I find this a very difficult colloquium to sum up because everybody's contribution was essentially so individual in its approach. As Mr McDowall said the other day, "there ain't no cure for people"; and so, despite excellent chairmanship, the participants were not prepared to be structured and they were not structured. And as a result my job is extremely complex.

Despite the participants, however, I think the best approach that I can make to summing up is to follow the questions the Chairman asked in trying to structure the discussion; and essentially they went like this:

— Why Regional Development?
— What is Regional Development?
— How do we get Regional Development?
— What part does forestry play in it, or what part can forestry play in it?
— What is needed to obtain the potential from forestry?

Now the short answer I got from the discussion could finish the summing up quite easily. The answers to these questions were:

(1) We don't know what Regional Development is, but we want it.
(2) We don't know why we want it, but we do.
(3) We don't know how to get it, but if we stick in enough trees it'll come.

Now, that, in effect, is my summing up of the discussion.

In some ways I suppose this is a bit of a caricature. It is probably a bit unfair, but I don't think it is too far off what the discussion said; in fact, I don't think it is too far off what the real situation about regional development is. I'm not too sure that anybody knows what he means by regional development; I'm darn sure nobody knows how to get it; and I'm pretty sure that not too many people know why they are in favour of it.

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So it is not totally a caricature. Just take a look at some of the things that tend to illustrate this. I picked out a couple. During the discussion, a large number of people used what are really relative terms in a way which suggested that they were absolute. But, on analysis, this usage doesn’t stand up. Now, this is no criticism of the group here; it is a criticism of everybody. We had such phrases as: “the best use of our resources”, “the sound management of our resources”, “the balanced use of our resources”, “wise planning”, and I could go on; but in all of these things what do we mean by best? Best from whose point of view? Sound from whose point of view? Wise from whose point of view? Until we answer these questions we haven’t answered the problem at all. So in effect this illustrates to some degree that we really don’t know what we’re talking about.

The thing that worried me also (and as a forest economist I’m almost ashamed to admit it) was the naive belief that economic analysis will provide the answers. Economic analysis doesn’t give answers to anything. In effect, in its approach, it solves the problem by assuming that the problem doesn’t exist. This came out very clearly with respect to regional development and people. Mr Latimer, Dr Parkes and Professor McKelvey all said that regional development is about people. Now, the economic approach is to assume that people don’t behave in the way that they do. That allows a solution; but it is not a solution to the real problem, and I was a bit distressed by the number of people who either abused the economic answer or praised the economic answer, when in fact it was not an answer.

So, overall, I have a strong feeling that my characterisation of the discussion is not a caricature, and is not unfair. However, having decided that, I then tried to search for some common themes.

What really did come through?

Two things, I think, came through very, very strongly, and with entire agreement. These were, first of all, the point that I’ve just made: that regional development is about people. The second one is that, whatever regional development is, forestry has the potential to propel it. Now these were about as far as we got in agreement.

The main points on which we differed concerned the nature of regional development — and how to obtain it.

Nobody defined regional development. The Chairman kept asking people to come back and say what they meant by it; or failing that to say why they wanted it; but everybody wisely dodged him. Out of it, however, I think I got four sorts of general ideas of what regional development meant to people.
To many, in effect, it means to stop things getting worse than they are. In other words, to get some stability; or in social terms to stop certain regions going any further backwards than they are. Some people said regional development meant getting some of Auckland’s goodies without getting any of Auckland’s baddies. Other people’s approach was that regional development meant “Stop Auckland”, and to others it meant “let’s have alternatives to Auckland”. Now these are all meanings of regional development that came out, and the definition we accept has a profound effect on our subsequent course of action. As Dr Parkes pointed out, it is fairly easy to get some social stability in the far north by planting a few hectares of pines at Aupouri. It is fairly simple to do it that way, if that’s what you mean by regional development. If, on the other hand, you mean by regional development putting another Auckland up there, then a different approach is required.

So the question then arose of how to obtain regional development. And as far as I could see, the house divided into two equal groups on almost every approach. There are sets of dichotomies. You do it on a small integrated scale, or you do it on a big scale. We’ve had no degree of consensus that either was better than the other. Or, you plant trees where the industries are, or you put them where the social need is greatest. Again we divided. You do it fast, or you do it slowly. We kept getting these dichotomies coming through, and we obtained no agreement whatsoever on how to obtain regional development.

At that point, I started to question what we had got. We had a fairly good discussion; people put their ideas forward, other people listened. We had a good colloquium, but did this colloquium come to any answer?

Now, I’ve suggested that it did come to an answer, which wasn’t the answer intended. But out of all of this, I think you’ve got to ask the question — “So what? Where do we go from here?” Where do we go from here as far as the Institute is concerned, because this is all we’re concerned with at this meeting? I don’t think we should worry overmuch as to where the Forest Service goes from here, and some of us don’t think we should worry where the big industries go from here. Where does the Institute go, which is meant to represent the profession of forestry? I don’t think it can go very far.

The first resolution, and the only resolution that came to my mind during the morning was that we, the Institute as a whole, the profession as a whole, should stop talking about regional development until we know what we are talking about. Now that’s a bit negative. It’s also a bit dangerous, because if we stopped talking about anything until we knew what we were talking about, we’d be alone in that situation. Every or-
ganisation in the country, every group of interests, talk about things they don't properly understand; and this is how action comes. In effect, the pressure groups (and I have a feeling that the Institute should be a pressure group for forestry as a whole, rather than for any single part of it) have to talk, and continue talking about things they don't really properly understand.

So out of this I came to my feeling that we could make a suggestion (or perhaps a resolution) to Council, that we should do something about clarifying our understanding; and perhaps we should try to enunciate an Institute policy on regional development. So the first resolution that I drew out was that we recommend to Council that "It appoint a subcommittee to define what the Institute means by regional development, as a step towards stating its policy on forestry and regional development."¹

Now the second of the two common themes, was that regional development is about people. This came through in many, many forms, and I was struck here with another issue that is very important for the profession too. This was the point initially raised by Mr Latimer, that this profession and this Institute consists of a very, very badly represented group of New Zealand society. As he pointed out, there are no Maoris in the profession in decision-making positions with respect to planning or execution of regional development. And again, it is fairly obvious, I think, that we not only belong to an all white, but also to an essentially all male profession.

There are, of course, social reasons for regional planning and regional development; and there are also social effects of regional development; and the two are quite often not the same thing. One of the social effects, which the Chairman made a point of developing, and on which there were very good contributions from the meeting, was the effect of forestry on the landscape in its contribution to regional development. Because forestry in regional development has to come largely through industrial use of exotic plantations, there must be major aesthetic effects on the landscape. Now it struck me that, because of the all male nature of our profession, we may suffer very greatly with respect to our understanding of aesthetics. It may be that we suffer here too because of the limited number of indigenous New Zealanders in our ranks.

I think we could do quite a bit, not only by encouraging a larger element of the Maori people into the executive and policy-making positions in forestry, but also by encouraging

¹ This resolution was adopted by the meeting.
more women into these positions. So out of this came what I thought could be our second resolution: "That the Institute explore ways and means of enabling the advancement in the forestry profession of Maoris and women." In other words, that it should encourage them into the professional and ranger side of forestry training, rather than into the planting side of it.

And this, unfortunately, is all that I could get out of the discussion we had: two rather limited resolutions out of three hours of talking. While this may be a reflection of what's wrong with forestry in New Zealand, I don't think it is. I don't think that forestry anywhere in the world that I know could have come up with anything more about the topic under discussion. And this perhaps is a good note on which to end, in that it returns us full cycle to the need for my first resolution: that the Institute clarify what it means by forestry in relation to regional development.

\[2\] This resolution was not adopted by the meeting.