PRIVATEIZATION OF THE FORESTRY CORPORATION

I am grateful to the many members who offered comments on the privatization question. As we might expect, no true consensus was possible. On the question of whether privatization should proceed there was a spectrum of opinion from those who pleaded for a return to the old Forest Service to those who wanted a complete sell off of the State asset in small parcels. The Institute could therefore take no stand on this question. however, some strategic issues did emerge. A clear majority of members expressed reservations against foreign ownership and control of our forests. Many members were also concerned that our forests might be bought by asset strippers who had no commitment to sustained yield management and replanting. Another area of concern was the possibility of strategic parcels being bought by foreign wood buyers for the purpose of future bargaining.

The treatment of NZ Forestry Corporation staff and the maintenance of public access were also areas of concern. The Government announcement that the forests could be sold separately from the land raised the whole question of lease agreements. The Institute argued that, should the Government proceed, it should avoid any system which results in a Canadian type solution. Evidence from Canada, especially British Columbia, has shown that forestry companies are very reluctant to invest in forests over which Government retains considerable control and where these controls can be easily changed.

A submission along these lines was made to Treasury.

W.R.J. Sutton, President

Changes in Membership

At the Council meeting of September 8, 1988 the following new members were accepted:

C.I. Poulter (student)  D.C. Cormack (student)
M.A. Candish (student)  T.W. Payn (student)
A.L. Tyler (student)    P.A.J. Hayes (student)
A. Tilling (student)    R.D. Green (reinstated as associate)
K. Buck (student)      C. Weir (student)

Advancements from Associate to Full Member were approved for:

G.N. Patching        D.M. Robinson
I.L. Currie          A.P. Wilkinson
J.M. Aitken          D. Hammond
R. Billard           A. Peddie
H.A. McKeesick       P. Lavery
D.R. Nicolson        H. Aitken

Advancement from Student to Associate:

I. Blake

The following resignations were accepted:

R.C. Ackland         J.D. Rockell
M. Calsaferri        M. Langford
R. Bagnall           G. A. Cornelius
A.G. Cornfield       R. Lloyd
A. G. Cornelius      G. S. Mitchell
D. Hemphill          J. W. Goodwin
G. S. Mitchell       M. McLean

RESOURCES MANAGEMENT LAW REFORM

This exercise by the Department for the Environment in consensus democracy can hardly be regarded as a success. We had the opportunity to see the submissions of other groups and we came to the conclusion that they too had experienced the same troubles as we had in trying to determine exactly what was required. In theory one overall law should be better than several independent laws. In theory too, decisions should be made at the lowest possible level of Government. In practice, this may be much more difficult.

The Institute’s submission was of a general nature only.