

Family property symposium: Welcome address

Rt Hon Sir Ivor Richardson*

On behalf of the New Zealand Institute of Advanced Legal Studies I welcome those attending today's Symposium.

The Institute has been incorporated as a charitable trust with the primary purpose of promoting legal education, legal research and scholarship.

It has a close relationship with the Faculty of Law at Victoria and three members of the Board of Trustees are also members of the Faculty - Professor Brooks in his capacity as Dean, Simon France as (until recently) Deputy Dean and Mr Bill Atkin as Dean of Research. Mr Atkin also chairs the Committee which was responsible for today's session. Judge Eddie Durie, Ms Patsy Reddy and Mr Bill Wilson are also Trustees.

Our first project was the consolidation of the Cook Islands Laws. We undertook it at the request of the Cook Islands Government and the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. It was a massive exercise which owed a lot to Professor Angelo, who as many will know has had similar involvement in the laws of Mauritius and Tokelau. The project has now been completed and the 12 volumes of the Cook Islands Laws have been published.

The Institute contemplates undertaking a range of activities where we see a particular need and particular opportunity. We envisage organising one or two special symposiums or conferences a year. This is the first; and if I can take a moment to mention the second. It is a conference on the Treaty of Waitangi under the title "Treaty Claims: The Outstanding Business" and it is scheduled for 9 and 10 February 1995. It will examine issues affecting the settlement of Treaty claims and the options for developing a claims settlement policy. There will be a wide range of presenters and speakers.

We are very grateful to the Minister of Justice whom we welcome here today. A tiger for punishment, he is speaking at the February Conference, as well as today. We are also grateful to other contributors today and at the Waitangi Conference.

Today's symposium is on Family Property, Law and Policy. 1994 has been designated by the United Nations as the International Year of the Family and the New Zealand International Year of the Family Committee has endorsed this symposium. Probably more than ever before, the media and public focus has been on issues of domestic violence and child abuse. Of course they are important but so too

* Judge of the Court of Appeal and Chairperson of the NZ Institute of Advanced Legal Studies.

and for all New Zealanders are questions of family property. It promises to be an interesting day.