



The rugged castellated outline of Tairua Hills at sundown.

Photo: G. Braithwaite

grove that Forest and Bird walking parties have enjoyed for many years. They now face competition from large truck and trailer units on their walks. Monowai ore would be transported to Maratoto further down the coast for processing.

The Crusader share prospectus envisages five such mines.

The Company has already antagonised the local residents by discolouring the stream that supplies the town's water. At one stage seventy and eighty year olds staged a picket at the stream ford, and a community action group is closely monitoring developments. Crusader's E.I.R. is also being prepared at the present time.

Further mining developments can be expected as prospecting programmes are completed. All of these will have significant and detrimental impact. Are the legal procedures adequate to identify and stop unacceptable proposals.

The law

Before a mine can begin operation — and a licence is usually for a period of 49 years — statutory consents include :

- ☐ water rights under the Water and Soil Conservation Act 1967
- ☐ a mining licence under the provisions of the Mining Act 1971

In addition, an Environmental Impact Report *may* be required. This is up to the appropriate Ministers to determine.

The E.I.R. is merely a description of the mine development and a preliminary assessment of the likely environmental effects. The hearing before the Planning Tribunal is critically important. It is the only opportunity to put the claims made by the mining applicant to the test of detailed cross-examination. Many are worried that the criteria or statutory considerations to which the Tribunal must have regard are themselves inadequate. They may not strike a reasonable balance between the needs of conservation and the demands for development.

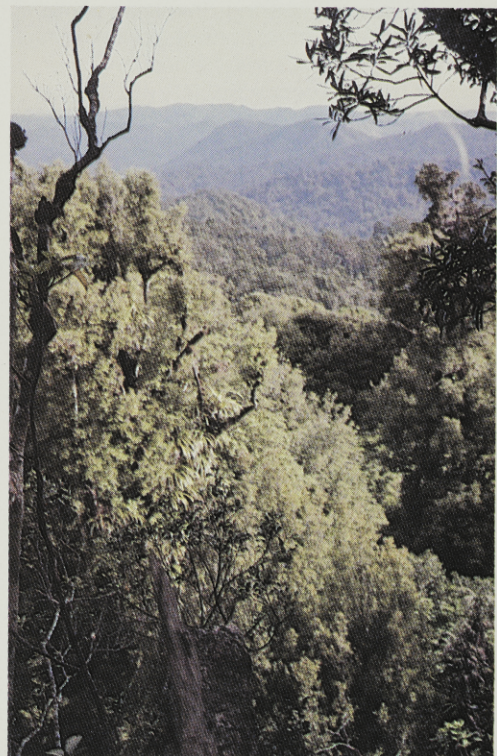
There is further concern at the apparent pro-development disposition of the Tribunal itself.

The environment movement

From the beginning of the 1980's drive for mining, local activists have been strong. One of the multinationals has acknowledged a greater resistance on the Coromandel than they have encountered anywhere else in the world.

A coalition of local groups, knit together as the Peninsula Watchdog Organisation was able to generate the political heat required to get the Mining Act amended in 1981, and to make New Zealand aware of the gravity and extent of the threat.

Other active groups have been Auckland Minewatch, Waikato Watchdog, the Physical Environment Association of the Coromandel, and the Coromandel section



Descending into the Kauaeranga Valley from Crosbies Clearing.

Photo: G. Braithwaite

Crossing the Waiomu Stream.

Photo: G. Braithwaite

that Forest and Bird is deeply interesting in.

The end of the prospecting stage is moreover approaching. Phase Two is now beginning, with several actual proposals moving towards implementation. The biggest is at Waihi, where the giant U.S. corporation Amax plans an open-cast mine, in Martha Hill, right on the edge of town. A mining licence will be applied for later this year and an Environmental Impact Report (E.I.R.) is being currently prepared.

Options for tailings and overburden include dumping at sea (as supported by the Waihi Borough Council) filling a valley, or retaining on flat land. This last would use 110 hectares of productive farmland, covered to a depth of 35 metres.

A New Zealand company, Crusader Minerals N.Z. Ltd, formed by ex-employees of two of the multinationals, will seek permission later this year for an underground mining operation at Monowai, near Waiomu on the Thames Coast and within the State Forest Park. This would be in the next valley to the magnificent kauri

