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Cover: Mount Sefton and the Douglas Glacier, Westland National Park. Himalayan tahr reached plague proportions and devastated alpine vegetation in this remote and spectacular valley until controlled by commercial helicopter hunting in the late 1960s (see article page 2).

Photograph G. McSweeney

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Editorial

I would like to say thank you. This is the last editorial I shall write for *Forest & Bird* as President of our Society. During my term of eight years much has happened. Some of it by conflict, but most by agreement, negotiation and understanding. The Society has by structure and inclination been loathe to commit itself to petitions and court cases, but has willingly initiated or joined in the battle when nought else availed. The forests of the West Coast and Central North Island were the battlefields. The conflict is probably not yet over. I would particularly like to thank our allies, the smaller conservation groups, the staunch members of our Executive, Council and our Society at large. I would also like to thank those who often unwittingly found themselves our adversaries. They included Ministers of the Crown, Government Departments, sawmillers and in some cases local communities. In my experience these people often had great sympathy for our aims. Problems were accentuated by timing and inability to find means to a common end. Fortunately in some cases solutions have been arrived at that have taken the heat out of the debate and provided a sound base for the protection of our natural environment.

On the other hand very substantial advances and progress in furthering the great ideals of our Society have been made by softer approaches. By this I mean by submissions, negotiations, discussions and the marshalling of public opinion

by education and encouragement. The soft approach as I call it takes an immense amount of time and effort in research, publicity and organisation. For me it is the much preferred option. So it is to those who have participated in this way that I offer especial thanks. To the persuaders and the persuaded. Conservation's friends are everywhere, some are in unlikely places. It is quite impossible for me to list them all. So I trust that those of you who read this will readily recognise who you are.

On a personal note I would like to take the risk of picking out those upon whom I have most relied and who have unstintingly helped me. First I would like to thank my two predecessors, Roy Nelson and John Jerram. Each in his own special way deserves the warmest gratitude of all of us. All past and present staff, Executive and Council members would be deservedly named but I mention those who helped me most in recent times. I wish to thank Alan Edmonds, David Underwood, John Morton and Charles Fleming.

I hope that all of you who have laboured will see the positive fruits of your efforts. The Society membership has increased dramatically in the past ten years from 14,500 to just over 40,000. We have established strong and abiding working relationships with other conservation groups. Regular meetings with Government Ministers and agencies will I hope continue and provide ready means of progress. For all this I am grateful.

A. A. T. Ellis, Q.C. President

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