

on pages 15, 18, 25, 34, 57 and 59. There are also some obscure passages (particularly on pages 37, 45 and 65) which should have been clarified before printing. An index would have been useful, too.

The booklet is available in a paperback as well as a hard-cover edition.

D. S. Jackson

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Sir, — I was disappointed to read in your *Journal* a commonly expressed supposition that the expansion of plantation forestry in New Zealand would remove land from the production of food essential for the sustenance of the impoverished peoples of the world (Wendelken, *N.Z. Jl For.*, 21 (1): 17-20). Frequently this argument is used to justify the exclusion of forestry from potential or existing agricultural land.

New Zealand, of course, predominantly grows costly and high quality foodstuffs especially prepared for wealthy customers. And milk powder, the only significant export to developing nations, accounts for a small proportion of our total production. Indeed, the "marketing" of milk powder is fraught with difficulties since ". . . the hungry populations of the earth . . ." (Wendelken, p. 18) cannot afford our price!

There is no evidence to suggest that farming in New Zealand will be less costly-based in the future or that farmers themselves will be more altruistically motivated. On the other hand, while forestry is no more altruistic than agriculture, it is conceivable that the produce of forestry in New Zealand could supply directly and indirectly essential materials for shelter, fuel and literacy in the developing world.

When one considers that agriculture already utilises some 50% of the total land area of New Zealand, then the marginal productivity of an additional 3 or 4% of land area to farming would be minor compared with that resulting from a doubling of the exotic forest estate. Indeed, if agriculturalists and their supporters were to be truly sincere in proposing to feed the Third World, then the solution lies simply in restructuring our existing agricultural system to meet the *present-day* needs of millions of starving and undernourished peoples.

Given our present economy, society and political system, I can only conclude that a land-use policy based on the assumption that land denied to plantation forestry today would be supplying foodstuffs to the developing world tomorrow is essentially mistaken.

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