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Samoans Testify Against Haydon

PAGO PAGO, American Samoa (UPI)—A U.S. civil service commission hearing is under way to determine whether Gov. John Haydon tried to influence Samoans voting on a referendum which could have affected his job.

Haydon, appointed by President Nixon, is charged with violating the hatch act prohibiting certain government officials from participating in political campaigns or from using their influence in any political activity.

Commission Administrative Judge John McCarthy Friday completed the first week of the proceeding. He said he would resume taking testimony Monday.

Specifically, Haydon was charged with six counts of manipulating in last fall's referendum that could have speeded up by two years the election of a local governor here to replace him. However, the referendum was defeated.

The Governor was charged with using the government owned radio and television stations to urge Samoans to vote down the referendum.

If convicted, Haydon would be removed from the Governor's office by the Secretary of the Interior.

During the first few days of the trial, the prosecutor called several American Samoan government officials who said they felt the Governor's statements misrepresented the financial position of the government.

They said Haydon stated in his television and radio talks that the government was operating in the red at the time he was appointed, in 1969. The government officials said Haydon was informed when he took office that there was no deficit.

The hearing was expected to last at least two weeks and perhaps longer, with Haydon's attorneys reportedly ready to call up to 50 witnesses for the defense.