

Violations of Hatch Act Laid to Samoa Governor

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John Haydon Jr., the controversial governor of American Samoa, was charged yesterday by the Civil Service Commission with violating the Hatch Act by interfering with local elections on the island last November.

The commission declined to detail the charges, but other sources said one of them alleges that the governor used government radio and television on election day and the day before to propandize against a ballot proposition that Samoans elect their own governor.

Last year a group of Samoan legislators urged Congress to allow the 28,000 residents of the South Pacific territorial protectorate to vote for their own chief executive.

When Congress did not act, the Samoan legislature, called

the Fono, passed the measure itself and submitted it to the people for their approval. It was defeated 4 to 1.

Another charge, sources said, alleges that Haydon urged Samoans not to vote for a white businessman named Wilbur Reisse who was running for the lower house of the legislature.

Haydon reportedly argued that "palangi"—that is, white foreigners—should not be in the Fono. Reisse, a building contractor married to a Samoan woman, lost his bid for a seat in the local house of representatives. Haydon also is white.

The Hatch Act forbids federal employees and territorial governors from involving themselves in elections. The

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charges were signed by the commission's general counsel, Anthony L. Mondello.

Haydon has 15 days to reply, after which a hearing on his case will be scheduled by John J. McCarthy, an administrative law judge with the commission. The case will be prosecuted by Ben W. Joseph, a trial attorney who went to Samoa in late May to investigate the charges.

The commission declined to name those who brought the charges, but they are said to include several members of the Samoan legislature. Also, Paramount High Chief Aseumu U. Fuimanono, who is Samoa's delegate to the United States, has complained about Haydon to Congress, the State Department, and the United Nations.

The governor, a Republican from Seattle, was appointed to the \$36,000-a-year post in 1969

by then Interior Secretary Walter J. Hickel. He controls a budget of \$30.5 million and has power to remove most of the 3,800 government employees there. In the proposed Fiscal 1974 budget the Interior Department is seeking \$32.1 million and 3914 employees for Samoa.

If it finds him guilty, the Civil Service Commission can order the Interior Department to remove him from office.

For three years Haydon has been seeking to deport the publisher of the biweekly Samoa News, J. P. King, who has repeatedly attacked the governor in his newspaper.

In 1971 Haydon succeeded in ousting a Samoan High Court justice who had prevented King deportation, and then the governor banished a government employee who later charged that Haydon was running the territory in "a dictatorial manner."