

involved in any examination of a forest company's activities *whatever the ownership*". (My italics)

The Corporation's forest policy should be subject to some form of government oversight and one would expect the Ministry of Forestry to have the power and the will to do this. They appear to have neither. The Institute thus has an important role to play.

The position appears to be fairly simple.

- a) The Corporation forests are still owned by the State.
- b) The Government does not intend to sell them at present.
- c) The public thus has a right to know what is the Corporation short-, medium- and long-term cutting policy and if need be to comment on it.
- d) As the country's best informed and concerned organisation, the Institute should take a lead.

To say that the Institute should not be involved with the long-term policies of State owned forests is in effect to deny a major reason for the Institute's existence. This I most emphatically deplore. And if the Institute likes to consult its most senior members I believe it would get almost universal confirmation of this view.

The President replies

In response to Priestley's specific concerns:

1. There is little need in making a judgment on the condition of the forest, in respect of future capability to sustain a cut, to have data on the past levels of cut. Age class distribution of radiata pine and Douglas fir were given and present and projected levels were stated, albeit in general terms. These appeared to conform with the aim of maintaining rotations (for at least radiata pine) at a level not greatly different from like operations in the central North Island. That is, the trend appeared to be of a cut consistent with increment and the silvicultural aim of rotations of a length adequate for clearwood production. Therefore **quality** of the resource, based on this criterion, is not being jeopardised.
2. This has at its corollary the thought that **quantity** of cut is sustainable. It could not be a presumption of quality for clearwood being sustained if cutting exceeded increment. There is of course a more general debate on length of rotation affecting wood quality for framing timber, which is a New Zea-

land-wide concern not specific to FCNZ, and if age class distribution reflected an inability to keep rotation above a target set by density and fibre length.

3. I consider Council were given an answer on the Corporation's marketing policies, harvesting levels and the effect on future yields as commented above. We were not told the specific levels of cut planned for 1995. This is possibly commercially sensitive in the light of arbitration proceeding but it is also difficult to adhere to in practice as markets move up or down. I commented generally on the events leading to rapid reduction in production prior to November.
4. Delays. There was no desire to put the matter off and Council adopted the option of accepting an invitation to have FCNZ and Tim Cullinane meet

the full Council. Thus September was the first convenient moment to meet in Rotorua and there was no perception of the urgency requiring a prior meeting.

5. Communication. Council have adopted the policy of an information sheet after each meeting being sent to members. The most recent contains a note of the actions taken on this issue. As a reaction to Priestley Thomson's most recent comment, Council has reacted quickly on this complaint.
6. The propositions stemming from items (a)-(d) in Priestley's final paragraph are issues that we could take up after the arbitration is complete. Then Wyatt Creech's invitation could be a basis for reconsidering these issues.

P.F. Olsen
President

I have a dream. It's Jurassic Pine!

J.C.F. Walker*

"The late twentieth century has witnessed a scientific gold rush of astonishing proportions: the headlong and furious haste to commercialise genetic engineering. This enterprise has proceeded so rapidly – with so little outside commentary – that its dimensions and implications are hardly understood at all.

"Biotechnology promises the greatest revolution in human history. By the end of this decade, it will have outdistanced atomic power and computers in its effect on our everyday lives. In the words of one observer: 'Biotechnology is going to transform every aspect of human life: our medical care, our food, our health, our entertainment, our very bodies. Nothing will ever be the same again. It's literally going to change the face of the planet.'" (Jurassic Park by Michael Crichton)

It is in this context that I see much of the argument about species diversity in plantation management as irrelevant, rather than as misguided or misinformed. Soon enough we will have the opportunity to select the varying and desirable attributes of a species with all the frivolity of browsing along the supermarket shelf. It is the inevitability of the situation rather than its desirability that should be recognised.

The quest for species diversity in plantation management is primarily a philosophical and economic Progress, and like any Progress it involves the future. The future doesn't exist, never did and because

of the considerable investment in knowledge, imagination and fortitude required in developing a working perception of the future most prefer to see it merely as a straight line extrapolation of the past. A more fruitful approach is to see the future as residing only in the mind's eye. The mind first creates our reality and then we see it. Since it is inside us, we can do something about it.

Change itself has changed. It has become so rapid, so complex, so turbulent and unpredictable that it can be described as "white water" change – no time for a cuppa, Mr Lange. In the past the usual basic strategy for playing change was to minimise it, but that could be the most risky strategy in the future. The essential skill for the future will be learning how to change one's mind: to shift one's point of view, to recognise that the future is uncertain and to be comfortable with the prospect. Believe those who are seeking the truth, doubt those who find it (for those who find it see no need for further change).

Technology defines all physical resources. Land was not a physical resource until people learnt how to use or cultivate it. Today the hard truth facing foresters is the fact that the majority of fortunes will no longer be made by commandeering natural resources. Rather it will be in the development of technologies and amusements that haven't even been dreamt of. Intellectual assets, not physical assets, are the resources of industries: after all, the raw material of a silicon chip is a handful of dust. Technology feeds back on

* School of Forestry, University of Canterbury.