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PETITION FROM MR. C. SMITH O'BRIAN GARDINER  
CONCERNING WESTERN SAMOA

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Malua Post Office  
Western Samoa  
Sept 22nd 1956.

Secretary  
United Nations Trustee Council,  
New York,  
U.S.A.

Sir,

I wrote to you giving certain information in regard to the relationships by marriage of both the members of the Legislative Assembly and eight (8) out of the nine (9) Europeans appointed to serve on the Constitutional Convention. I trust you received this letter which was posted by air on the 6th of this month. In the "Samoa Bulletin" Sept 14th, I noticed the United Nations Trustee Council had asked for action in regard to labour legislation and other matters, and the Trustee Council, expressed the hope "that the Samoan people would come to accept universal suffrage". It should surely by now be apparent that unless the Trustee Council and the New Zealand Government assist the ordinary Samoan to free himself from the state of peonage in which he lives by insisting on a plebiscite, on both the question of suffrage and the question of whether he wants self-government at all, you will in effect be riveting the chains of peonage on him for an indefinite period ahead. If the tiny group of conspirators get self-government without a national plebiscite, both the New Zealand Government and the Trustee Council will have grossly betrayed both of their Wards in Samoa, the ordinary Samoan and their European Wards. We are often told that after

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self-government has come that New Zealand wishes to have close ties with Samoa. Our idea of this idea of close ties is that perhaps the New Zealand Government feels once self-government for Samoa comes into being, the Samoans who have a great admiration for America, and a sentimental feeling for that country, they know it is the most powerful country in the world and that most generous, and that all pacific countries including New Zealand depend on the US for protection, as a consequence as time goes by will turn more and more towards the USA and American institutions. American Samoa being so close and the two islands being the same people, it would of course quite natural, but would mean the eventual exclusion of New Zealand influence in the territory. One of the earlier causes of trouble and dissatisfaction in Samoa after the Mandate was granted to New Zealand, was that Samoan pride was hurt at being handed over to what they regarded as a small colony after they had been used to being governed by a big and powerful nation. This leaning toward the USA, has been opposed by a tiny group of Samoan and their European relatives because of the fact that the US is a Republic, and this group have ambitions of imitating the Tongan Monarchy, but the great mass of Samoans definitely are attached to the USA. The New Zealand Government is quite aware of this, so the European minority are entitled to ask "Is the betrayal of New Zealand's European Wards and the untitled Samoa, the price they are paying to achieve the close ties they want? "Are they giving this very small group of chiefs the power to prevent any progress towards freedom for the ordinary Samoan? "In plain words are we being betrayed so that the New Zealand Government can maintain her influence in Samoa and so counteract any chance of a growing sentiment for America? We are told by both the Trustee Council and the New Zealand that they will give us full protection and in every way look after our interests when self-government comes, yet it is obvious to any 12 year school boy that once this group of chiefs get control, i.e. self-government neither the Trustee Council or the New Zealand Government will have any legal right to interfere in what has become the domestic policy of a self-governing power, or state. We the minority are entitled to a clarification of your intentions towards us, especially so the older members who have lived in this territory for from 25 to 60 years. This clarification should come now,

and, as I stated in a letter to Mr. Morgan MLA who forwarded it on to you, I consider the New Zealand Government should compensate all the Europeans who wish to leave the territory rather than be deprived of all rights and controlled by a people who have stated on many occasions they intend to return to the tribal system of the pre-German days. We do not wish to contemplate the idea of having to apply to the International Refugee Organization a few months after self-government becomes effective. That self-government is a conspiracy by a very small group of chiefs and their relatives and is not a national movement should be apparent from the information I sent you in my letter of the 6th Sept, plus the fact that this group have always opposed the idea of a plebiscite, they have very good reason to fear the result. I trust the Council will give every consideration to these matters affecting Europeans and let us know in the very near future where we stand so that we can take whatever steps are possible to secure our future.

I am Sir,

(Signed) C. SMITH O'BRIEN GARDINER

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