

INTRODUCTION

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Purpose and Organization

The objectives of this symposium are not so grandiose as the brief title might imply. A meeting of size perhaps comparable to the Tenth Congress would be required to treat in detail with the vast scope of land tenure problems viewed in time and space for the entire Pacific Oceanarea (Fig. 1). Our much more limited purposes are twofold, to examine a few current problems of land ownership in several well-dispersed island groups and to illustrate the utility of a slightly different cross-disciplinary approach to such problems than those of former Congresses.

The significance of problems of land tenure everywhere need not be emphasized to this audience. The intimate connections of man with the earth which provides his needs and the ever-increasing numbers of humans competing in a finite area which decreases in quality as they misuse it - it is indeed ironic that these are the commonplaces of today.

Since land tenure problems are of magnitude and are ubiquitous it was felt that comparative studies from several parts of the Pacific might be useful. Westernized areas such as Hawaii, New Zealand, and Australia were excluded from consideration, and an attempt made to obtain contributions from the Gilbert and Marshall Islands in Micronesia, from the Solomon and Fiji Islands in Melanesia, and from the Cook Islands in Polynesia.

It is recognized commonly that problems of land tenure are cross-disciplinary in nature, and that no one person can have a background

completely adequate for their solution. The single individual who often is forced to act on problems, despite his awareness of shortcomings in available information, is the administrator. It was thought that it might be stimulating to present problems as seen through the eyes of those in most immediate contact with them, hence four papers this morning are presented by administrators.

In an area of relatively primitive people, whose cultures may be basically different from those of western civilization, it is imperative that the studies and advice of anthropologists be considered in attempting solutions to problems of land tenure. We are fortunate in having on the program a person who has studied such problems intensively in several Polynesian groups and can illuminate them from an anthropologic viewpoint.

Finally, the organization of this program and the introductory statements on each area may be taken as a possible illustration of the integrative facility and insight which geography can contribute to problems of land tenure.

Administrative Details^{1/}

Certain administrative matters may be mentioned at this point. Several of the maps used as illustrations are taken from various United States or British governmental sources. Those illustrating relief and rainfall of Viti Levu are taken from Derrick's Geographical Handbook of the Fiji Islands. The photographs are mine except for aërials of Rarotonga and Tongareva taken by the U. S. Navy.

Unfortunately, only two of the six persons presenting articles are with us in person this morning. Due to travel problems Messrs.

^{1/} This section is appropriate to the verbal presentation only.

Pilling, Regnault, Townsend, and Turpin are unable to attend the meeting and their papers will be read by proxies whom I shall introduce at the appropriate time.

Finally, since it is intended that the symposium have a unitary character will you please reserve your questions until all the papers have been presented?