

## EDITORIAL COMMENT

### FOREST ADMINISTRATION IN NEW ZEALAND

The question of the governmental structure for the administration and management of the bulk of the lands of the Crown in New Zealand, which comprises some 50% of the land area of the country, and includes practically all of the national forests, more than half the plantation forest estate, and vast areas of tussock grassland, and mountain lands, has been under scrutiny and debate for several years. This debate has featured in the *Journal* over the past few issues. The debate is now reaching a climax as this issue is prepared; the following "open letter" to the Prime Minister from a distinguished member of the Institute, A. L. Poole, encapsulates the attitude of the Institute itself, and of most members, to the proposals for the administrative separation of so-called "development" functions from so-called "conservation" functions.

The word "conservation" is used by the protagonists for the separation to mean almost exclusively preservation. It is the view of the Institute that "conservation" is an ethic which must properly apply to all forms of land use.

The next issue of the *Journal* will endeavour to provide a review of the debate, and a commentary on the governmental decisions made. While this commentary will lack the perspective which can only come with elapse of time, it is necessary that some effort be made to record the events of the past year or so while they remain fresh. Much is unwritten; the issue is nevertheless the most important in New Zealand forestry for many decades.



#### AN OPEN LETTER

6 August, 1985

Dear Prime Minister,

My whole official career, spanning 50 years, has been spent on matters related to environmental issues in New Zealand. I therefore asked to attend the Environmental Forum 1985, which was to set the pattern for proposed changes, and I produced a contribution as asked. I was not invited because people were