

The Samoa Guardian

"Here shall the People's Rights be Maintained by Influence, and Unbought by Gain."

THURSDAY JULY 28, 1927

Samoa's Rule of Oppression

A RINGING warning that Samoa may be lost to New Zealand has been given by leading newspapers of the Mandatory Power. This warning is worthy of the most serious consideration. The legislators of New Zealand must not be dilatory in averting such a disaster. The policy of General Sir George Richardson, the Administrator, as now pursued is defeating all hope of a return to normalcy.

His threats of deportation without trial of the Citizens' Committee; his cancellation of traders' licenses to pursue their livelihood in Samoa; disfranchising high chiefs and matais by prohibiting the use of their titles; banishment of Samoans from their homes without proper trial; imprisonment for disobeying orders of the Administrator which have been made without information and the privilege of pleading personally or by counsel, notwithstanding an empty "notice to show cause;" enforcement of serfdom; intimidation; dismissal from office of officials who express their candid opinion,—in fact, anything short of hanging, branding or shooting—all these acts are encouraging the Samoans to be more determined in their resolutions and their faith in their aims is unshaken, their teeth are set with obstinacy and all that well meaning citizens can do will be of no avail so long as the Administrator pursues this course of agitating the people towards exasperation: He throws out his darts here and there, and all efforts towards a reconciliation are thwarted by his own acts.

The Administrator has misjudged the character of the Samoan people, he has utterly failed to carry out his duty by conciliatory measures, he relies on frightening the people whom he rules; he has lost their confidence and respect; he seeks to cast blame for his own shortcomings on the Citizens' Committee. The situation may well cause anxiety and fear on the part of the responsible authorities. Irretrievable blunders have already been made. As bad judgment will land a business or a ship on the rocks so the faulty judgment of the Administrator will lead to disaster. Good results can only come from good judgment. Without good judgment the Administrator may exercise all his talents and virtues and yet fall short of success. Even his ceaseless energy, his untiring efforts for the production of wealth, his protestations of love for the Samoans, his assertions of extreme patience with the people will prove of little avail and he will be unable to effect a reconciliation, for if he is following the wrong track obviously the right goal will not be reached.

"Samoa Guardian" cannot support any system of boycott where there is discrimination of the several trading firms. It is believed that the cause for which the people are now fighting is good without resorting to boycott. There is every chance of winning in a just cause without taking harsh measures against a section of the traders. All should be treated alike. There is absolutely no occasion for any of the people or any section of the people to refuse or incite to refusal to have commercial dealings with any one firm or person on whom it is wished to bring pressure. As merely a form of "Sending to Coventry or (W. E. Gladstone's phrase) "exclusive dealing" boycotting may be, from a legal point of view, unassailable and as such has frequently been found justifiable. But when it takes the form of what is undoubtedly an illegal conspiracy to injure the person, property or business of another by unwarrantedly putting pressure on all and sundry, to withdraw from them business intercourse, all law-abiding citizens should discountenance it in every way.

There is a form of "boycott" that at present is being exercised by the Administration and which also cannot be countenanced, yet the Administrator is using one of the Ordinances to legalize his "boycott" on the imaginary ground that it is necessary for the "peace order and good government of the Territory." One definition of "boycott" is "Social or business interdiction for the purpose of coercion or punishment." The Administration have recently ordered the cancellation of licenses of traders and others are threatened. Until some good reason—not the imaginary reason of the Administrator—is shown, the action of the Administration must be considered in the light of a "boycott."

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## The Boycott

The "Apia Correspondent" published in the "Fiji Times" of July 5th a rumour of a boycott by the "Mau people (agitators)" but qualifies the statement that the report is only from one district and may be unfounded. The charge aimed at the "Mau" is false. Enquiries were made and there was at the time no substantiation of the report. Since then the people have been reminded of a system of boycott and a section at Falefa, so it is reported, where Mr. A. W. Johnston is trading for Messrs. Burns Philp (S.S.) Co., Ltd., has declared a boycott. It is purely local and aimed personally at the trader on account of certain utterances which have disturbed the peace of mind of the people of that village. There is a report now from Savaii that the people of the south side of that Island have declared for a boycott of the stores of Messrs. Burns Philp (S.S.) Co., Ltd. This is emphatically denied by Mr. Peter Jensen who trades with Messrs. Burns Philp and Co., in the Salailua vicinity and elsewhere on the south coast. Enquiries have been made of several of the Samoan delegates to the "Mau" in Apia, and they have stated that the boycott as reported does not meet with their approval. The Citizens' Committee know nothing of the boycott except by report. The

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### THE KAVA TITLE OF THE GOVERNOR

The "Samoa Times" last week in the leading article under the head line "APING THE GOVERNOR" charges the Hon. O. F. Nelson, M.L.C. with using the kava title of His Excellency the Administrator. There has been a misconception on the part of our contemporary. He asserts that the "kava title" of the Governor of Samoa is "Aumai Tafa Mamao se sau le sau o le ola," and he accuses the Hon. O. F. Nelson with

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