LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir, — Editorial comment by your predecessor *The Ebullient Forestry Scene* (Vol. 19 (2): 158-9) cannot go unchallenged. I take exception to his opinion that the work of the FRI Economics Group is based on “instant” research results — the implication being that the other alternative(s) is well proven. Nothing could be further from the truth. The short-rotation sawlog regime evolved because research demonstrated the failure of alternative systems. I doubt if a silvicultural system anywhere in the world has as much supporting research evidence as the present Economics Group proposals.

If it is logical to argue that widespread adoption of the short-rotation sawlog regime would lead to factory grade being “... reduced to an all-time low in value”, is it not equally logical to argue that New Zealand should immediately stop all new planting since the expected increase in wood volume will depress all stumpage values?

There is much more I would like to say but will leave it until I publish the results of my present research on the export markets for clear, superior factory grade, and other wood products, and their likely competition and profitability.

W. R. J. SUTTON
University of Oxford

Sir, — I welcome Mr Sutton's rejoinder. It is from argument and controversy that the truth will in due course emerge, and it has been disheartening that, during my tenure as editor, the sparkling and intentionally challenging remarks in editorial notes rarely drew any riposte!

I have nothing but admiration for the work of the FRI Economics Group, and I think I made this clear in the first paragraph of the note in Volume 19 (2), page 158. What I am doubtful about are the following: first, the naive assumption that the premises will continue to remain static, even in the near future; secondly, the assumption that, even within New Zealand, the conclusions have ubiquitous validity; thirdly, that diseconomies and certain other difficulties have been generally ignored; fourthly, that demographic factors have been given no weight.

During my tenure as editor the Editorial Committee touched on this subject in “Quantity versus Quality” (Volume 17 (1)) and took the view that, on balance, quantity was more important than quality. And in my recent peregrinations I was impressed by the almost universal view of foresters that the yield per hectare needed to be substantially increased and that other technical problems (including quality) were much simpler to solve. I am also coming to the conclusion that the world is becoming more and more uncertain about the profit motive and the present functioning of the Western money system, which appears to be steadily grinding to a disastrous halt. Changes are inevitable, and they may make orthodox economic studies merely risible. Among the most suspect of our technocrats are economists, who so frequently are found to be wrong even in the short term; world production of beef is a classic case in which, because everyone followed the dictates of the economists, they simply demolished the premises of the economists' case.

However, it would be a sad day if our FRI economists ceased to prod us into heightened cerebral activity.

C. G. R. CHAVASSE
Forest Research Institute
NEW ZEALAND INSTITUTE OF FORESTERS (Inc.)

The Institute was formed in 1927 and incorporated in 1929, with the object of furthering the development of forestry and the interests of the forestry profession in New Zealand. There are five classes of membership. Further information may be obtained from the Honorary Secretary, N.Z. Institute of Foresters Inc., P.O. Box 2070, PALMERSTON NORTH, New Zealand.

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Papers and articles for the Journal should be in the hands of the Editor before 1 January and 1 July for the first and second numbers, respectively, in any particular year. Instructions for authors are printed in each number of the Journal.
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Contributors of papers to this Journal are asked to study these notes with care in order to save themselves and the editor unnecessary work in revision.

1. The original and one copy of the manuscript should be sent to the editor. Manuscripts must be typed double-spaced on one side only of paper of International A4 size. The Journal's conventions regarding main and subsidiary headings (which may be observed in this issue) should be followed. Headings should not be underlined. Only words to be set in italics (e.g., botanical names) should be underlined.

2. Only the author's name should be included in the heading; a brief footnote may be used to denote his rank, position or business location.

3. An abstract of the paper should follow the heading.

4. Metric units, according to the Systeme International and conventions adopted by the Metric Advisory Board, will be used throughout.

5. Tabular matter should be kept to a minimum. All tables will be typed on separate sheets, in the form displayed in the Journal, and numbered consecutively in arabic numerals. The preferred position in the text should be indicated by a blank space with ('Table No. '). Tables should be as simple as possible with clear explanatory headings.

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by author and date — e.g. Smith (1970), or (Smith, 1970). Titles of journals, etc., should be abbreviated according to the 1958 edition of the Guide to the Use of Forestry Abstracts, Commonwealth Forestry Bureau, Oxford.

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