

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 clears, 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.

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THE NEW ZEALAND JOURNAL OF FORESTRY

The *Journal* is the official publication of the N.Z. Institute of Foresters, and is published twice annually. A consolidated index is produced at three-yearly intervals, covering three volumes.

Subscriptions from non-members of the Institute will be entered by the *Journal* Subscriptions Manager (D. Revell), N.Z. Institute of Foresters Inc., P.O. Box 468, TOKOROA, New Zealand. The annual rates, covering two issues each year, post free, with index each three years, are: within New Zealand, \$NZ4.00; overseas, \$NZ5.00 or equivalent, net. Back issues may also be obtained from the *Journal* Subscriptions Manager. Most issues up to 1947 are now out of print, but second-hand copies are sometimes available.

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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.

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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.

6. Text figures may be in the form of line drawings or graphs, not more than three times the size at which they are to be printed. Lines, figures and letters must be in black india ink, of sufficient size and thickness to be clearly legible when reduced. Shading must consist of lines or dots, not half-tone washes. Figures should be on white drawing paper or draughting film. The author's name and the figure number should be on the back of each.

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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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