



**AgEcon** SEARCH  
RESEARCH IN AGRICULTURAL & APPLIED ECONOMICS

*The World's Largest Open Access Agricultural & Applied Economics Digital Library*

**This document is discoverable and free to researchers across the globe due to the work of AgEcon Search.**

**Help ensure our sustainability.**

Give to AgEcon Search

AgEcon Search  
<http://ageconsearch.umn.edu>  
[aesearch@umn.edu](mailto:aesearch@umn.edu)

*Papers downloaded from **AgEcon Search** may be used for non-commercial purposes and personal study only. No other use, including posting to another Internet site, is permitted without permission from the copyright owner (not AgEcon Search), or as allowed under the provisions of Fair Use, U.S. Copyright Act, Title 17 U.S.C.*

### DISCUSSION

(on papers delivered by Messrs. Cacho, Mathurin and Toolsie,  
and Mrs Ruth Rawlins)

#### *B. Persaud (Barbados) :*

I would like to comment briefly on Mr. Cacho's paper. I am a bit worried about this expectation that because there is unlimited land in British Honduras it is going to be used extensively. After all we must remember that land is not a substitute for labour as capital is, and if you are going to use more land you are likely to need more capital which may be scarce in the context of the British Honduras economy.

#### *C. Cacho (Trinidad) :*

I agree with you, the technology of agriculture would, as you suggest, require a large input of capital if the population is going to handle as much land as there is.

#### *S. N. Girwar (Trinidad) :*

I refer to Mr. Mathurin's paper. The examination of the land tenure system in St. Lucia seems to indicate that the trouble really stems from the fact that St. Lucia practises a dual system of law: the old Code Napoleon and English law. The system of "communité de bien" as it is commonly referred to in the Code Napoleon, really takes precedence over the English legal system. So it seems that if the present land tenure system in St. Lucia is to be improved, and the present anomalies and difficulties corrected, you need legal reform first. And then the second question of the excessive fragmentation of farms can be tackled through land reform.

#### *D. C. E. Mathurin (St. Lucia) :*

I must agree with you. The legal aspects of the problem should be tackled first, and very soon, but it should be remembered that the whole land tenure problem is a political one, which nobody wants to tackle. In addition, no one has ever tried to ascertain how much land is involved in multiple ownership.

#### *B. Persaud :*

I wonder if the land tenure programme in St. Lucia is as serious as is made out by Mr. Mathurin. I know he has lumped all the problems together but if we take them individually, for example, share cropping, while it may have been a serious problem in the past, the evidence from recent related work reveals that it had declined in importance. The problem of the under-utilisation of land on the large estates is also a problem of the past. We have heard a lot concerning the communal land problem in St. Lucia, yet we are still not clear on the extent of the problem at present. It may be that some of these problems are changing and for the better.

#### *D. C. E. Mathurin :*

While the problem of share cropping is not as widespread as before, it yet remains an important problem particularly in the southern

part of the island. Now to take the question of land utilisation. As I said, you can just look around and you see good land not utilised. Then, when you take into account the fact that the economy centres around agriculture, with most of the population living in the rural areas, one is better able to appreciate the magnitude of the present problems.

*I. T. Twyford (St. Lucia) :*

In spite of the very real difficulty with land tenure in St. Lucia, agricultural production there compares quite favourably with that in other Windward Islands. So I think that even though there is this problem, it cannot be holding things back to all that extent. As far as under-utilisation of valley lands is concerned, in some valleys I can think of, there is in fact over-utilisation.

*I. Johnson (Jamaica) :*

I'd like to make a few comments on the papers presented by Mr. Toolsie and Mrs. Rawlins. The titles of both their papers included the term "farm planning" which suggests micro planning, but I think that what the papers in fact considered was macro planning. But more important, I think that neither paper has given sufficient consideration to the human element in farm planning.

*Mrs. R. Rawlins (Trinidad) :*

To some extent I have to agree with Dr. Johnson. We have not taken up the human element in noting what might be feasible for farm planning on the basis of land capability surveys, but neither does the Land Capability Survey. On your first point, I certainly did not intend to go into the farm planning in terms of the individual farm planning. This was not included in the scope of my paper. You are right to correct me there, but I was talking in the broader sense of agricultural planning rather than of farm planning. This is simply a field that I haven't covered and therefore your views on it would be most welcome to supplement the views of these papers.

*F. A. Francis (Trinidad) :*

Mr. Chairman, I want to refer to a statement which Mrs. Rawlins made in her paper: "one area of valuable agricultural land is the Aranjuez vegetable gardening area, but whatever the assessment of its agricultural contribution, the fact that it is in the path of urban growth may mean it must go to housing." I keep wondering about this trend in Trinidad and Tobago. I note that quite a lot of our very fertile, agricultural land is very closely located to urban centres but I keep wondering whether, if we consider this area to be very limited, and if in fact we do have a land scarcity problem and a population growth problem, whether or not we should not, in prudence, perhaps, limit the rate of alienation or you might say extraction of this land from agriculture, by making use of our more windy and perhaps cooler mountain areas for housing, reserving the land near our cities for agriculture to be the bread basket of our expected very large population in the future.

*Chairman :*

I think Mrs. Rawlins agrees with you.

*L. James (Trinidad) :*

Is it not true that one of the severest limitations of the Trinidad and Tobago Land Capability Survey is that it has failed to take into account knowledge from other areas? For example, avocados are not grown on any scale in Trinidad and Tobago, but information could have been got from other areas where the crop is grown.

*Mrs. R. Rawlins :*

I think you are right. In reference to the Tobago Land Capability Survey, certain crops have been evaluated. The point is recognised that the Survey has not taken a wider range of possibilities in order to suggest new crops that could be grown. The report itself is very generalised. It is not possible to identify particular crops. The recommendations of the report are also quite general. It could be that these recommendations of the report could be made more specific relating crops to particular farm plans.

*I. Johnson :*

I would like to make the observation to Mr. James that there is danger in using information from other countries and relating those to our particular Land Capability Survey.

## THE SOCIAL ASPECTS OF AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Chairman : Mr. F. Barsotti<sup>1</sup>

### *Introduction*

This morning we have three papers dealing with the "Social Aspects of Agricultural Development". The first paper is to be presented by Dr. John Mac Donald, Head of the Department of Sociology, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. The title of his paper is "The Sociological Element of Agricultural Organisation from the Development Standpoint".

The second paper deals with a land settlement project and is being presented by Mr. Leonard James, agronomist, attached to Shell (Trinidad) Limited. Mr. James is in charge of a land settlement project in Point Fortin and, I think he will be speaking on this project.

Finally, Mr. Andrew MacMillan, post-graduate student at the University of the West Indies, will present a paper on "Aranjuez — Agricultural Growth in a Suburban Setting".

May I now invite Dr. MacDonald to present his paper.

---

<sup>1</sup>

Senior Economist, Ministry of Agriculture Trinidad and Tobago.