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003116



Distr.
LIMITED

ID/WG.105/1
30 July 1971

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

Seminar on Furniture and other
secondary wood processing industries

Finland, 16 August - 11 September 1971

WOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES IN SAMOA ✓

Country paper

by

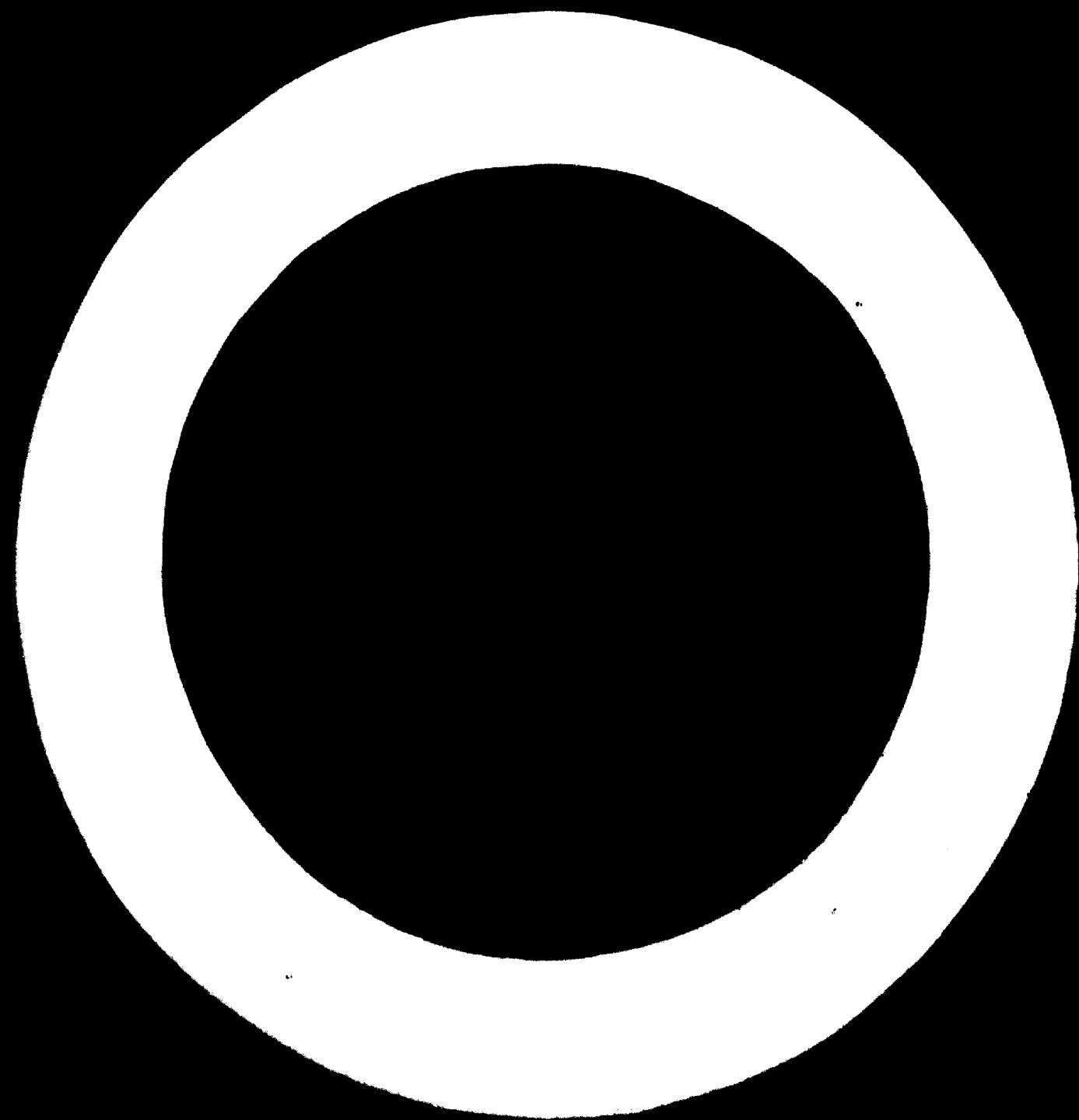
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Samoa being in the first stage of the timber industry, the potential with natural tropical conditions, has abundant virgin forest on the two main islands of Upolu and Savai'i.

There are three milling companies and one church cutting timber, mainly native hardwoods.

Over the past 8 years local timber has been rough sawn, then air stacked for drying. With high all year round temperatures and humidity, this method has not been completely satisfactory.

Recently an American-owned mill is operating in Savai'i and producing the first quality kiln dried timber for export and local use.

On the island of Upolu when the Germans governed Samoa, they planted teak in rows dividing the cocoa plantations into sections for shelter and shade, these trees were spaced at 20' to 30', now they are left to branch out and not trimmed, when cut the knots of the branches joining the trunk give an unusual grained effect from the normal forest teak.

With this growth it is hard to find a board more than 6' long in a straight grain, matching grains sometimes has its problems on items such as tables, cupboards and larger furniture.

To date we are still using air dried timber; with our first order of kiln dried native timbers within the next few weeks, this will improve our export and local furniture, joinery and building industry.

For the past 2 years in our factory, we have been using wood preservatives, teak oils and finishing with polyurethane than in natural satin and gloss to the customer's requirements, previously an oil or varnish finish had not stood up to the climate because of moisture and glue deterioration.

Manufacturing and building development stems from the overseers and supervisors as there is no apprentice or improver system for local people; although the natural ability is high the basic grounding to make good tradesmen is yet to be set up.

Most merchants supply imported building timber and do not handle locally milled timber as this generally is not treated thickened or dressed.

Many people would prefer using local timber if possible for interior wall panels, shelving and furniture, this is now only beginning to materialise because previously the time delay in drying, therefore imported materials have been far easier to obtain in both sizes and quantity.

Encouraged by the United Nations and the Government, the people are becoming aware of the resources of these exotic timbers previously not used.

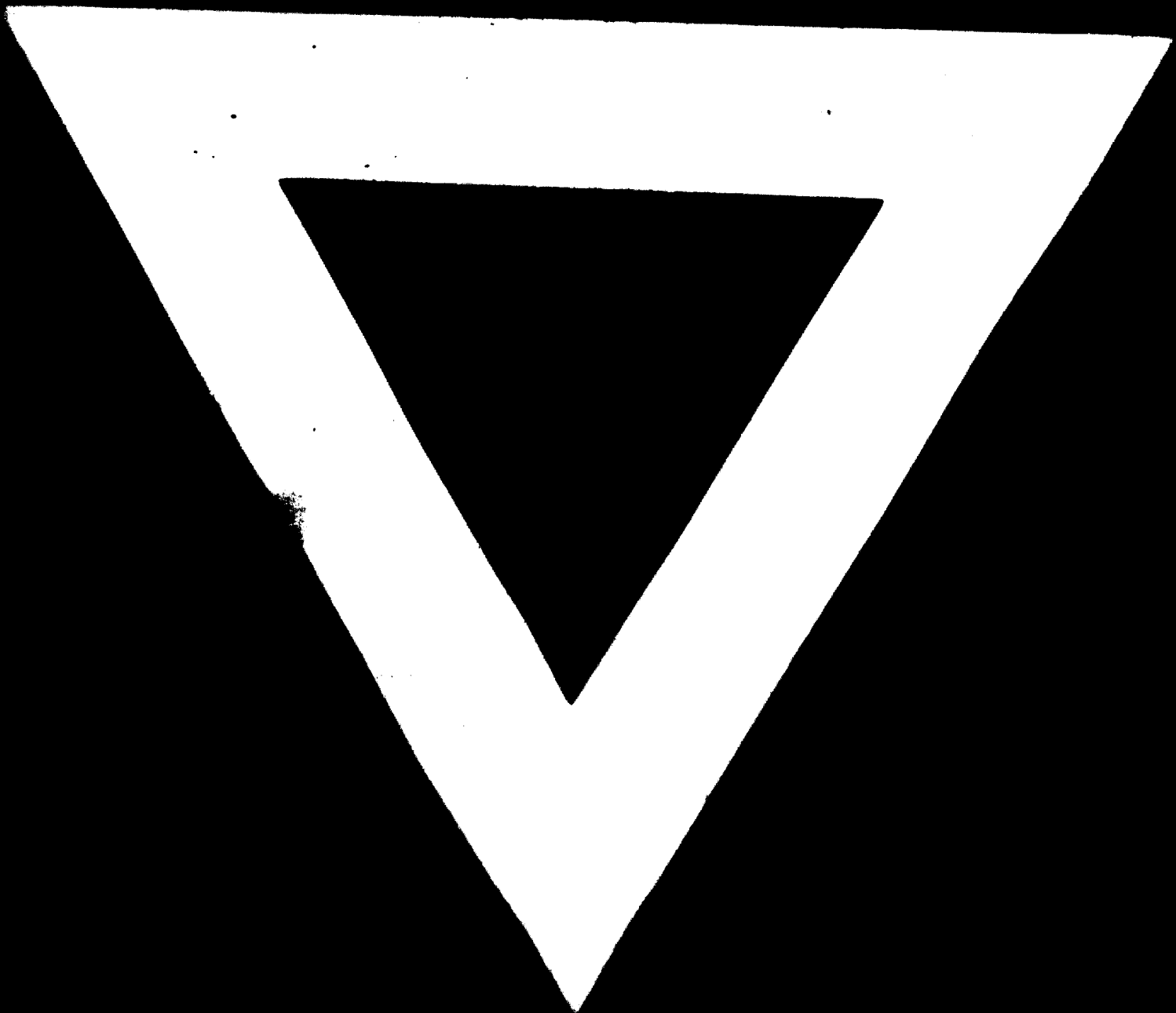
Dip diffusion is being used for specific work when requested, these timbers are treated at the New Samoan Industries sawmill and Government are also setting up this method for the new airport, lining the interior with matchlining panels walls, counters and furniture.

Personal and magazines' design of furniture from overseas styles are reproduced using leather and handwork, this is becoming a major interest in this company.

With such a small population repetition and mass production of items, we have not yet had the opportunity to compete, this will start when tourism and export markets are found other than what we have at present.

In the seminar of furniture and other secondary wood processing industries a listing outlines the topics to be covered during lectures which covers all aspects and utilisation of what Samoa has in natural raw materials





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