throughout the colonial era. Western Samoa had been granted its independence by New Zealand in 1962, Nauru became sovereign in 1968, and Fiji was to become independent in 1971. The Cook Islands achieved internal self-government in 1965, and Niue was to receive it in 1974. Britain eventually was to give self-government to the Gilbert Islands (now expected in 1978). Only in the thinly populated Tokelau and Ellice Islands, and in French Polynesia ^{7/} and American Samoa were there no plans for local autonomy.

In 1969, the Fono created a Future Political Status Study Commission. After touring other U.S. dependent areas, and consulting the Governments of New Zealand and Western Samoa, the Commission recommended that there be no change in the relationship between American Samoa and the United States. The Commission specifically ruled out independence, reunification with Western Samoa, statehood, commonwealth status, passage of an organic act, and inclusion in Hawaii. The Commission did propose popular election of senators (to this day senators are chosen by county councils in accordance with fa'Samoa), representation in the U.S. Congress by a delegate at large, and the popular election of Samoa's Governor.

An Elected Governor

A delegate at large soon was elected, although Congress never has granted him any official status, and the delegate is accredited to this day only by Samoan authorities. In three successive annual plebiscites beginning in 1972, Samoan voters rejected the proposal that they elect their own governor. Finally, in August 1976, the vote swung in favor of this step toward self-government. Samoans currently are discussing among themselves, as well as negotiating with the Department of the Interior, the qualifications for election to this office and the powers the occupant will enjoy. A lieutenant governor also is to be elected, and similar consultations are underway regarding qualifications and authorities.

Reluctance

The hesitance demonstrated by Samoans in approving an elected governor has origins both in the depths of fa'Samoa and in much more recent influences. Family ties are extremely strong in Samoan society, and many Samoans fear a

^{7/} In Tahiti strong pressure for more local government had not overcome more broadly based support for continued close ties with France, which provided various subsidies to Tahiti's economy.

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Samoa governor will favor his aiga. Status is the objective of traditional politics (the matai hierarchy is so complex few foreigners can claim to perceive clearly any but the major divisions). Many traditional chiefs, who can influence the votes of their subordinates, were reluctant to see any Samoan elected governor because this position could be interpreted as equivalent to that of a paramount chief (fa'Samoa recognizes five supreme titles, and attempts by individual high chiefs to obtain all five had been among the causes of the incessant wars of the nineteenth century). Many conservative Samoans simply regarded election of a governor as unauthorized by fa'Samoa. Many Samoans were confused, suspecting there must be some unforeseen danger, and their apprehension prompted negative votes.

The most widespread fear was that election of a Samoan governor would be followed by a reduction in the substantial federal subsidy, either because the U.S. Government would begin to back away from its commitment, or because no Samoan would be as effective lobbying Congress as politically influential appointed governors and the Department of Interior.

A contributing factor in the 1972 referendum was the opposition of Governor John Haydon, who, while cleared on charges of violating the Hatch Act (the judge ruled the Act did not cover the plebiscite), was reprimanded for unwarranted intrusion in the electoral process. The following year only 48% of those registered voted. It rained heavily the day of the referendum. In addition, considerable opposition was generated by linkage of the gubernatorial issue to approval of a new constitution which was not well understood and called for substantial increases in the salaries of Fono members. In 1974, the time allowed for discussion of the issue between the date the plebiscite was announced and the date it was conducted was criticized as too short. However, 47% of those voting favored an elected governor by 1974.

Turnabout

There also was a variety of reasons why the proponents of a locally elected governor succeeded in 1976. The most broadspread appears to have been dissatisfaction with Governor Ruth. Drought and a series of accidents forced the closure of the canneries in 1974, causing a serious shortfall in anticipated local revenue. Simultaneously, auditors on loan from the Agency for International Development (AID) identified sizeable obligations for which there were not sufficient funds. The consequence was a sharp curtailment of the programs administered by the Government of American Samoa (GAS). Almost 40% of the more than 5,000 Samoans employed by GAS were discharged in a massive reduction in force. The manner in which these economies were effected, and the pervasive belief that Governor Ruth had little respect for their culture, came on the heels of severe difficulties with previous appointed governors. Many Samoans, including numerous influential chiefs, became convinced that their self-respect and the territory's economy probably would be safeguarded better by a Samoan governor than by future political appointees.

The "yes" vote of some Samoans was influenced by knowledge that Peter Tali Coleman probably would stand for election. The only Samoan to serve as an appointed governor, Coleman was Deputy High Commissioner for the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands in 1976. He visited American Samoa during the period prior to the plebiscite and discussed his possible candidacy. Coleman had avoided favoritism while in the governor's office, had twenty-five years experience in administration of dependent areas, and, perhaps most importantly, he was believed to know his way around Washington well enough to assure continuation of the U.S. subsidy.

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Some Samoans decided it was time for an elected governor because American Samoa had become too far out of step with its Pacific neighbors, some of whom taunted Samoans with references to their continued dependent status. Finally, the 1976 referendum was conducted more carefully than the three previous. An election commissioner was appointed, and, with the assistance of a Samoan speaking U.S. attorney, the issues were discussed extensively at public meetings and on television. To encourage voters to express their own preferences, rather than those of their matai, all of the ballots collected throughout the territory were dumped together prior to counting, which took place before television cameras. The results were clear; the local election of a governor was approved by almost 70% of the voters.

The Election Campaign

The plebiscite decided the principal question, but it raised many others concerning qualifications for office, election procedures, gubernatorial powers, etc. A Gubernatorial Advisory Commission chaired by a senior Interior Department attorney, with further representation from Interior, GAS and the Fono was established. It met at Pago Pago in November 1976 and again the following February. The most controversial subject proved to be Interior's proposal that a special representative of the Secretary of the Interior be assigned to American Samoa where he could block any GAS obligations in excess of \$2,000, as well as any tax exemption, and would exercise a de facto veto over legislation. The Samoans recognized that in the absence of organic legislation, or a reassignment of administrative responsibility by the President, the Secretary of the Interior would retain legal authority for administration of American Samoa, and therefore have the right to exercise some oversight. But they objected strongly that the powers Interior suggested be given the Secretary's representative would make the Governor a figurehead. In response to Samoan criticism, and that subsequently expressed by Congressman Phillip Burton, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Territorial and Insular Affairs, Interior agreed to modify its proposal.

A special Fono session was called in late March to discuss those issues requiring local input. Chief among these was the timing of the election. Interior and Congressman Burton's subcommittee favored November 1977. Several of the prospective candidates saw tactical advantage in delay, and there was a more generally shared concern that Samoans might require more time to consider and discuss such an important step. Finally, there was the question of whether or not eligibility for election to the governorship should be restricted to matai. This was a struggle between traditionalists and those who seek to reform or abolish the matai system. Also at issue, at least formally, was the eligibility of Peter Tali Coleman. A non-matai, Coleman believed the absence of aiga obligations would increase his appeal. It would be possible, although embarrassing, for him to obtain a matai title, if this became a qualification for office.

The Candidates

Peter Tali Coleman - Born to an American father and a Samoan mother, Coleman was educated in Hawaii and on the mainland, where he obtained a law degree. He served as an officer in the U.S. Army. Although absent from American Samoa for much of the time since 1960, he visited Pago Pago regularly. He has family ties to influential Samoans and some proteges occupying important offices.

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High Chief A.U. Fuimaono - A senator who was elected the territory's first delegate at large, his title is among the most important in Samoa but is of Western Samoan origin. 8/ Fuimaono is a leader of the Samoan Congregational Church, which is headquartered in Apia. He has experienced two political setbacks in recent years; defeat in his 1974 bid for re-election as delegate at large and a 16-2 loss in his 1976 effort to unseat the current Senate President.

High Chief A.P. Lutali - From the small island of Aunu'u, Lutali has held most of American Samoa's prestigious political positions, i.e. Speaker of the House, President of the Senate, and his present post as delegate at large. He was a member of the Future Political Status Commission. He is an ex-marine and a former school teacher.

High Chief Salanoa S.P. Aumoeualoga - The eldest of the candidates, Salanoa 9/ is a self-taught lawyer, businessman and long-time prominent politician. He also was a member of the Future Political Status Commission. As President of the Senate, his position in the American Samoan political hierarchy supercedes that of everyone but the delegate at large, who resides in Washington.

None of the preceding is an avowed candidate, but each is widely believed to be an aspirant. Both Coleman and Salanoa have come within a breath of declaring their candidacies, and each is campaigning. This quartet is not an exhaustive list of potential contenders - several traditional chiefs who currently do not hold political office also are weighing their chances of success.

The lieutenant governor's race remains wide open. Should Coleman emerge as the frontrunner, two of his principal rivals might join forces. House Speaker Tuana'itau F. Tuia is believed to be thinking of entering this race. Another possibility is the nomination of one of American Samoa's younger, better educated political figures, e.g. High Chief Fofu I.F. Sunia, a forty year old economics graduate who is Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee.

The Issues

There are no political parties in American Samoa. There is no teachers' association, only one small union which is just getting on its feet, and only one private newspaper, a weekly which is politically unsophisticated. One commercial radio station is operating, but television is government owned. In brief, the political structure lacks the base usually associated with modern campaigning. There are two constituencies. Members of the first prize fa'Samoa and to some extent can be mobilized by their matai, who deliver their votes to candidates preferred largely because of aiga or regional ties. The second, the modernist constituency, places greatest importance on experience and impartiality. The dividing line between the groups is ragged and shifts. Common to both groups is concern about the candidate's ability to preserve the inflow of federal funds.

8/ With the exception of one high title from Manu'a, which was suppressed by the naval administration, all of the most important Samoan titles originate in those islands now included in Western Samoa.

9/ Fuimaono, Lutali and Salanoa are all titles which are used in place of family names by those bearing them.

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Coleman has strong support among those businessmen and young professionals who are concerned about the quality and impartiality of administration. He is believed to have best access to Washington's officialdom. Among residents of the Pago Pago Harbor area, where regional ties are weakest, he is strong. He also is well regarded by the Western Samoan community, which, although its members cannot vote, can influence relatives who do. Coleman's principal liability is that because of his long absence from Samoa some Samoans say he has not "paid his dues", i.e. performed public service locally, which is a qualification for high office according to fa'Samoa.

In his campaigning Coleman is emphasizing his twenty-five years experience, as well as his freedom from regional and family ties. He believes the new governor's first priority should be to ease the conflict between western and traditional values. The education system, he says, should concentrate more on Samoan culture. The matai system should be retained, Coleman maintains, but the matai must become more moderate in the demands they make of aiga members. They also must remember that land is to be allocated on the basis of contribution to the aiga, not on the proximity of relationship to the matai.

Fuimaono's occasional outspoken views and his cultivation of youth have earned him a following among the young, especially among the most discontent. Congregationalists, the largest church group in Samoa, will look sympathetically at his candidacy, as will many in western Tutuila, where he has local ties.

As a former teacher, Fuimaono expresses concern about the educational system. An opponent of ETV, he favors return to fundamentals, plus greater emphasis on the early childhood and community college programs. Consistent with his interest in the young, he calls for stepped up educational, social, religious and athletic programs for Samoa's youth. He expresses concern about Tutuila's recurrent water shortages and insists GAS's books be audited before an elected governor takes responsibility for administration of the territory.

Delegate Lutali will draw strength from eastern Tutuila, including, of course, Aunu'u, as well as the Manu'a Islands. His efforts in Washington have won him some support among the professionals. As a former schoolteacher, he is believed to enjoy some favor among the young people his ex-colleagues influence. Finally, his advocacy of welfare programs, such as meals for the aged and food stamps, is expected to win adherents among present and prospective beneficiaries.

If he runs, Lutali expects to emphasize retention of Samoa's cultural identity, including preservation of the matai system. As governor, he would highlight industrialization and tourism in the territory's development planning. The educational curriculum would be made more relevant to local conditions. Young Samoans employed in Hawaii and the mainland would be encouraged to return home to work.

President Salanoa is the traditionalists' favorite. He has strong regional ties in western Tutuila. He has been campaigning more actively than his rivals, or at least more visably. He even has established liaison within the American Samoan communities abroad, where he hopes his supporters will urge their relatives still in American Samoa to give him their votes. Salanoa is the least acceptable candidate to the modernists.

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Salanoa also believes the new governor should focus on the territory's need for new industry. More adequate water and power supplies are essential, he says, for an improved investment climate. He too believes an audit of GAS's books is necessary before an elected governor takes office. Finally, Salanoa calls for the end of discrimination in the salaries paid by GAS to Samoan and off-island personnel.

In view of the dual nature of the constituency, gubernatorial candidates are expected to appeal directly to the voters via advertising and personal appearances. But they also will try to elicit support among those chiefs who still can influence votes. Thus there will be quiet meetings with county and district councils, as well as with church elders.

After the Election

Samoans expect Washington's eye to remain on them for some time after the election. They recognize that the Fono's occasionally whimsical approach to budgeting, e.g. calls for expenditures the Governor obviously had to veto and recommendations that clearly unjustified tax relief be granted influential firms, raises some suspicion within Interior that they will not behave responsibly. Unhappy experience with the Virgin Islands and Guam is an unfortunate precedent. But Samoans expect that as they demonstrate their capacity to manage their affairs intelligently and honestly the degree of oversight exercised by Washington will moderate.

Samoan Political Aspirations

Independence

If there is a Samoan independence movement, it probably could hold a plenary meeting at noon in the shade of a coconut palm. The U.S. subsidy and free entry to the United States totally outweigh the appeal of sovereignty. This attitude is reinforced by recognition that the difference in living standards between Western and American Samoa has grown substantially since the former area became independent.

Reunification

Fuimaono has espoused reunification with Western Samoa, and Prime Minister Efi of Western Samoa believes reunification is inevitable. ^{10/} Several prominent American Samoans feel some political ties eventually will link all the islands. Nevertheless, reunification has no popular appeal.

As Western Samoa will not surrender its independence, reunification could be achieved only if Pago Pago severed its ties to the United States. For reasons just stated, such a divorce would be unacceptable to almost all American Samoans. Another impediment is the low status of Tutuila titles relative to those of Western Samoa. ^{11/} So inferior are Tutuila titles, say

^{10/} The Prime Minister is not pressing for reunification and says it may be several decades, or even a few centuries, before common culture, language, geography and other ties draw the separated islands back together.

^{11/} The Western Samoan Head of State reportedly told visiting members of the Future Political Status Commission in 1969 to forget about reunification, because in a reunited Samoa they would be serving him his kava cup.

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those familiar with the hierarchy, that at a meeting of all Samoan high chiefs in which seating was by order of rank there "would be no room in the fale" for the high chiefs from Tutuila.

Although family ties between inhabitants of the two island groups are extensive, and almost half of American Samoa's residents are Western Samoans, there is considerable irritation in relations. American Samoans criticize their neighbors' allegedly haughty attitudes ^{12/} as well as their neighbors' poverty. In turn, American Samoans are reproached for ostentation, ^{13/} disrespect for fa'Samoa, and dependent status.

Statehood or Inclusion in Hawaii

With a population of less than 30,000, statehood is conceded to be unlikely. The suggestion that Samoa be attached to Hawaii has little support as Samoans believe they would be swallowed up and their special needs ignored.

Commonwealth Status

The eventual political goal cited by most Samoans who believe a change in the status quo ultimately is desirable is commonwealth status. But realization of this objective presents American Samoans with a major dilemma. Although there has been some movement toward the nuclear family, Samoan society remains founded on the aiga led by the matai. His (or her) authority stems principally from power to allocate communal land to aiga members for cultivation and home construction. Consistent with the pledge contained in the deeds of cession to respect existing land rights, the laws of American Samoa sanction the authority of the matai, not only in the allocation of land but in his right to receive service from members of his aiga. To protect native Samoans from losing their lands, as occurred in Hawaii and elsewhere in Polynesia, Samoan law also prohibits alienation of communal land (which comprises 96% of the land in American Samoa) to those less than 50% Samoan by blood. So cumbersome are the regulations governing sale to those who are not full blooded Samoans, it was reported in 1974 that no such sale had occurred in the previous 25 years. ^{14/}

In cases of conflict local courts decide who will receive matai titles ^{15/}, and, as noted earlier, only matai council members may vote for senator or hold that office. Because extended family obligations would make impaneling an impartial jury difficult, if not impossible, trial by jury is not available in American Samoa. In deference to customary methods of expressing apology and making amends for wrongs, many legal offenses are not tried in court and/or sentences are influenced by the observance of such

^{12/} One Samoan scholar says resentment of Upolu's pretensions was a more important motive than hostility to the Germans in prompting Tutuila's chiefs to seek an American or British protectorate in the nineteenth century.

^{13/} By relatives who nevertheless consume the bounty laid before them, comments one Western Samoan wit.

^{14/} Lutali, A.P. and Stewart. "Legal Aspects of the Matai and Land Tenure System in the Territory of American Samoa" The Samoan Pacific Law Journal Vol 2, 1974.

^{15/} These are not inherited but accorded on the basis of qualifications which can include clan membership.

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traditional practice. ^{16/} Local laws and judicial practice thus conflict with provisions of the U.S. constitution regarding due process, equal protection, and the prohibition against the award of titles of nobility. Moreover, Samoans who have studied these issues believe these conflicts, especially those centered on the alienation of land and the authority of the matai, cannot be resolved in favor of the constitution without fundamental injury to fa'Samoa.

The constitution as a whole is applicable only in the states, the District of Columbia and incorporated territories. ^{17/} What constitutes incorporation is poorly defined legally. Theoretically, Samoa could be organized (it is the sole territory for which Congress has not enacted organic legislation) without becoming incorporated and thus subject to the full provisions of the constitution. But there is fear that the courts would treat promulgation of an organic act as sufficient to make American Samoa an incorporated territory. Congress was unwilling to specify that Guam would remain unincorporated when it passed an organic act for Guam twenty years ago. And if it had, the Supreme Court might have ruled the legislation unconstitutional. ^{18/}

Three precedents offer hope to those who believe the Supreme Court might tolerate a conflict between the constitution and legislation creating a Samoan Commonwealth. First, the Hawaiian Constitution incorporates provisions of earlier laws giving Hawaiians preferential access to some lands. This discriminatory legislation has not been overturned by the courts. Second, in Mancari v. Morton, a case involving preferential hiring of Indians, the Supreme Court ruled on June 17, 1974 that:

"As long as special treatment can be tied rationally to the fulfillment of Congress' unique obligations to the Indians, such legislative judgments will not be disturbed. Here, where the preference is reasonable and rationally designed to further Indian self-government, we cannot say that Congress' classification violates due process."

Some Samoans argue that the terms of the deeds of cession create obligations similar to those stemming from treaties with the Indians.

^{16/} Stewart, William J. "Ifoga: The Concept of Public Apology, the Family and the Law in American Samoa", The Journal of International Law and Economics. George Washington University: Washington, April 1975.

^{17/} An unincorporated territory is subject only to the fundamental provisions of the constitution, a ruling held by the courts to exclude inter alia trial by jury. This exclusion currently is under challenge in the courts in King v. Morton, an action stemming from the successful prosecution of criminal charges against a U.S. citizen, Jake King, in the courts of American Samoa, where King had no access to trial by jury.

^{18/} Schwartz, Rob. "The Status of American Samoa. A Brief Overview" The Samoan Pacific Law Review. Pago Pago, Vol. 2, 1974.

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The third precedent remains untried in the courts. It is Congress' approval of the Covenant to Establish the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. This document contains language stating that the Government of the Commonwealth:

"will until 25 years after the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement, and may thereafter, regulate the alienation of permanent and long-term interests in real property so as to restrict the acquisition of such interests to persons of Northern Mariana Islands descent." 19/

Given the degree of uncertainty touching directly on issues at the core of their culture, most Samoans are in no hurry to move toward commonwealth status. Impatience is expressed only by those who wish the matai system shorn of its political and economic roles and reduced to familial and ceremonial functions. Congressman Burton has expressed his views in the following language: "I am not sure of this, but maybe American Samoa would be better off without an Organic Act...I have never fully understood why it is desirable to have an Organic Act." 20/

United States Interests in American Samoa

Any consideration of United States policy toward American Samoa must reflect not only the momentum of history but respect for U.S. national interests. These are outlined in the following paragraphs.

Military

Closure of the naval station in 1951 marked the end of serious U.S. military interest in American Samoa. Today the airport is used by American military aircraft travelling between the U.S. and New Zealand and Australia. Alternate facilities are available in Fiji and elsewhere in the south Pacific. Ship visits by the American Navy are infrequent. Contingency planners see little military need for Samoa. Should the U.S. lose access to the bases in the arc swinging from the Philippines to Japan and Korea, the logical fallback position would be some of the islands now included in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. This too is the region expected to provide the land area and searoom for the maneuvers conducted with increasing difficulty in the crowded terrain and waters further west.

Recent Soviet and Chinese diplomatic approaches to American Samoa's neighbors first were seen by some observers to indicate military ambitions. But the current assessment of intelligence specialists is that neither power would see any advantage in deploying naval or air forces in the area. The Soviets are known to be anxious to secure shore facilities for their fishing vessels, which now operate as far south as the waters off New Zealand. In preliminary talks with the Western Samoan and Tongan Governments, the Soviets reportedly promised foreign aid in return for authorization to

19/ Public Law 94-241 94th Congress, H.J. Res. 549, March 24, 1976.

20/ Election of Samoan Governor and Lieutenant Governor: Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Interior and Insular Affairs. Government Printing Office: Washington, 1976.

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establish a shore facility in one of the two countries. Sharp criticism by powerful church groups in both Western Samoa and Tonga appears to have interrupted discussions with the Soviets. 21/

Economic and Commercial

Significant U.S. economic and commercial interests in American Samoa are limited to the large Starkist and Van Camp tuna canneries in Pago Pago Harbor. The output of each is shipped almost exclusively to the American market and totalled over \$75 million in value in FY 1974 (the figure for the following year - the most recent for which statistics are available - was distorted by the drought which forced the closure of the canneries for several months). As the fish are caught by Korean and Taiwanese vessels in waters often far from Samoa, the canneries could be relocated, albeit at substantial cost to the companies. Or the catch could be sent to the West Coast for processing, at the cost of higher consumer prices.

Political and Humanitarian

These interests overlap in the case of American Samoa. No time limit was set for the obligations the United States undertook in accepting the deeds of cession. The U.S. could expect renewed international criticism if it failed to assist American Samoa with its political and economic development after having done so little for the territory during the fifty years the U.S. enjoyed the base rights which were its objective in negotiating the deeds of cession. Moreover, the United States is obligated under Article 73 of the United Nations Charter to:

"recognize the principle that the interests of the /non-self governing/ territories are paramount, and accept as a sacred trust the obligation to promote to the utmost...the well-being of the inhabitants of these territories, and, to this end:

- a. to ensure, with due respect for the culture of the peoples concerned, their political, economic, social and educational advancement, their just treatment, and their protection against abuse;
- b. to develop self-government, to take due account of the political aspirations of the peoples, and to assist them in the progressive development of their political institutions...etc."

21/ Some commentators believe the Western Samoans and Tongans have been exploiting Soviet interest in an effort to coax more aid from the West. Whether or not this is their intention, Australia, the United States and Germany have all indicated their intention to furnish new or additional assistance to the two Governments since the talks with the Soviets and the opening of a Chinese Embassy in Western Samoa.

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The Appropriate United States Policy

Since the early sixties the stated policy of the U.S. Government has been to respect the political wishes of the American Samoan people. On November 18, 1976, this commitment was expressed in the following terms by the U.S. spokesman during the Fourth Committee's discussion of American Samoa at the United Nations General Assembly: "The United States is fully aware and freely acknowledges the obligation regarding non-self governing territories which it administers specified in Chapter 11 of the United Nations Charter, and the U.S. is fully committed to the principle of self-determination." 22/ Simultaneously, as has been described, the United States has furnished sufficient economic assistance to enable American Samoans to enjoy a substantial improvement in their standard of living. While many Samoans resent the obvious skepticism of some Interior and GAS officials that they will be able to manage their own affairs, and Interior is not yet willing to allow the Samoans unsupervised control of the funds flowing from Washington, no Samoan complains that the U.S. is blocking movement toward self-government or has been stingy in recent years.

The subsidy from Washington currently amounts to \$45 million annually, approximately \$1,500 for each resident of American Samoa, almost half of whom are aliens. With the possible exception of phosphate rich Nauru, per capita GNP consequently is much higher than elsewhere in Polynesia. There is universal free education through secondary school, and a community college in which 900 of the territory's 30,000 residents are enrolled. Each schoolchild is eligible for two free meals a day. The elderly can receive social security pensions and one free meal a day. Everyone in the territory has access to free medical care at the best hospital in Polynesia and at dispensaries located throughout the Islands. GAS employs 10% of the population, which, given the median age of 15, means the majority of the adult work force. Import duties are levied on only a handful of products, and less than 10% of the population pays income taxes. There are approximately 3,000 privately owned vehicles in a territory with only 76 square miles of terrain, most of it mountainous. Ninety-six percent of the population has access to the 3,800 privately owned television sets, and over a third of the territory's residents watch television in color.

The problems which call for some redefinition of policy are not those of neglect but of administration. Development, and the manner in which it was undertaken, have created a new set of problems, and the response by all concerned has been inadequate.

Major Problems

Out-migration - The estimates vary widely, but a conservative figure for the number of American Samoans now in Hawaii and West Coast states is 45,000. This is almost three times the number residing in the Islands. Samoans leave home primarily because they perceive better economic and education opportunities in Hawaii and the mainland. Others are attracted by what they know of U. S. life styles. Several subproblems exist under this rubric. They are:

1. Maladjustment - Poor english and little vocational education back home make it difficult for Samoans to find work. They also experience

22/ Statement by Jay Kenneth Katzen on American Samoa, November 18, 1976, United States Mission to the United Nations.

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the disorientation common when members of communal societies find themselves in the impersonal environment of a modern city. Samoans are very physical people, and this tendency, when combined with frustration and alcohol, leads frequently to brawling and custody. These same problems recently have led some Samoans into organized crime. By misfortune or intent many Samoan migrants eventually apply for welfare payments.

2. Brain Drain - The majority of male high school students not going on to college enlists in one of the U. S. military services. The Army takes 200-300 per annum and maintains a recruiting office in American Samoa. Many of the enlistees extend their commitments, a substantial portion remaining 20 years in the service. A high percentage of those Samoans receiving college degrees seeks employment in the United States after deciding that GAS salaries are not competitive or that promotion within GAS will be too slow.

3. Agricultural Production Falling - A rural exodus fuels this migration, draining men off the land. Food imports, many of non-traditional varieties, are replacing local production.

4. Labor Shortage - Although the unemployment rate is estimated by GAS to be 16%, lack of an adequate labor force limits production at the canneries. American Samoans prefer to seek employment in Hawaii and the West Coast rather than accept the lower wages paid for the unattractive task of cleaning fish. Samoans also are unwilling to tolerate the primitive living conditions and long absences from home endured by the Koreans and Chinese who man the 200 fishing boats which supply the canneries. For American Samoa this means a substantial loss in potential upstream benefits from the canning industry.

In-migration - According to GAS figures from a 1974 census, American Samoa's estimated 30,000 population then included 14,704 aliens. Thirteen thousand six hundred and sixty-seven of these foreigners were Western Samoans. Their labor is essential for the canneries, where Western Samoans comprise roughly half the work force. However, they drain the economy of several million dollars per year, which is mailed home to their families, and few earn enough to pay income taxes. Nevertheless, Western Samoans enjoy most of the social benefits received by American Samoans. They comprise 17% of the public school population and frequently come to Pago Pago for the purpose of obtaining free medical care.

Recent revision of New Zealand's visa procedures is believed by unskilled Western Samoans to have choked off their entry to the New Zealand labor market. ^{23/} Given this perception, the American Samoan economy can be expected to attract even more Western Samoans, some of whom eventually will join the Samoan communities in Hawaii and the western states. Currently ineligible to vote or to hold public office, Western Samoans resident in American Samoa may constitute too large a portion of the population to accept political impotence docilely when greater self-government becomes a reality in American Samoa.

^{23/} The New Zealand Government says it intends to accept over a thousand Western Samoan emigrants per annum and is establishing procedures to facilitate the temporary employment of Western Samoans. The New Zealanders also point out that thousands of Western Samoan "overstayers" are being allowed to regularize their status.

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Other expatriates include Tongans, for whom there is historic ill-will dating back to the years before the arrival of the Europeans, when warriors from Tonga conquered Samoa. With the Tongan economy in the doldrums, and few other outlets for the Islands' rapidly expanding population, American Samoa can expect more Tongans to seek admission and employment. The most recent emigrant group is drawn from oriental fishermen who have married Samoans and established themselves in business. Cultural antipathy toward Asiatics and business competition suggest these Orientals eventually may find their status precarious.

Deficient Education System

The attempt to use ETV to hurdle the barriers to rapid development of a quality educational system has not met Samoan expectations. Regardless of the reasons stated - some Samoans believe the entire scheme was a mistake in which their children were used as guinea pigs, while others state that ETV could have accomplished its objectives if given more time and support by teachers and politicians - it is a fact that the average reading comprehension of applicants for admission to the community college is at the fifth grade level. In 1976 only 25% of the candidates for admission to U.S. colleges scored well enough in the test of english for foreigners to merit further consideration.

In the view of many technically qualified persons, including some senior members of the Education Department, the principal flaw has been reliance on english as the language of instruction throughout the school system. Few Samoan teachers were fluent in english when ETV was introduced. Samoan children were and are discouraged from speaking english at home. Imperfect english makes it very difficult to transmit course content in other subjects. Belatedly, an effort is being made to introduce more Samoan into the schools, with use of the vernacular increasingly emphasized in the early years.

Growth Without Development

American Samoa is a textbook example of a state growing in terms of per capita GNP without becoming more self-reliant. In fact, as the U.S. subsidy has grown, so also have American Samoa's dependence and vulnerability. There is no serious development plan. Investment priorities reflect the preferences of the governors, none of whom in recent years has had any background in economic development. Not only direction but thrust has varied with the governors. Haydon accelerated public spending, while Ruth and Barnett have sought to economize. In the opinion of some Samoan businessmen, the frequent shifts in GAS priorities have been a major deterrent to outside investment.

The phantom of industrialization has captured the imagination of several governors, but the territory's industrial park stands largely vacant, a mute reminder of American Samoa's distance from both raw materials and markets, as well as of the shortage of vocationally educated workers. Tourism's potential has been exaggerated by those who ignore the territory's climate and modest attractions. Basic services, e.g. water and power, have been poorly managed. Despite almost 200 inches of rainfall per annum, as well as the investment of over \$8 million in recent years, water shortages limit production at the canneries and have compelled their closure. As these plants are by far the major employers in the private sector, and they provide the largest portion of local government revenue, their needs for water, power (despite the installation of army generators to cover a shortage which developed several years ago, there are frequent outages), and

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a marine railway staffed to handle peak demand have not received sufficient attention. The Fono has been as unsystematic as GAS in its approach to development, frequently adopting a pork barrel attitude toward public investment.

Swollen Bureaucracy

There is an enormous amount of government in American Samoa. As mentioned earlier, GAS employs 10% of the population. This polity of 30,000 has almost two score legislators whose salaries and expenses consume \$500,000 in public revenue. The Governor's office costs almost an equal amount to run. GAS recruits by newspaper advertisement (and occasionally by placement of friends of the governor or of the administration in power). Most of those hired have no experience with the frustrations of life in a developing country environment. Almost no GAS contract personnel speak Samoan. Their turnover rate is high, and social relations with their Samoan colleagues frequently are stiff.

Disorientation

Predictably, the process of modernization has undermined adherence to traditional values. Consensus has given way to some polarization on generational lines, but the impact has been too ragged to describe so neatly. Some young Samoans have returned from the United States with an ethnic consciousness which glorifies the traditional system many of their peers would abolish. The award of matai titles removes some of the reformers from the debate. Some influential Samoans advocate policies regarding fa'Samoa which are inconsistent. 24/ Dissatisfaction is not limited to the young - many older Samoans advocate restricting the power of the matai. Meanwhile some high chiefs call for restoration of the greater powers they once exercised.

The Education Department encourages traditional arts and handicrafts, but it does not suggest to teachers how they respond to questions about the obvious conflict between the political equality of the American model and privilege embodied in the matai system. The Office of Samoan Affairs promotes traditional sports but it has not defined the desirable blend of Samoan and modern mores. In fact, no one in the Samoan community has proposed a formula which has won wide acceptance.

Conclusion

The urgency and magnitude of more vital issues have left little time for senior U.S. Government officials to focus on American Samoa's problems. Benign neglect and fa'Samoa's flexibility preserved the integrity of Samoan folkways during the initial phase of western impact. But the equalitarian ideal and the seductive influence of American affluence now prompt many Samoans to reject much of fa'Samoa. A culture with a three thousand year history is being abandoned by a people who will live an uncomfortable length of time at the margin of the society many find more attractive. As long as the federal subsidy remains generous, those in American Samoa will enjoy a standard of living quite satisfactory from a material standpoint. But even for those in the islands, the psychic costs of cultural conflict are becoming evident in higher incidents of hypertension, suicide, etc. Samoans in the slums of Hawaii and the West Coast suffer both material and emotional deprivation. There is a worrisome possibility that a portion of the Samoan community eventually might follow the American Indian down the path to cultural disintegration and alcohol laced despair.

24/ Uncertainty and ambiguity are compounded by the fact that Samoans differ considerably in their interpretations of the content of fa'Samoa.

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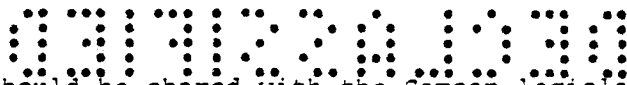
U.S. interests in American Samoa are insignificant from any national perception. However, commitments to the Samoan people, and international undertakings oblige the United States to search with greater imagination and energy for a humane resolution of the dilemma which appears to make prosperity and cultural integrity mutually exclusive. Federal spending can aggravate the problems it is intended to resolve and, as American Samoa's experience illustrates, create new and more serious challenges to the well-being of those it is intended to assist. The scarce resources are attention, sensitivity and imagination. These must be forthcoming if the United States is to discharge conscientiously its obligations to the Samoan people. They must be allowed to assume rapidly greater responsibility for management of their own affairs, with the recognition that their performance may be as spotty as that of many youthful polities.

The following recommendations hopefully will prompt some further discussion of what can be done to ease American Samoa's emergence into an increasingly uniform modern world.

Recommendations

1. The National Security Council should consider the desirability of instructing those departments with responsibilities related to U.S. territories to prepare a Presidential Review Memorandum. This paper would recommend to the President policies to govern relations with each territory which would be consistent with U.S. national interests and the desires of the inhabitants. The views of the appropriate committees of Congress would be incorporated in the memorandum.
2. Pending the inauguration of an elected governor, the Secretary of the Interior should appoint as governor someone familiar with economic development, who has demonstrated success establishing rapport with members of foreign cultures.
3. GAS should make greater use of AID's expertise in economic development. With AID's assistance and the participation of Samoans designated by the Fono, private organizations, (e.g. the Bar Association), and the district councils, GAS should draft a new development plan. Once approved by the Fono, this plan should be the blueprint for public spending and the guideline for the promotion of private investment. Local programming by federal agencies inconsistent with plan objectives would be resisted. The funds available to the Development Bank could be increased, the staff augmented, and lending conducted in conformity with development plan priorities.
4. GAS contract personnel should be encouraged to learn Samoan by arranging free instruction and providing additional compensation to those who become fluent.
5. The commissioner to be appointed to supervise the gubernatorial election should be someone experienced with alien cultures and of distinguished reputation. The commissioner should be assisted by a disinterested person fluent in Samoan.
6. A thorough audit of GAS should be completed before the inauguration of an elected governor.
7. Subject to the recommendations which might be incorporated in the Presidential Review Memorandum suggested above, the President might delegate to the locally elected governor some or all of those authorities for the administration of American Samoa now assigned the Secretary of the Interior.

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These powers should be shared with the Samoan legislature and judiciary as provided by the Samoan constitution. Procedures for auditing of federal government funds should conform with those normally employed, except perhaps during a brief initial period, when exceptions should be minimal.

8. The executive branch should oppose enactment of organic legislation for American Samoa until there has been a court test of the restriction on alienation of land which is incorporated in the Northern Marianas Covenant. For as long as it remains the will of the majority of the Samoan people, alienation of Samoan land should be prohibited.

9. GAS should accelerate the recruitment of Samoans and ensure that Samoans are promoted to senior positions rapidly. The training of Samoan successors should be among the principal responsibilities of incumbent contract personnel. GAS' college scholarship program should be integrated more closely with anticipated GAS personnel requirements, especially in technical areas.

10. Samoan should be the language of instruction throughout both primary and secondary school. English should be taught as a foreign language, with intensive courses available for those who expect to continue their education or seek employment in Hawaii or the mainland.

11. High school students should receive extensive instruction in the difficulties experienced by Samoans adjusting to life in Hawaii and the mainland. GAS should establish offices in Honolulu and Los Angeles to assist Samoans, particularly students, resident in those areas (the liaison office established in Honolulu by the Government of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands is a happy precedent).

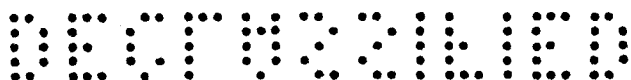
12. Closer economic and cultural ties with the nations of the south Pacific should be encouraged. Western Samoa might be invited to form a joint commission which would meet periodically at the ministerial level to coordinate economic development efforts.

13. American Samoa's tax laws should be revised to spread the tax burden more widely, hopefully thus awakening more voter interest in the conduct of government.

14. GAS should intensify its present modest efforts to encourage family planning. Consideration might be given to abolishing the current \$750 per dependent tax exemption.

15. Greater emphasis should be given agriculture within the education system to encourage Samoans to use the land available to them to provide food and employment for the territory's population.

16. A renewed effort should be undertaken to awaken Samoan interest in commercial fishing. The owners of the modern purse seiners which recently began discharging at the canneries might be asked to engage Samoan trainees.





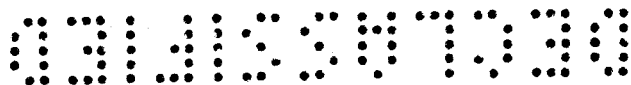
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High Chief Leiato, Secretary of Samoan Affairs

High Chief Pau Pau, Deputy Secretary of Samoan Affairs

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High Chief Fofu I. F. Sunia, Senator

High Chief A. U. Fuimaono, Senator

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John Murray, Manager, Starkist Cannery

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Frank Thompson, Assistant Manager, Van Camp Cannery

Chief Falemaota, Ta'u Island

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Asi Aikeni Fruean, Minister of Fisheries, Tourism and Economic Development

Afioga Tuilaepa Sailele, Assistant Financial Secretary, Treasury

Sam Leung Wai, Assistant Manager, Western Samoan Development Bank

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