Structure of the Forest Service and its economic performance

Sir,

Peter Grant on P.3 of the May 1987 issue of the NZ Forestry scoffs at technical forecasts I helped prepare for the 1981 Forestry Conference. He says that the 1983-84 net revenues from growing and harvesting NZ forests was $614 million less than Carol Gilchrist and I predicted.

In saying this he has overlooked the fact that on P.6 of our 1981 paper we clearly state: “The (high) values allocated are shadow stumpages, i.e. they are those that might be obtained if the yield was exported as logs”.

Being surprised about a large difference between forecasted shadow export net revenues and actual net domestic revenues in the Muldoon era is like being astonished that bananas and lemon trees turn out to have different fruit.

Readers may also be interested to know that Carol and I prepared our paper at the request of the afforestation working party of the 1981 Forestry Conference. The paper was widely disseminated only after that working party had checked and approved it.

I wonder if Peter Grant realizes that by ridiculing the Levack and Gilchrist report he is casting aspersion at his own working party.

Hamish Levack,
Wellington

Sutton article on NZFS contribution

Sir,

In the typesetting of my article, part of one sentence was deleted. As a result the sentence’s meaning and emphasis was changed.

The second sentence of the second to last paragraph reads “unlike today’s philosophy...”. My original statement read “unlike today’s conservation movement which has very much a ‘don’t touch’ philosophy...”. The deletion of these qualifying words has changed the meaning of the rest of the sentence to imply that the present Forest Service did not have the same conservation concerns as the Department had in earlier times.

That obviously was never my intention.

W.R.J. Sutton
Rotorua

(We apologise for the omission. Ed.)

‘Exotic plantation forestry rubbed—'

Sir,

Imagine a conservation movement that is against planting trees! In the May issue, Peter Grant of NFAC gives us a stunning display of numerical gymnastics. His effect is to rubbush exotic plantation forestry in New Zealand, as exemplified by the Forest Service.

As a spokesmen for NFAC, Dr Grant should be deeply concerned about the global loss of forested land. He should be troubled by the destruction of northern hemisphere forests by acid rain. Of all people, he should believe that future timber supplies will be scarce. In addition to the world’s shrinking resource, an increasing area is being zoned for preservation - thanks to the good work of NFAC and kindred groups.

As an economist, Dr Grant must realize that when a commodity becomes scarce its price rises. The effect of this is twofold. First, there will be an increasing pressure on unprotected indigenous forests. Secondly, the high timber price will make plantation forestry very profitable. Dr Grant uses current costs and current prices. He has the mentality of an accountant, not a conservationist.

This country is ruled by accountants. Enthroned in their citadels of concrete and steel, they know little of mountainous forests. As an economist, Dr Grant must realize that when a commodity becomes scarce its price rises. The effect of this is twofold. First, there will be an increasing pressure on unprotected indigenous forests. Secondly, the high timber price will make plantation forestry very profitable. Dr Grant uses current costs and current prices. He has the mentality of an accountant, not a conservationist.

This country is ruled by accountants. Enthroned in their citadels of concrete and steel, they know little of mountainous forests.

C.G.R. Chavasse,
Rotorua

‘Unprofessional’ cover photograph

Sir,

One concern expressed by the NZIF recently is the low public esteem for forestry as a profession compared to professions such as law and accountancy. Imagine my dismay when I received the February 1987 issue of New Zealand Forestry. The cover photograph initially led me to believe I was holding a copy of the PSA journal rather than the latest NZIF journal. A cover photograph such as this does nothing to dispel the public’s misconception that the forestry profession is not comparable to
other professions. The editorial policy states a refereeing and editing process is used to ensure published articles are of a high quality. Surely this policy should apply also to cover photographs. I agree the restructuring of the government environmental agencies has caused stress and disrupted people's lives. The journal would be neglecting its duty if it did not comment on this. However, unprofessional content in the NZIF journal such as the cover photograph of the February 1987 issue will do little to remedy the public's low esteem of forestry as a profession.

Peter J. Sutherland, Waikawa

Editor's Note: Point taken — The cover was attempting to make a comment on the times — it will be interesting to see if forest historians consider it unprofessional.

Dismayed by cover format

Sir,

I would like to express my dismay as to the format of the cover on the ‘New Zealand Forestry’ Vol. 31, No. 4, February 1987. The cover, titled ‘Musical chairs for forest folk’, a combination of a photo of NZ Forest Service staff playing musical chairs and a cartoon of Mr Douglas playing the tune, is totally inappropriate for a professional magazine.

This cover is an injustice to the fine work that has been done in producing the new-format ‘New Zealand Forestry’. The new-style magazine is well presented, easy to read — essential features required in communicating to the industry and society as a whole. The cover page mentioned is not what one would expect from a professional group propounding their sector in an economy and society that is currently intensively examining the industry. This intensity will continue and most probably increase in the future.

I am sure a cover of better taste would have better reflected the theme, Restructuring of the Government Environmental Agencies. The actual topic itself is presented in a constructive manner. Having myself been directly affected by these changes, I can understand the feelings presented by the cover picture. But let us try to present a professional image, an asset that will earn positive future gains.

Peter Casey, Wellington

CONSULTANT RECOGNITION

The following have applied for recognition or review of recognition as General Forest Consultants:

- B. Everts (Review) Christchurch
- J.R. Smith Blenheim
- L.J. Wilson (Review) Taupo
- G.L. Ramsay Invercargill

Under the NZIF Constitution any member of the Institute may send objections in writing to the: Registrar of Consultants, NZ Institute of Foresters, P.O. Box 12314, WELLINGTON NORTH

Consultants recognized by the N.Z. Institute of Foresters as at 1st July 1987

General Forest Consultants

Mr I.L. Barton Hunua, R.D.3, Papakura, Auckland
Mr K.C. Chandler P.O. Box 2246, Rotorua
Mr P.D. Clark P.O. Box 1127, Rotorua.
Mr P.C. Crequer P.O. Box 169, Taupo.
Mr W.J. Ellis Murray North Partners, P.O. Box 553, Rotorua.
Mr B. Everts P.O. Box 13382, Christchurch.
Mr J.G. Groome P.O. Box 13382, Christchurch.
Mr J.E. Keating P.O. Box 25-222, St. Heliers, Auckland.
Mr W.B. Lilly P.O. Box 79, Taumarunui.
Mr R. Lockyer P.O. Box 190, Kerikeri, Bay of Plenty Islands.
Mr R.S. Macarthur The Grove, R.D. 1, Picton.
Mr W.K.J. McCallum 24 Hunly Ave, Grafton, Auckland.
Prof. P.J. McKelvey 9 St Chio Street, Christchurch
Mr P.E. Olsen P.O. Box 1127, Rotorua.
Mr A.J. Page Tahere Farm, Pataua North Road, R.D.5, Whangarei.
Mr I.G. Rawson 16 Wolfe Street, Whangarei

Mr A.N. Sexton 2/170 King Edward Avenue, Bayswater, Takapuna, Auckland, 9
Mr J.J.K. Spiers Mr R. Usnar
Mr F.P. Wallis Mr J.L. Wilson
Mr J.L. Wilson Mr J.L. Wilson

Specialist Forest consultants — chosen field

Mr T. Fraser Forest Valuation/Economics
Dr J.M. Harris Timber Developments and Wood Science
Mr P.W. Hyam Export Market Development
Dr A.J. McQuire Timber Processing and Utilization
Mr W.J. Wendelken Environmental Aspects & Land Use

General Forest Consultants are recognized as having a wide range of professional skills. Specialist Forest Consultants are recognized to practise in the area specified. Reviews of recognition are undertaken at not greater than five-yearly intervals.