

## REPORT ON FOREST CONDITIONS IN NEW ZEALAND, AND A CASE FOR A NATIONAL FOREST POLICY.

TO THE HON. THE COMMISSIONER OF STATE FORESTS.

Sir,—

The writer has the honour to submit herewith an analysis of the timber situation in New Zealand, and a case for a comprehensive Dominion forest policy.

In the preparation of this report the writer has visited practically every forest region and every important milling-centre. Interviews and expressions of opinion have been obtained from sawmillers, consumers of forest products, forest workers, Government officials, business men, bankers, development leagues, forestry leagues, farmers' institutions, academicians, scientists, &c. Existing legislation, administration of the public forest resources, Royal Commission reports, &c., have been analysed and reviewed, and on the ground have been studied the actual accomplishments of various forestry efforts, private and public, of the past generation.

In formulating a progressive forest programme for New Zealand due consideration has been paid to the policies and methods that have been successful in other countries similarly placed—Great Britain, France, Sweden, German Empire, India, South Africa, Canada, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, British Columbia, United States of America, Australia; but the forest policy herein proposed for New Zealand is based on an independent and original consideration of New Zealand problems. It is not borrowed from somewhere else with the hope that it may fit in, but it is essentially a plan developed from and on the present and future needs of this country.

The writer considers that this policy is a practical, constructive, and well-ordered one; it fits in a place in the national economy which was heretofore vacant; and if this Dominion forest policy is worked out along the lines suggested herein it should solve the problem presented by forest-depletion in New Zealand. He therefore most earnestly requests your consideration of the practical measures composed in the accompanying report, and would particularly emphasize the conclusions as expressed in this summary:—

- (1.) New Zealand's visible supply of timber is estimated to be between 35,000 and 60,000 million superficial feet. The annual national consumption within a generation will probably be 1,000 million feet. In the interest of national prosperity every acre of forest on absolute forest soils should be placed at once on a sustained-yield basis.
- (2.) The world's visible supply of wood useful in the arts is limited—New Zealand's timber-supply problem must be solved by *action in New Zealand*.
- (3.) A definite forest policy is recommended by which continuity of action, and a stable and competent management, may be secured for a period of years. The following is proposed:—
  - (a.) A simple effective Forest Act.
  - (b.) A Forest Service.
  - (c.) A Forest Development Fund for forest development and demarcation.
  - (d.) The administration and management of all the Crown forests and forest lands by the Forest Service.
  - (e.) A progressive timber-sale policy.
  - (f.) Adequate facilities for technical education in New Zealand.
  - (g.) State co-operation in private tree-growing by various means, such as equitable taxation, forest fire insurance, forest fire protection, &c.
  - (h.) The administration and management of all scenic reserves, national parks, forest reserves, forested national and educational endowments, and forested Native lands by the Forest Service.
  - (i.) A Forest Products Laboratory and Bureau of Forest Research.
  - (j.) Survey and inventory of the forests, forest resources, and soils of the Dominion.
  - (k.) An economic survey of the timber industry and of the timber-using industries.
  - (l.) The administration and protection of the fish, bird, and game resources by the Forest Service.

Upon these proposals may be built a forest policy that should ensure the permanent and adequate supply of timber for New Zealand. Moreover, *the adoption of the principles involved should result in immediate increased forest revenue to the State, instead of increasing the drain on the public Treasury.* (There is abundant indication that the cost of operation should constitute a smaller and smaller percentage of the revenues yielded by the Forest Service.)

The writer hopes, for the sake of the continued prosperity and welfare of New Zealand, that his attempt to bring about a better state of affairs as expressed in this report will receive more than a hard-boiled and indifferent interest, and that the proposed remedial legislation will reach the statute-book in a sound, virile, and workable form.

L. MACINTOSH ELLIS.