

The following are the main points made:

(1) Objectives of each Govt.

The objectives of the U.S.G. (i.e. the ones to which it may want to put "its islands" in no way affect the question of its ^{claim to} sovereignty. The terms of sovereignty and use should not be confused.

(2) Islands claimed

The U.S.G. enclose a list and are prepared to discuss claims & counter claims to each one on it.

(3) Four-party conference

U.S.G. repeat that the status of the islands and the subject of trans-Pacific aviation are only indirectly related and sh^d. be considered separately, each on its merits.

The latter subject is so complicated that the U.S.G. cannot "yet" accept the invitation to a conf^{er}.

H.E.

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As you are going away tomorrow
you may like to glance at
this.

I have not yet had time to
minutiae it thoroughly, and I
shall also need Mr. Officer's
views and air attaché's.

I suggest sending it to S.O.
by next bag with short
coverer saying that our
observations will follow.

It is rather ridiculous of
the U.S. Gov^{mt} to pretend that
their reasons for wanting the
islands are immaterial, and
that they are interested in the
legal title to sovereignty in
a sort of academic way. Such
of the islands as I've been able to
find on the map are all more
or less on the direct ^{air} route from
Hawaii to New Zealand.

Of the islands which U.S. G.
wish to discuss note that in
addition to list at the end they
also include the Phoenix group
(which includes Hull). Of those

On the list Christmas and
 Nukunono are important,
 even vital, to us for air
 purposes. The five "line
 islands" are of no use
 except possibly for colonization.

Regarding the others I've not
 so far been able to ~~find~~ find
 whether we are interested in
 them or not.

Obviously this is not the
 moment in international
 affairs for arbitration, nor
 do U.S.G. suggest it. But
 they seem to want to compare
 claims, and I fear we shall
 never admit their title to
 any island which matters
 without arbitration.

But it is more important
 that U.S.G. are prepared to
 treat Trans. Pacific aviation as
 a separate matter, though not
 "at this time" ready for a conference

H.E.
 W. Officer
 6/24/38

P.T.O.
 1878

It seems to me that the S.D. desires the question settled on purely legalistic lines, & refuses to take into consideration any factor which might tend to the convenience of either party. Presumably they think this best suits their interest.

I don't see what we can do, but follow this line & go to arbitration, but the more slowly we follow this path the better.

We could however precede the offer of arbitration by two other separate offers

(1) we to give them all claim to Canton if they surrender all claim to Hull

(2) they give us Xines & Nukamona if we give them all the others on the list.

They might accept (1). They would almost certainly refuse (2)

RH