



Comment from the Incoming President

It is several years since I was last a member of the Institute's council and Vice-President and in that time there have been some very significant changes in forestry administration, structure and ownership in New Zealand.

This process commenced with the restructuring of the Forest Service in 1987 and has since included the progressive privatisation of the Crown's plantations starting in 1990, substantial changes in forestry company structure and ownership, major growth of the small forest owner sector, consolidation of the Department of Conservation's role as administrator of the Crown's conservation forest estate, and most recently the amalgamation of the Ministries of Agriculture and Forestry.

Change on this scale is unsettling for most involved, and calamitous for those displaced by the process. It is therefore no surprise to find that over the last decade the fortunes of the Institute have varied significantly.

A strong focus on addressing the issues of greatest concern to members over this period, holding costs, and supporting the professional development of the organisation have been very successful and today the Institute is in very good heart. For this we should particularly thank the councils



of the last few years.

The breadth of endeavour that the last council maintained was frequently and favourably commented upon at last month's AGM. However those who looked more closely will also have noticed that this level of activity comes at some cost, and without the continued commitment of the members cannot be main-

tained. Nevertheless the leadership that the Institute provides in its professional capacity is important and, to the extent that we can afford to do so, should in my view, be maintained.

It is against this background that I have given some consideration to where the new council might best and most effectively place its endeavours over the next year or two. There are three areas that I will be stressing:

- support for the membership through the continued professional development of the Institute and its members;
- leadership on specific forestry issues where it is appropriate for the national professional forestry body to do so;
- encouraging growth in membership, especially from the significant ranks of experienced and qualified practising foresters not yet members of the organisation.

In many respects this approach continues and further develops the strategy of the former council, and I am satisfied continued strengthening of the Institute in this way will be of greatest long-term benefit.

Peter Berg

Where have all the foresters gone?

Another round of restructuring is sweeping through the New Zealand forest industry. And with this we see more foresters, often senior, experienced people, being laid off. And the era of a separate government forestry bureau, which began life in 1919, has disappeared with the merger of the Ministry of Forestry.

New Zealand forestry, particularly the highly developed plantation sector much admired by the rest of the world, was a direct result of the vision of Alex R Entrican, an engineer. He insisted on the NZ Forest Service developing a sophisticated three level training programme. At the top

was the highly trained forester group, trained in degree programmes around the world. These were the technical, planning people, many of whom were responsible for leading the second planting boom of the 1960's, encouraging the new forest industries and pushing more sophisticated silviculture and management. Some of these made their mark in the Forest Service Conservancies, others in the Forest Research Institute and in education, and still others went across to or were part of the private sector.

The second level were the rangers and below them the woodsmen. Many of these

became quite influential, rising to leading positions and becoming highly respected within the industry. These groups were trained in New Zealand by the Forest Service.

In 1970 we had the opening of the School of Forestry at Canterbury University under the direction of Professor Peter McKelvey. His contribution was recognised last month by the New Zealand Institute of Forestry with the award of the Kirk Horn Flask and Medal (see elsewhere in this issue). Since 1970 the School has produced almost 700 graduates.