

# BOARD TO DIRECT SHOOTING?

GORE

A suggestion that the Fiordland National Park Board could well consider contracting out and directing the shooting of deer in the park itself, with the profits being channelled into the public purse, was put forward yesterday by a member of the park board, Mr Jack McKenzie.

Commenting that he had a high regard for the reliability and efficiency for the management and staff of Alpine Helicopters, the firm which at present has the sole shooting rights in the park, Mr McKenzie said it now appeared as though the venison in the park was to be regarded as a public resource.

Having the board itself control the shooting operations would, Mr McKenzie said, be a way of avoiding "undesirable aspects" in what was a large industry.

Profits could be used for control work and park development.

Mr McKenzie said most of the present problems came from the "insane" section of the National Parks Act which called for the complete extermination of introduced species in parks.

He said to achieve this through helicopters and professional hunters, would only lead to pollution and could do more harm than good.

Describing Fiordland as one of the best parks in the world, Mr McKenzie said most would surely agree that a few wild deer were "quite appropriate."

He also remarked on the success which seemed to be coming the way of the commercial operators in confrontation with the Government.

"They seemed to have got more in a few weeks than we

who have been fighting for the preservation of the wapiti have had in 20 years," he said.

## Venison Fiordland

Sir, — I feel disappointed that so few seem to have come to the defence of Alpine Helicopters' operations in Fiordland.

This firm through hard work and enterprise has built up a large and efficient operation which I understand has been entirely to the satisfaction of the Fiordland National Park Board. Now it would seem that jealous competitors want to undermine public confidence in the firm and its employees.

The firm pioneered the helicopter recovery of venison. In Fiordland, in an attempt to meet the authorities' requirements, it modified two coasters — at great cost — so that they would act as helipad, fuel depot, crew accommodation and venison freezers. Apparently this venture was not successful and so the vessels were sold and their place taken by high performance jet helicopters.

In 1970 and 1971 Alpine was the firm that carried out the experimental campaign to try to stop red deer from infiltrating into the wapiti area. In 1973 they co-operated with the Park Board, Forest Service and New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association in an effort to cull out red deer and hybrids from the whole of the wapiti area.

Many of us were involved in this campaign which extended over a period of nearly three months. I am sure that all those taking part thought the effort had been a huge success, and I would say we were all impressed with the friendly co-operation of the firm. The Park Board even benefited financially to the extent of some \$70,000 I believe.

In 1974 when the board engaged an outside firm the operation was a failure. However, in fairness, it has to be stated that this was the period of large scale illegal helicopter hunting in the wapiti area, and the remainder of the park.

It would seem a miscarriage of justice if some of the other operators were to benefit by being allowed into the park as a result of the campaign to discredit Alpine Helicopters and the Park Board.

W. J. Gerken,  
President,  
Gore and District branch  
N.Z.D.A.

## Company Meets Mr Young

Alpine Helicopters' Ltd attitude relating to the Fiordland National Park and venison recovery were put to the Minister of Lands, Mr V. S. Young, by the company's managing director, Mr T. W. Wallis, and Mr R. D. Spary, general manager, at a meeting in Wellington yesterday.

Mr Wallis outlined Alpine Helicopters' position, emphasizing the expertise of its staff, and their long experience as pilots and shooters gained in the area.

Mr Young was told that he must look at a form of licensing that would give the industry long-term stability and control.

Towards the end of the meeting Mr Wallis asked for reassurance that Mr Young would ensure the investigation into deer recovery operations in the park were thorough and covered every aspect.

# Criticism Of Park Board

More criticism of the Fiordland National Park Board came yesterday from Mr Dave Richardson, a private helicopter operator and Te Anau agent for Consolidated Traders Ltd.

He was adding to statements made over the last few weeks, regarding licences for deer culling on a commercial scale, and venison recovery operations in the park.

Mr Richardson criticized a park board member, Mr Jack McKenzie, for statements made this week.

"The continuance of misleading articles in the paper has intensified to a degree that some truth must be told," said Mr Richardson.

"We have read a number of articles which mention the illegal shooting of wapiti. If wapiti were shot, where were they sold?"

"Consolidated Traders has been accused of taking wapiti, yet the company won't buy samba deer, let alone wapiti," he said.

### Rangers Informed

"As agent for Consolidated Traders, I informed local park rangers when I loaded deer out during the so-called war of 1973 to the present, of which there were many times.

"However, I still had to work under the watchful eyes of park rangers and board members from the water tower which overlooks the freezer installations," said Mr Richardson.

"I would like to point out that no wapiti were ever found on these premises or ever likely to, yet Mr McKenzie still persists that the so-called poachers have shot the wapiti to such a low level that he wants this year's trophy shoot cancelled.

"With the heavy shooting pressure Alpine has put on the wapiti area," Mr Richardson said — referring to Alpine Helicopters Ltd, the only company presently holding a licence for recovery operations in the park — "and with the leaving of velvet there as well as inexperienced personnel to identify wapiti from red deer, I can understand fully why Mr McKenzie wants the shoot put off.

### Investigation

"There is an investigation under way at the request of the board to establish the current situation regarding the animals and vegetation in this area," said Mr Richardson.

"If Mr McKenzie would stop coming out in defence of a monopoly we could all be able to give more support to the wapiti situation as it really is.

"During the past 18 months, Alpine has had a free hand and approval from the board, to enter and shoot whenever they please. This approval coincided with the transfer of rangers

who had been delegated supervision of the wapiti area.

"It is no wonder Mr McKenzie does not see many wapiti when he flies around as these animals are not dumb, and would seek cover following the continual helicopter harassment.

### No Mention

"Mr McKenzie is concerned at the low number of wapiti observed on the tops, yet no mention is made of animals removed to Inverlaid deer farm, and subsequent losses, plus there recent attempt to catch good wapiti, and further such losses.

"Even the average keen deerstalker knows that the best wapiti are found in the heavily forested areas," he said, "so if Mr McKenzie wants to see good wapiti he should consider observing on foot.

"We are sick and tired of hearing these reports from totally unqualified people of little hunting experience, who fly around the park in helicopters and who can't observe animals.

"This seems to be the pattern employed by Alpine in order to influence those in authority who have to make reports on animals in the park, and who do not have the necessary time to do it thoroughly.

### Production Figures

"Recent production figures by Alpine refute such reports and the very fact that this production cannot be handled by the new Mossburn factory indicates an inquiry is urgently needed in all aspects of the game industry," said Mr Richardson.

"There are too many departments and organizations involved or working independently and all concerned about deer in one way or another," he added.

Now Mr McKenzie advocates the Fiordland National Park Board should consider directing shooting of deer in the park, so as to avoid undesirable aspects. This is ridiculous and would immediately turn what he considers a profitable industry, into a Government-sponsored venture which would further laden the taxpayer."

Mr Richardson finished: "I wonder if Mr McKenzie could tell us who paid for the 12 hours flying?" referring to helicopter flights by Mr McKenzie over the park, to try to spot wapiti.



# More Operators To Shoot in Park

April 1 should see more than one helicopter operator culling deer in the Fiordland National Park following a meeting in Wellington yesterday between Southland operators and the Minister of Lands, Mr V. S. Young.

After the meeting, Mr Young announced that a new scheme was being prepared by the Forest Service and would be submitted to the Fiordland National Park Board in the near future.

This would mean that operators, and not processors, would apply for licences.

"This noxious animal control programme will allow for more competition in the taking of game," Mr Young said.

The scheme would also concern wapiti, he said. It was hoped to retain a trophy wapiti herd, with control over its numbers.

The Minister said the initial programme would be submitted to the board, and he would be discussing it

with the chairman of the National Park Authority early next week.

At present, only two meat-processing companies, T. J. Edmonds Ltd and Game Collection Ltd, have licences for commercial deer hunting. Both contract Alpine Helicopters Ltd to kill and collect game.

This monopoly on operations in the park has upset other operators in the area for some years.

The controversy was brought to the fore again recently when it was announced that Alpine Helicopters had been given a three-month extension of its licence — this extension expires on March 31.

The announcement was

greeted with anger by the independent operators and they issued an ultimatum to the Minister that they would go into the park by this Saturday unless the situation was resolved.

At yesterday's meeting, the independent operators seemed satisfied with Mr Young's assurance that there would be more competition in the park for commercial deer hunting.

A spokesman for the group, Mr E. J. Meredith, said in Wellington after the meeting that the threatened ultimatum was "not operative now."

But, Mr Meredith added, he still thought Mr Young had a lot to learn about what

was going on in the park.

Mr Young said last night he did not accept the ultimatum.

"I will regard most seriously any infringement of the law of civil aviation regulations until the matter is properly resolved," he said.

However, he was sure the operators appreciated this.

## Not All Satisfied

Mr Young said he was not unaware that the new scheme would not be accepted by everyone involved in the situation.

"The noxious control programme . . . will satisfy most people, but won't satisfy everyone," he said.

"The programme will be fair and competitive, and any competition must be orderly."

Mr Young said he had the power to recommend to the National Parks Authority, which dictates general policy to the park board, what should be done in the area. However, the park board had the right to administer details of the policy.

"I hope it can be achieved by discussion and negotiation, rather than by direction from me," he said.

Mr Young said yesterday's discussion took place in an atmosphere of co-operation, as did a meeting with one of the game processors.

## Agreement

The Minister said he discussed with the processor the fact that the licences would be with the operator and not the processing firms, and there was general agreement on that point.

Mr Young has yet to meet other groups and organizations associated with the game industry, but he does not think that such meetings will delay the introduction of the new scheme.

There should be competition in the shooting and collection of game in the park on April 1, he said.

Mr Young said he thought the scheme should work for 12 months, and then be reviewed.

Although Parliament had to approve the legislation, a temporary scheme could operate until the House sat, he said.

## 'Lion's Share To Alpine'

**Some helicopter venison recovery operators insist that Alpine Helicopters has been given the lion's share of Fiordland National Park and an additional shooting right by the New Zealand Forest Service.**

Mr E. Meredith, spokesman for some of the operators, said last night that Alpine Helicopters Ltd has been given 80 per cent of the shooting area of the park, leaving only 20 per cent for the rest.

The park is cut into three areas, north, east and west. Alpine was allotted the western area, while other operators who had applied for licences would be able to shoot over the rest.

However, Mr Meredith said he had information that Alpine had been given rights to shoot in the Murchison Mountains, one of the special areas set aside. He said this would give Alpine an advantage and additional area.

Mr Ross Usmar, conservator of forests in Otago and Southland, said this was not the case. No aerial shooting was allowed

in this area. All Alpine would be doing was to land and pick up Forest Service control officers who would be involved in search and destroy operations, which would mean that no animals would be lifted from the Murchison Mountains, an area set aside for the preservation of takahe.

Mr Meredith said certain valleys had been set aside for Alpine which should be in the area allocated to the other operators. He said he was also keeping a watchful eye on who would get the rights for shooting over the wapiti block.

Mr J. P. Harty, chairman of the Fiordland National Park Board, said he was at a loss to understand why Mr Meredith thought special valleys had been given to Alpine Helicopters.

"There has been no discussion about the wapiti block, and this would be subject to consideration by the recreational and hunting advisory committee," said Mr Harty.

When the decision was made to cut up the park into three areas for venison recovery it was said by the board that the park consisted of three million acres.

One million of these was allotted to operators who had applied for licences when they were advertised, and 1.4 million acres was given to Alpine to shoot over. The balance consisted of special areas, such as the wapiti and takahe blocks.



# Six Helicopters In Action

The Fiordland National Park Board's new policy on helicopter venison recovery operations in two sections of the park began quietly yesterday.

Eight companies or individuals registered on Wednesday to shoot in the two blocks, and these involved 13 helicopters.

Each pays an interim fee of \$5 a month per aircraft, but this will be increased shortly.

The park's chief ranger, Mr

Wally Sander, said last night that he believed six private helicopters had gone into the park yesterday, although there could have been "one or two more."

"I don't think there was a high tally of animals taken out," Mr Sanders said.

They were shot mainly in areas that Alpine Helicopters Ltd, which previously had been the only company licensed to shoot in the park, had not shot in consideration of foot hunters, who had been shooting in these areas for some considerable time.

The new policy will end today until April 23, because for the intermediary days, the traditional recreation shooting period will take place.

After that, the new policy will resume.

Alpine Helicopters has been allocated a third block in the park.

## Fiordland Park

Sir, — Having just taken part in the Fiordland National Park wapiti trophy shoot I feel I must protest at the way the present Park Board administration of this area is being conducted. This area I understand is supposed to be set aside for the pleasure of the people of New Zealand. Not only are trophy heads near extinct but the deer themselves have been reduced to such an extent that it will take numerous seasons of relatively undisturbed breeding (5 years) before another trophy shoot should be held and all commercial shooting by private companies should be stopped immediately, with no exceptions.

The Park Board or Forest Service should purchase a helicopter or helicopters and control herd growth, recovering and selling all carcasses with the funds from this going to pay for the operation and all surplus money to be used to help finance Park Board operations which should be in the interests of all New Zealanders.

Also Park Board members should be elected by the people of New Zealand in an open election with candidates putting forth their ideas and beliefs so we would be putting into control of this very important area people who have a genuine interest and concern for this wonderful park.

True Kiwi

# Game Recovery Should Be Policed

(P.A.)

DUNEDIN

Submissions and evidence relating to policing of the regulations for helicopter meat recovery operations, and the need for regulation through licensing, were made to the Air Services Licensing Authority in Dunedin yesterday.

The public hearing began in Wellington last Friday before Mr J. H. O. Tiller (chairman), Air Commodore R. J. Cohen, Mr G. K. Grocott, and Mr P. A. Hansen, and concluded in Dunedin yesterday.

Evidence was presented by Mr W. P. Terry yesterday that runholders in West Otago and northern Southland had, over recent years, experienced problems because of illegal operations by helicopter pilots. They shot over land without permission, contrary to the regulations, and this led to problems with stock being scared.

There was difficulty in identifying the helicopters involved because of the large areas concerned.

He cited one case where one particular operator had been convicted five times, and had three prosecutions pending, yet still retained his licence.

## Markings

He asked that all helicopters be marked so that they could be seen and identified at 500 ft, and that the Department of Civil Aviation be more diligent in policing the regulations.

Court penalties were inadequate, he said. The deer concerned were causing no problems, and were of benefit to recreational ground shooters.

The Fiordland National Park Board submitted that standard terms and conditions should be imposed for licences for game recovery operators, and that there should be special terms for game recovery within the park.

The board was responsible for seeing that deer and other introduced fauna were as far as possible exterminated. Its present policy was to aim for the ultimate extermination within the park of browsing mammals, with the aid of the New Zealand Forest Service. Its immediate objective was to control these animals so that vegetation was not adversely affected.

The helicopter had a definite role in the shooting and recovery of deer, but it was essential their use be controlled.

Unauthorized deer recovery in the past had been a serious problem. While the board had extensive powers under the National Parks Act and by-laws, they were difficult to enforce because of limited finance, and small ranger staff. Penalties imposed on those caught seemed to have little if any deterrent value.

## Special Conditions

The submissions called for more stringent provisions in the Civil Aviation Act, and a number of special conditions imposed by way of licence in national parks.

Mr C. I. H. Forsyth said in evidence that in one decade animal numbers had declined so much that in many areas, including Mt Aspiring National Park, it was not worth visiting hunters looking for sport.

Speaking as an individual amateur hunter, he asked if it was right that the recreational shooter should be penalized to that extent.

There was a threat to the vegetation of mountain lands because of the fecundity of deer which would follow in areas where commercial operations were no longer immediately viable.

In evidence, Mr R. D. Spary, manager of Alpine Helicopters Ltd, said his company would support any controls which would lead to an improvement on the present situation.

Whenever there were too many helicopters available for game recovery there were problems. Whenever numbers were reduced standards improved.

Helicopters should be licensed for game operations, he said. Search, shooting, recovery and transport were essential parts of game recovery operation.

The definition of what constituted hire and reward needed to be re-examined, and if necessary altered.

He suggested the possibility of licensing game recovery operators in given areas, similar to legislation under the Transport Act. This would take the heat out of the migratory practices as at present. He hoped the forestry department could be of help in deciding how many licences were needed in what areas.

## Good Record

It should be compulsory for existing operators to establish that they had a good record of reliability, consistent production and efficiency, and had access to adequate back-up services. If they could do this they should receive an automatic licence.

Submissions from World Wide Helicopters Ltd indicated that game recovery operations were pioneered by licensed operators, and later unlicensed operators had come in.

Unfortunately some indulged in irresponsible and dangerous activities.

Some system of game licences was desirable, as different from other air services.

The company suggested an independent tribunal to establish the number of bona fide operators, and to define the number and capacity of aircraft needed to service game operations. This body, independent of the Air Services Licensing Authority, would be responsible for issuing game operations licences.

As far as misconduct was concerned, the framework was already there. It needed policing by the Civil Aviation Department.

In all 14 companies or groups gave evidence or submissions to the authority, with only two small operators seeing need for some regulation of game recovery operations through standard terms and conditions.

The authority reserved its findings.





First light this morning, saw two large areas of the Fiordland national park opened up to private operators, following months of intensive pressure on the park board to open up the park, which up till now has been the almost exclusive aerial domain of Alpine Helicopters Ltd. As this picture indicates, some impressive new machinery has been acquired for venison recovery and deer shooting.

### Jet Hunters

Sir, — I was disgusted to see yet another example of how Alpine Helicopters is favoured when I saw the picture on the front page of Thursday's morning edition.

Could you please give answers to the following questions:

1. Have Alpine hired the fighter bombers from the R.N.Z.A.F.? If so, how is this allowed to happen and at what rate are they hired out?

2. If Alpine own them how did they get the import licences?

3. Have Civil Aviation given special permission to fly without identification letters and below 500 feet.

4. How can the Park Board allow these planes to roar around the park when the area is supposed to be a haven of peace.

This would seem another perfect example of the collusion between the Government, Civil Aviation and the Fiordland Park Board to protect the Alpine monopoly against the private operator.

### One-legged Deer

[Yesterday, April 1, not all things were as they seemed. — Ed., S.T.]

### Game Collection

Sir, — As a passenger on the Wairua last Friday, I noticed about 38 frozen deer as cargo from Stewart Island. On arrival at Bluff a Mossburn game collection truck was on hand.

I understood that game had to be delivered to game processors within 12 hours after death complete with lungs, liver and so on, left in the carcass. The deer mentioned were clean gutted. Sir, could you advise me, through your column, if restrictions still apply, and, if they do, could someone explain how game can be delivered to game collectors under the conditions mentioned?

### Deer Me

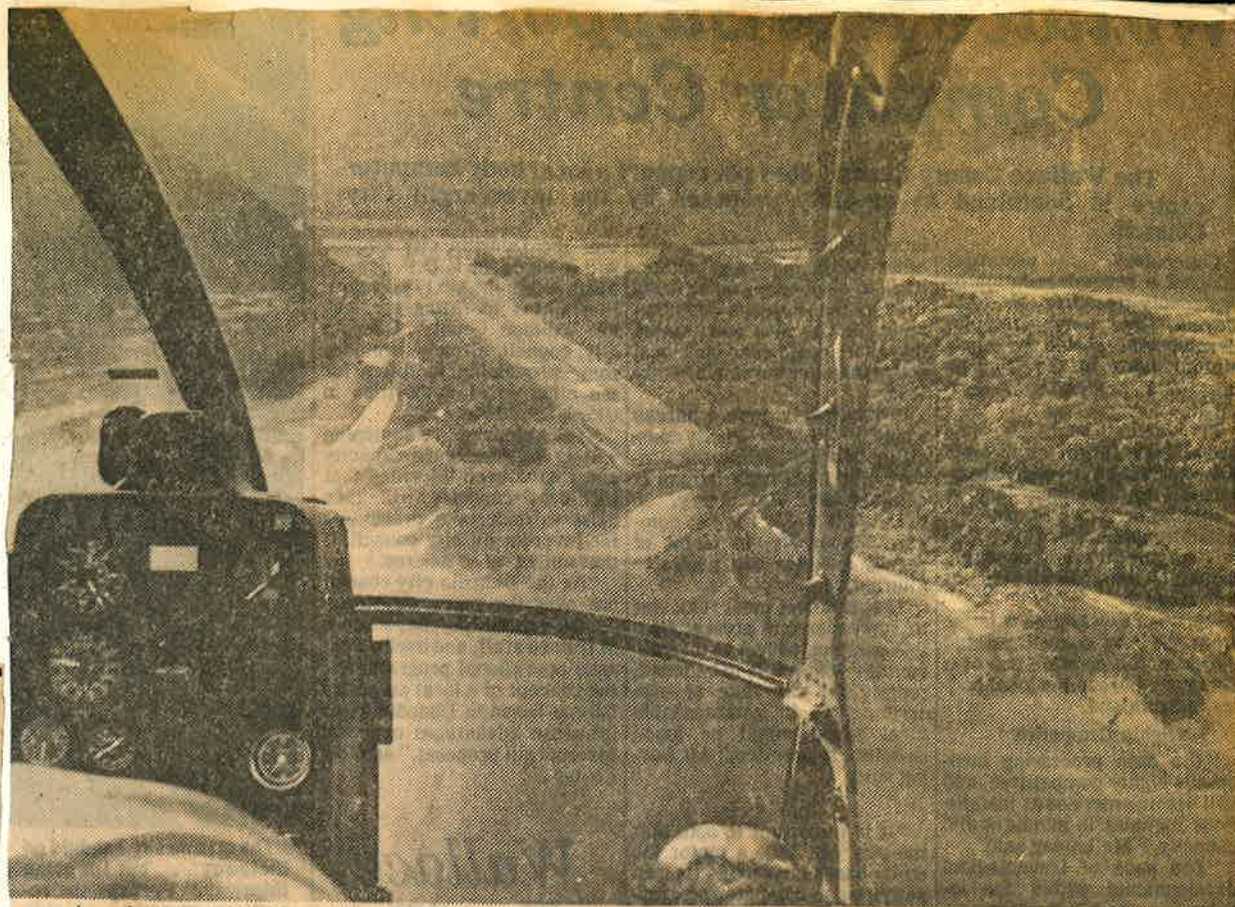
[Asked to comment, a spokesman for the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries said the carcasses mentioned definitely did not go to the Mossburn game packing house and the ministry knew

nothing about them. No frozen carcasses would be accepted at Mossburn for processing, but the ministry did not have control over all deer killed, only those destined for export. Carcasses were gutted as a normal process, but the liver, heart, lungs and kidneys were left attached to the carcass.]



## Game Hunters Of The Air

Helicopter venison recovery has been in the news lately but regardless of any controversy, the ariel recovery business is an exciting one which involves magnificent scenery, split second judgement and able-bodied men. These pictures, by staff photographer Barry Harcourt, show some of the grandeur of the country the men shoot in and the machinery on which their lives depend.



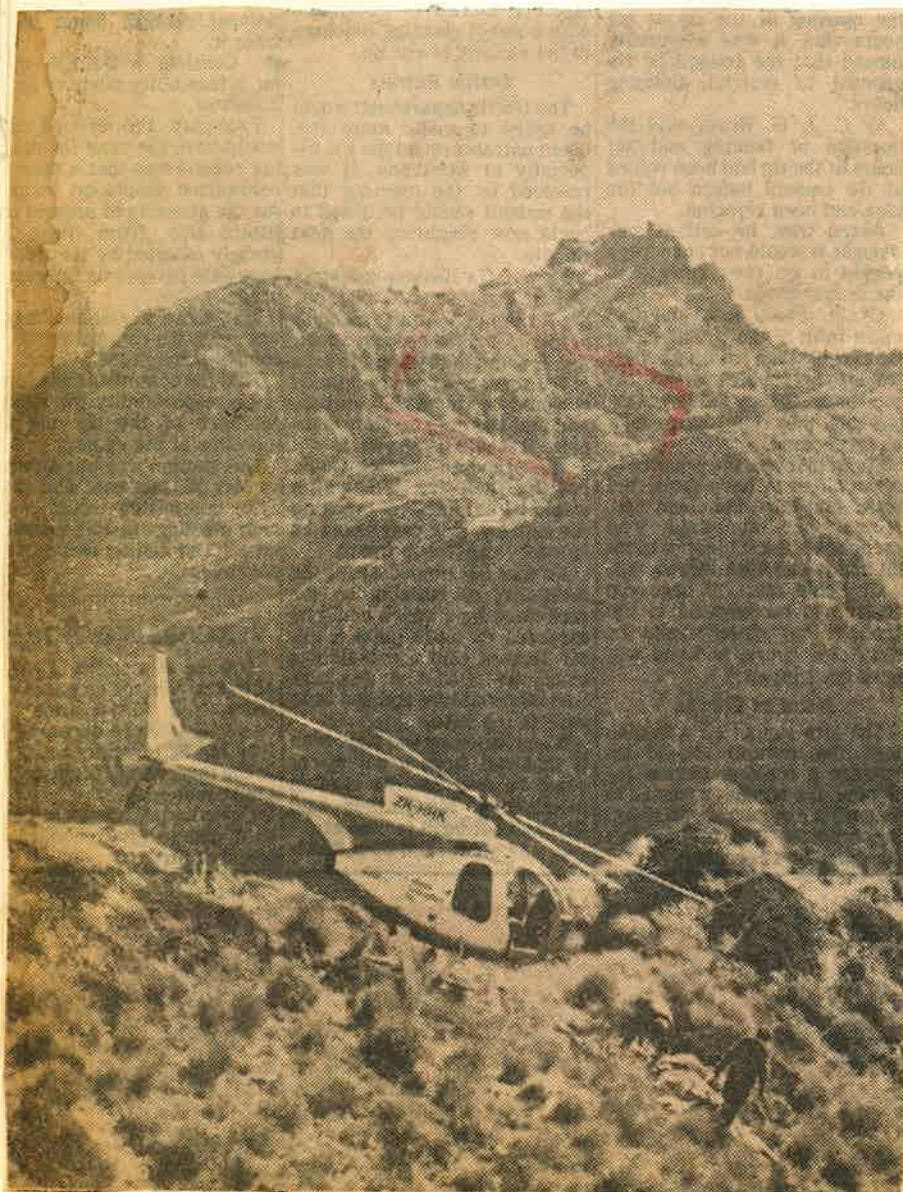
A welcome sight after a hard day's shooting in the park — the Milford airstrip promises hot food and a warm bed.

Hughes 500 jet helicopter pilot, Dick Deaker, prepares to leave the Milford airstrip on an early morning shoot.





Hovering in the jaws of a ravine in the Fiordland National Park, helicopter venison hunters (right) attach a line to some dead deer.



A hazardous landfall in the heart of Fiordland to recover carcasses shot a few minutes earlier.



An early morning fuel up, before a day's shooting in the Fiordland National Park.





Sid Deaker prepares to sling deer carcasses beneath his brother's waiting helicopter for transportation to the freezer at Milford.

## Noxious Animal Control

QUEENSTOWN

In his noxious animals sub-committee report to the Mount Aspiring National Park Board at Wanaka on Saturday, Mr M. C. Kershaw, of Invercargill, said the overall noxious animal situation in the Aspiring Park was favourable, with adequate intensity being maintained by commercial, recreational and official hunting operations, to hold animal populations at a level consistent with board policy.

Relating to recreational hunting, information gleaned from hunting parties revealed fair to good results were obtained.

Official control measures involved follow-up ground hunting operations which had been maintained over the greater part of the goat-infested country, within and adjacent to the Aspiring Park, and those operations will continue over the winter season, Mr Kershaw said.

### Thar Reported

Aerial inspections had been made of sectors within the West Matukituki Valley following reported sightings of an animal, believed to have been a thar.

No sightings were made.

Other inspections were made over the catchment areas of the Young, McKerrow and Bealy Ranges, in an endeavour to establish the southern limits of thar. Those investigations are continuing.



## Fiordland Park

Sir, — I consider it important that the public be made aware of the situation which now exists in the Fiordland National Park following the granting of permits to additional helicopter operators at the request of the Minister of Lands and Forests, Mr Young.

The intensified hunting by air which has resulted from this latest arrangement can only lead to more competition amongst operators, the necessity for more ground shooting to supply the helicopters, and greater danger to recreational shooters, trampers and school parties.

Whilst considerable control is maintained over the activities of persons using the park for sport and recreation through the records kept in the headquarters of the Park Board at Te Anau and Clifden, this is not so with the helicopter operators who may roam anywhere at any time within their boundaries.

Alpine Helicopters have been granted a permit to operate in an area seldom hunted by sportsmen. The numerous private operators are jammed into the areas which are usually hunted by sportsmen and visited by the majority of park users. The intensified hunting in these areas promises little hope for the sportsman in relation to safety and availability of game.

Whilst Mr Young attempts to justify his intervention in this matter by stating that the deer need to be reduced in numbers, he has little if any scientific evidence that would support this. The last detailed surveys were carried out prior to intensified helicopter shooting and the more recent survey has not yet been completed.

Mr Young simply bowed down to the pressure applied by the private operators who had threatened publicly to take the law into their own hands and operate in the park without permission. It is conceivable then that such lawlessness still exists and that those in authority are prepared to turn our nation-

al park into an arena of commercial exploitation at the expense of the safety and welfare of the general park user.

Surely this situation is unacceptable to most people.

Jim Smith Jnr.

## Fiordland Park

Sir, — I agree wholeheartedly with the views of your correspondent who recently stated that the National Park Board should own and operate its own helicopters for game recovery with the profits going back into the park. If the present system continues it appears that anybody who purchases a helicop-

ter in the future will be able to apply for, and be granted as of right, a licence to hunt deer in the park. Obviously the situation has now reached the stage where firm control must be exercised and the large profits at present being carved up by the present operators should be channelled back into the park so that all may benefit not just the present privileged few.

The Eagle

Mr Evans then went on to describe the foresters' method of the preparation for planting by line dozing.

"Start at the top of a hill with a bulldozer and drive straight down to the bottom, windrowing the topsoil to the side and exposing the subsoil.

"Soil conservators don't like the practice too much because if the land was subjected to a high intensity rainfall there would be a disaster.

"But even with an ordinary rainfall, the streams and rivers now turn to a yellow, muddy flow.

"But the foresters are still doing it because it's more economical than other methods and because the public haven't yelled loud enough," Mr Evans said.

## Practice Seen As Damaging

When will catchment authorities stop turning a blind eye to the Forest Service and private forest companies? asked the president of the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association, Mr A. S. D. Evans during his annual presidential address at Napier yesterday.

He outlined the case of a Christchurch contractor who was fined \$250 for discharging waste-water containing silt into the Cashmere stream last April.

## Land Zoning Questioned

Catchment authorities, justifying the wholesale removal of deer from zoned VIII land because of erosion, came under criticism from the president of the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association, Mr A. S. D. Evans.

In his annual address at Napier yesterday, Mr Evans said eroded zone VIII land was the criterion for passing the buck in the numbers game for wild animals from catchment authorities to the Forest Service, to the Lands Department, and the Lands Settlement Board.

"The Lands and Survey Department don't regard their unoccupied Crown lands as critically eroding, the Forest Service don't regard State forest reserves as critically eroding, but the catchment authorities, who have never yet placed a conservator in the field to carry out a detailed land inventory, have placed a broad brush classification on all their zone VIII land and then have tried to justify the removal of one animal species off the land.

"The system needs a critical reappraisal," Mr Evans said. He said much of the State forest, forest parks and areas marked for recreation herds were zoned class VIII.

"The term 'critical catchments' has been bandied about, and all paid employees use it as if they knew what it was all about.

"Now, what is critical about erosion in New Zealand?" Mr Evans asked.

He agreed that catchments in the North Island's Ruahine Ranges were, indeed, critically eroding.

"But to put them in the same class as the South Island high country, where most of the shingle slides never reach the stream beds below, shows a lack of discrimination and interpretation."

## Warning For Stalkers

Dangers have been seen to deerstalkers from a caucus committee report on noxious animals published in August 1974.

Recommendation No 28 states that research into deer farming be extended to deer farming under free range conditions on land of low productivity.

In his annual address at Napier yesterday the national president of the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association, Mr A. S. D. Evans, said that if implemented, a situation could develop involving free range deer populations as alarming as the plight the cattle farmer is in today.

The deer farming regulations do not stipulate how long the deer have to be kept in captivity before they are killed.

Mr Evans said that with free range deer being used to stock deer farms, they could expect breeding stock to be built up and relieve the pressure from animals in free range.

"Should the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries be as ruthless and shortsighted on deer as they have been on cattle numbers, we may find the farms being stocked continually from free range conditions, the animals held for a few weeks for testing and then slaughtered.

"The so-called free range animals will then be jealously protected as a source of supply and farmed deliverately to stock the six foot enclosures," he said.

Mr Evans said there would be more deer in free range conditions than had been seen many years and recreational shooters would not be able to hunt them.

"When the farming community presses Government for regulations to implement recommendation No 28, the Deerstalkers Association had better

## Game Collection

Sir, — I read with surprise and concern the answer to "Deer Me" by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. To deny that the deer went to Mossburn for processing is staggering. Can the spokesman tell us what the Mossburn game collection truck met the ferry for? And can he tell us where the Stewart Island meat hunter has his outlet for deer carcasses? Also, if frozen carcasses aren't accepted for export, where do all the deer held in freezers in Southland and Otago go?

Deer are sometimes, I believe, held for a week or more before being collected.

I will ask are any hygiene regulations

on game meat in existence other than tongue in cheek?

I think these meat inspectors who hammer us farmers at freezing works should explain the double standards.

Concerned Cockle

Heriot

[This letter was referred to the spokesman for The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries who commented on the original letter referred to by our correspondent and he said: "I have nothing further to add to the facts I have already stated."]

mes, Wednesday, July 7, 1978. 3

## REDUCTION SHOOT

The Fiordland National Park Board will start reducing numbers of red and hybrid-type deer in the wapiti area of the park today, weather permitting.

The operation is being conducted on the recommendation of the board's hunting and recreational advisory committee. It is planned to use helicopters, supported by ground shooters.

The board has agreed to the committee's request that Alpine Helicopters Ltd be contracted to carry out the work. Both sides of the operation are to be under the direct control and supervision of the board and its chief ranger, Mr W. Sander, and is expected to continue for up to three months.

## HELICOPTER TRESPASS STILL RIFE

(P.A.) WELLINGTON  
Trespassing by helicopters is rife, the Air Services Licensing Authority has found.

The authority does not, however, believe further legislation is necessary to control wild game recovery operators.

"We are satisfied that trespassing by a number of helicopter operators is rife and efforts to police illegal activities by pilots and helicopter owners has met with little success," the authority's report on a hearing held in April said.

Hearings were held by the authority in both Wellington and Dunedin to determine whether tougher regulations were needed to control professional game recovery operators.

Forest Service, Ministry of Transport, helicopter companies and hunting organizations made submissions. The Ministry told the authority the \$10 million earned annually from game exports was being wasted by the high accident rate among helicopters. The number of helicopters in New Zealand had risen from 40 in March, 1972, to 134, two years later, the Ministry said.

## Poaching Of Wapiti In Fiordland

Wapiti poaching in the Fiordland National Park had been detected during the annual wapiti trophy shoot in April, the assistant chief ranger, Mr A. Gragg, said last night, and in some areas poachers were aided by the crews of fishing boats.

Mr Gragg was reporting to the park board on the annual shoot.

"From reports it appears that no outstanding heads were taken, as regards the shoot," he said.

But, "some parties reported signs of pre-trophy shoot poaching, which is difficult to control, especially on the coast where they are aided and abetted by fishing boats."

There were indications of concentrations of wapiti still in some areas," Mr Gragg added, and "it is necessary that control measures be implemented as soon as possible."



# Deer Best For Carcass

HAMILTON (PA).—Deer are better converters of feed into meat than either cattle or sheep, according to the results of research work carried out at the Invermay Agricultural Research Centre.

In a paper presented to the twenty-eighth Ruakura farmers conference in Hamilton yesterday, a scientist at the centre, Dr K. R. Drew, said experiments with 90 red deer hinds farmed over the past three years proved deer were not only better converters of feed into meat, but produced the lean type of meat the world was calling for.

The performance rate of 800 kilograms of carcass a hectare in six months compared with 650kg a hectare for Friesian steers reared at the Winchmore Irrigation Research Station.

"The deer performance is obviously very attractive and the potential on some high-producing land can only be speculated with recorded stocking rates of over 60 a hectare," Dr Drew said.

## 90 p.c. LEAN

The reason for the good deer performance, he said, was almost certainly in the nature of the carcass composition, where about 90 per cent of the gain was in lean meat and very little in expensively-produced fat.

"Early evidence with growing deer farmed on high fertility soil indicates that meat production in both quantity and efficiency compares more than favourably with the best pastoral beef and lamb production systems," he said.

Evidence from taste panels showed there was no difference between the farmed and wild deer for flavour.

But there were two areas of "concern" which could be limiting factors in deer farming, Dr Drew said.

One was the problem of slaughter and the other how the logistics of this could be worked out in portable or fixed slaughterhouses when most farmers wanted to kill their stock at the same time.

Deer killing would have to be done in March either at the age of 15 or 27 months.

## FLUCTUATION

The second problem related to the development of markets. In the past, the wild venison industry market had had its share of fluctuating markets, but unlike other primary producing industries, there was little indication of the possible extent of markets nor was there significant international competition for farmed deer.

New Zealand had been selling feral venison to West Germany mainly from animals shot and recovered from helicopters. The numbers of deer shot in this way and value of

exported venison had ranged from 112,000 deer and \$4.7 million in 1970-71 to 64,000 and \$6 million worth of venison in the 1974-75 season. The decline had been largely due to the "drastic" reduction in deer numbers, he said.

Dr Drew predicted that, with the improvement of the quality of venison, there would be more predictable cooking characteristics.

## VENISON DISHES

"An imaginative chef should be able to confidently develop first-class venison dishes that will be essentially New Zealand in flavour and style," he said.

In theory the farmed deer would have a wide potential world market and it was probable that in future the wild venison industry would decline while the farmed or "slaughter" deer industry would expand at a "rapid and progressive rate."

Problems in handling and behaviour of the farmed deer had been overcome after some initial difficulties.

# DEER FARMING ASSESSED

The benefits of commercial deer farming for the export market were looked at in a two-hour meeting of about 20 interested farmers in the Southland Farmers' Co-operative Association Ltd conference room last night.

Speakers included Messrs Arnold Snodgrass, district appraiser for the Rural Bank and Finance Corporation, John Scandrett, sales manager for Wilson and Neill, Russell Cull, of Southland Farmers, and Robert Brooks, a deer farmer and owner-operator of New Zealand's only mobile slaughterhouse for farmed venison.

Mr Snodgrass set out the Rural Bank's policy towards would-be deer farmers.

He explained that lending for deer farmers came under the same policy as lending for any other part of the farming industry, but there were some special considerations.

The bank must first examine the available security, which is likely to be less on a deer farm than other farms, and must also consider that the deer farming industry is only very small at the moment. Care must be taken in how the industry is going to be developed.

One of the most important aspects, Mr Snodgrass said, was that the applicant must be experienced in deer-farming. Personal ability and experience counted for a lot, he added.

## Venison Exporting

Mr Scandrett outlined his firm's involvement in farming and exporting of venison, concentrating on Wilson and Neill's Mossburn processing plant.

He said the present choices for farmers in getting their venison marketed were that the deer either be shot in the field and presented to the game-processing plant as ferals, or inspected live, and processed through the mobile slaughterhouse which was operating.

At the moment, deer cannot be killed and processed at a freezing works — the Government will not allow this.

Mr Scandrett detailed the growing overseas market for New Zealand venison, especially in Australia and the United States.

The thing to watch here, he said, was that a continuity of market was necessary for these areas, particularly as venison is marketed as a luxury product.

Mr Scandrett produced figures of returns to farmers from the German venison market.

## Gross Return

The current gross return on packed weight venison, he said, was \$1.73 per pound. Taking away costs from several sectors, including weight loss, this comes down to 87 cents per pound for straight-killed meat.

But a premium of something like 20 per cent was gained by using the mobile slaughterhouse, which put the price back up to \$1.22. Take off the packing charge, and the net price return to the farmer amounts to about \$1.16 per pound for head-off, skin-on, feet-off, visceraed carcasses.

Skins were fetching \$4.50 to \$5 each, Mr Scandrett added, and on top of this were the by-products (velvet antlers and other parts), which could add up to about \$90 per stag per season.

Mr Scandrett said the possibilities of an offal market were also being looked at.

The Mossburn plant is now capable of handling about 200 deer a day. It intends to charge farmers with 50 head or less, 15 cents per packed weight pound. This drops down to 14 cents if there are more than 50 head being offered.

Mr Scandrett predicted there would be a gradual reduction in straight-culled deer in the future, but a gradual increase in the deer farming industry.

Mr Cull, for Southland Farmers, detailed the benefits individual farmers could gain from dealing through his company.

## Rebate on Profits

A rebate on profits, related to the amount of business put through by the farmer, was available if the farmer had shares in the company. It did not matter how many shares.

There was a 5½ per cent commission rate, and only farmed meat was exported by the company, which has its own export licence.

The meat is shipped to the company's overseas agents, and sold through them. Mr Cull's figure for net return to

the farmer amounted to about \$1.15 per packed weight pound, only one cent below that given by Mr Scandrett. This figure, as was Mr Scandrett's, was being looked at as conservative, rather than maximum.

He agreed that there must be a continuity of supply, and both he and Mr Scandrett agreed that their companies could deal with any amounts of head offered by farmers.

The deer handled by Southland Farmers were processed at the Mossburn Wilson and Neill plant.

Mr Brooks, owner-operator of the mobile killing house, said the main purpose of this process was to get an "ad-mortem" ticket on the deer, where an inspector could look at them while they were still alive, and they could be slaughtered straight after.

## Avoiding Stress

He explained that it was important to quieten the animals down to avoid stress, and the best way to do this was by keeping them under cover.

The deer was first stunned with a bolt gun, then stuck and bled, dressed, the offal inspected, and moved to the cooling room.

Cooling was vital, because getting the heat out of the dead animals could be very difficult.

Mr Brook's slaughterhouse employs about five men, and has handled as many as 80 deer in one day. He believed this could be increased to 100 per eight-hour day if conditions were right.

One thing which may cause problems is possible Government legislation which requires the skins to come off at this stage. This would make the slaughterhouse much more labour-intensive than it is at the moment, Mr Brooks said, and two more men would be needed.

He said the best killing time of the year was in February or early March, when the highest return could be expected.

If everyone wanted stock killed at about the same time, it would be no trouble for the slaughterhouse to work round-the-clock.



## Control Of Game Operations

In spite of a somewhat mixed start to the beginning of competitive game recovery in the eastern and northern areas of the Fiordland National Park from April this year, hundreds of deer carcasses have so far been taken out.

In his report to the monthly meeting of the park board last night, the chief ranger, Mr W. E. Sander, said all the helicopter companies concerned were represented from the beginning by at least one machine.

"The mechanics of the operation of issuing permits, furnishing of returns, etc., has now settled down and we feel that we are now also in a position, with additional staff, to manage and police these operations satisfactorily," Mr Sander said.

"One company has been consistently late in furnishing returns and renewing permits, and I would suggest that this be looked at with a view to cancelling their licence," he said.

"Another company has not carried out any work of any consequence to date, but the company has indicated that it is interested and will be commencing operations shortly."

Another company had only operated for half the period, as their machine crashed and was not flying again yet, Mr Sander said.

He added: "A further company has indicated that they intend to put their machine on the ground for the next three months and will recommence operations in September."

"In spite of this, in April 435 animals were taken out of the northern and eastern areas of the park for a total of 206 flying hours.

### 1069 Animals

"In the western area, Alpine recovered 1069 animals for a total of 374 flying hours, giving a return of 2.1 and 2.85 animals per flying hour respectively.

"In May, 293 for 145 hours (2 per hour) were recovered from the northern and eastern areas," Mr Sander said.

"By and large, while the organization has been time-consuming, the project has gone off better than expected," he said, "and with tighter field control in the future, I am confident that we can exercise reasonable control."



"It's just about hopeless," pilot Alan Bond shouts above the roar of the helicopter's engine and the scream of the whirling blades. But the driving snow stopped, and next moment the chopper was darting and diving above the rugged bushland of the Worsley valley.



Less than an hour previously these red deer were browsing on the vegetation above the Castle river in the national park in wapiti block



# War Against Deer To Protect Park

A new breed of men stalk the fastnesses of Fiordland National Park — the pilots who swoop and hover in helicopters over endless expanses of bush in search of deer which threaten the very existence of forest and tree-clad mountains.

To the purist hunter, perhaps the thought of hunting from a machine would be repugnant. He would consider the thrill of the chase on foot the main attraction.

But these aerial hunters are not there for the sport; they are there with the permission of the Fiordland National Park Board to eradicate what in a relatively short span of New Zealand's history has become a danger to the native trees and terrain — the deer.

On the other hand, even though these men are engaged in a search and destroy operation on a commercial basis, the thrill and excitement is still there.

On a typical winter's day in Te Anau, morning low cloud hung over the lake, obscuring the surrounding peaks. Ron Peacock, a park ranger assisting the noxious animals officer, busied himself at odd jobs around the park headquarters on the foreshore, waiting for the weather to clear.

In another area of the park pilot Alan Bond was using his Hughes 500 helicopter to move equipment.

## Clouds Parted

The clouds slowly dispersed, revealing snowcapped peaks above the bush-lined shoreline, and the time approached for the helicopter to arrive. But then large flakes of snow drifted down, slowly at first, then quickening to again obscure the skyline.

Alan Bond arrived in his car, and the snow stopped. There were patches of blue in the sky, but conditions looked far from

settled northwards up the lake. There was a discussion between ranger and pilot.

The mission for that day was part of a three-month culling operation of the "wapiti block" — an area of the park where that animal was known to exist. The idea of the operation was to eradicate red deer and red deer hybrid types.

The helicopter lifted from the ground, Alan Bond at the controls, Ron Peacock with his repeater rifle, and a reporter making his first "chopper" trip tucked in the rear.

The helicopter scythed its way through flurries of snow and drifting cloud on the far side of the lake. Bush appeared and fell away behind. In no time the wide mouth of the Worsley valley yawned ahead, and then we were between its walls.

Suddenly the driving snow ceased, and Ron Peacock was pointing downwards, towards rock-stewn valley slopes and leafless seral vegetation.

## One Deer Less

The peaks disappeared, and a scarred face of the valley wall obliterated the skyline as we banked sharply. We hung in space and through the earmuffs came the sharp crack of a rifle. One deer less.

One deer less to browse on young saplings.

The helicopter descended into a steep, rocky gulley, poising delicately to allow the hunter to step out and secure the carcass with a rope strop to a hook suspended by chain from the chopper's belly. It was deposited on the bank of the Worsley river, and we were away again.

A turn took us between the steep sides of the valley of Castle river. At one moment rising vertically then falling away in twisting turns, quivering the face weakly illuminated by the sun's rays.

Another report from the ranger's rifle, then later two more as we hovered above lichen-blotched boulders in a gully.

The noise of the motor quietened and the scream of whirling blades subsided — we were on the valley floor, making fast the carcasses of four red deer to the hook.

## Kea, Ducks

A kea made a sortie over our heads. Upstream, in the rapidly-flowing water of the Castle river, two blue ducks paddled placidly, ignoring the activity of man.

The homeward trip was uneventful, without the urgency of two hours before, at the start of a 140-miles flight up the reaches of the Castle river. The weight of the carcasses seemed to give the aircraft a swinging motion as we skimmed over bush at a speed of over 100m.p.h.

Then it was all over as men prepared the carcasses for processing, and jawbones were tagged for study.

This kind of hunting may not be appreciated by the purist hunter; but then it is not a sport, but a necessary job. The men who engage in it need skill, trained eyes, endurance and nerve. It is not an easy job.

But the rangers in particular who supervise this operation, appreciate the environment of this magnificent park.



Three more deer are plucked from the wapiti block of Fiordland National Park.

# Home Sale Of Venison

WANGANUI (PA).—Venison is likely to be on supermarket shelves within a year. A national councillor on the Deerfarmers Association, Mr C. G. S. Cox, of Wanganui, said last night that commercial deer breeders hope to market their produce through supermarket chains in packs similar to those in which smallgoods are sold.

This will probably be done through a processing factory in Helensville which already handles venison for distribution to restaurants and hotels.

The main factor holding back the domestic sale of deer meats is the price they can bring on overseas markets, Mr Cox said.

With a 15 percent increase this year, deer farmers can earn up to \$3.50 a lb for some cuts of roe deer (fallow yearlings), and up to \$2.69 a lb is being paid for prime cuts of red deer.

## EXPORT PRICES

Mr Cox said bringing venison to the New Zealand housewife will be a key topic at the next association meeting, and commercial breeders are keen to sell locally at the price they receive for export sales.

The gross return from red deer now averages about \$1.16 a lb carcass weight and roe deer return about \$1.30 a lb carcass weight.

Most deer farmers sell their venison direct to Germany, and after paying for processing and packing, freight, insurance and commission to the exporter and overseas handler, they receive a net return of 87c to 90c a lb for red deer and \$1.01 to \$1.04 for roe deer.

Mr Cox said he was surprised that more back country farmers do not take up deer farming.

Venison has proved the most steady of all meat exports over the past 10 years, and there are untapped markets waiting to be filled in the United States, Japan and Australia.

He maintains deer farming is the ideal way to break in rough back country land, and as deer can be grazed in an equal capacity with sheep (one deer to one sheep unit), deer farming is far more profitable.

A farmer can expect to clear \$313.60 from an adult red deer stag, Mr Cox said. This consists of \$243.60 for 280lb of meat at 87c a lb, \$50 for velvet and \$20 for by-products.

There is a drive under way for herd increase. Red deer have been successfully carried on some farms at the rate of 20 an acre with minimal disease problems, and together with roe deer they are considered the finest venison in the world.

## \$250 A FEMALE

"It is also interesting to note that although barely half the size of a red deer, roe deer are being bought in many areas for a staggering \$250 a female. When available, red deer females can be sold as livestock for about \$300 each."

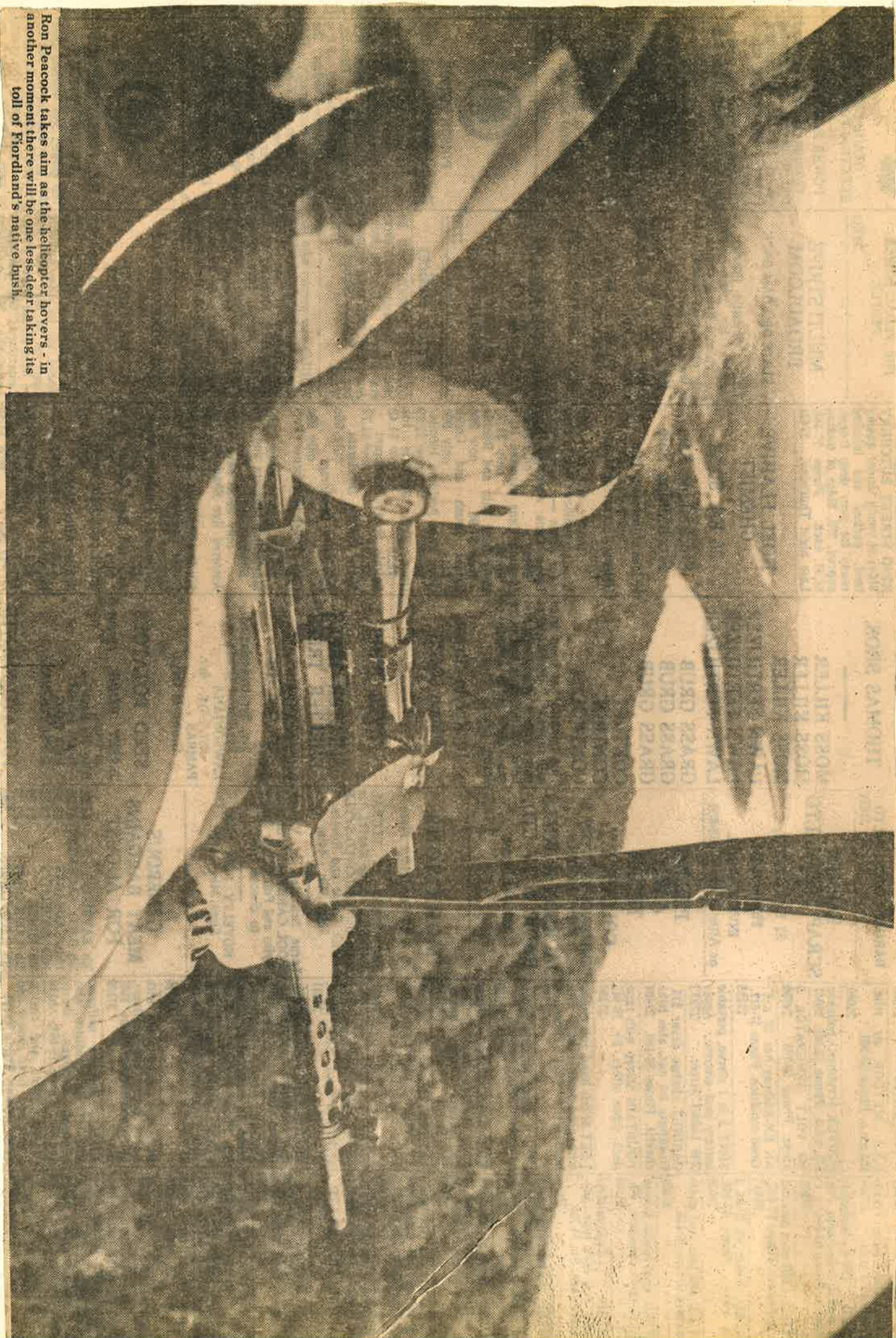
Mr Cox said many people want to farm deer, but are unable to buy stock. It irks him that other farmers have herds of deer roaming free on their properties and are ignoring their potential as farm stock.

Apart from the initial expense of providing 2.2-metre fences, deer farming has no special costs, and the young

animals will nibble manuka and ferns that other stock will not touch, he said.



Ron Peacock takes aim as the helicopter hovers - in another moment there will be one less deer taking its toll of Fiordland's native bush.





## GAME PRESERVATION OPPOSED

# Thar Area Possible

Wellington Reporter

The establishment of a recreation area for the hunting of thar on the west coast of the Southern Alps was advocated yesterday by Parliament's select committee on lands and agriculture.

The committee unanimously must take priority. declined a petition from F. E. King and 12,644 others for the retention of thar in New Zealand, but added a rider that the relevant department could consider setting aside a recreation area instead.

Committee members from both sides of the House were all opposed to a recreation area on the eastern side of the main divide.

As committee chairman, the Under-secretary for Agriculture and Fisheries, Mr J. B. Bolger, said the petitioners opposed the extermination of any game animal species anywhere in New Zealand.

The evidence was insufficient to support any recommendation, but there had been some evidence that an area to the west of the Southern Alps should be set aside. This should be investigated further.

### COUNTRY'S INTERESTS

The committee was sympathetic to the aspirations of the petitioners to retain sporting opportunities, but it did not think it could be supported in the manner it was presented.

Sir Basil Arthur (Oppn., Timaru), who presented the petition and was also a member of the committee, said the committee recognised that there were large numbers of thar on erosion-prone land, and that control would need to be maintained.

As a person with a lifetime interest in game sport, he found these hard facts to come to terms with, but the overall interests of the country

If the spirit of the committee's rider was recognised, it could well be a satisfactory compromise to a matter which was difficult to resolve.

Although several possible sites for a recreation area had been put forward by the Forest Service, Sir Basil said he favoured the headwaters of the Landsborough River. It was close to a light aircraft landing strip at Toitoti Flat, seemed to meet the specifications which everyone sought, and was close to one of the areas suggested by the Forest Service.

### ALWAYS SOME THAR

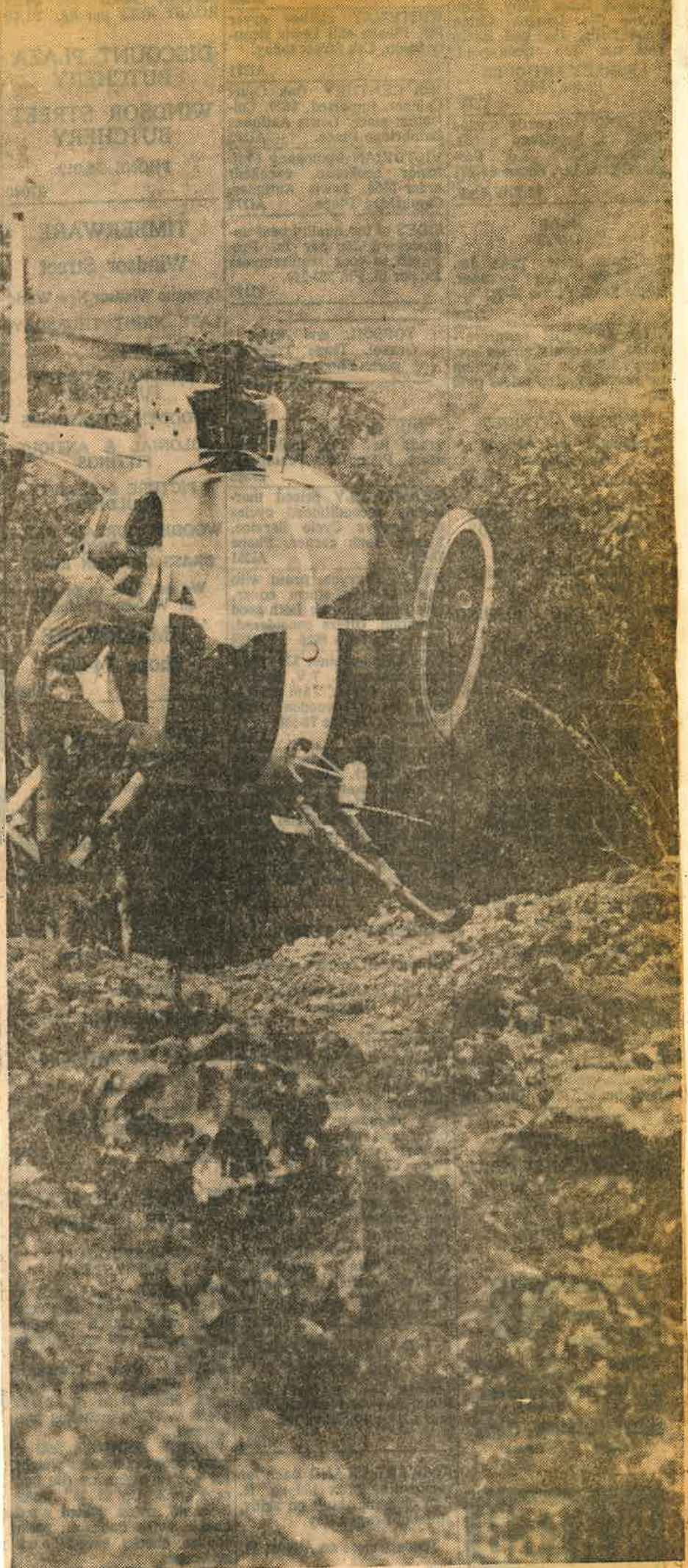
Mr R. L. G. Talbot (Oppn., South Canterbury) said the petition had been responsible for bringing forward some important submissions.

"There will always be thar to shoot, but not on the class of country they have been on for the past few decades and not in the numbers some sportsmen would like."

Mr Talbot said class 7 and 8 land had been severely damaged.

Mr P. Blanchfield (Oppn., West Coast) said damage which had occurred on the Canterbury side of the Southern Alps could not be sustained or perpetuated. It could be different on the western side.

The high country where thar bred and browsed was not so susceptible to damage on the western side. Regeneration on the west was such that erosion did not pose the same problems.



The Hughes 500 helicopter rises from a boulder strewn gulley, up on the sides on the Castle river valley, as park ranger Ron Peacock climbs back aboard, after securing a deer carcass to the chain suspended from the chopper's belly.



# Local venison market

**The possibility of selling some of New Zealand's farm-raised deer on the local market is being investigated by deer farmers.**

This was revealed at a recent seminar on deer farming held in Alexandra recently.

The president of the New Zealand Deer Farming Association, Mr Peter Elworthy of Oamaru said deer farmers were interested in channelling some of the deer they produce into the local market, and accepting a price lower than the export market price for a guaranteed period.

The move would go some way towards insulating the farmer against fluctuations in the export market price.

Deer farmers have been discussing the marketing of deer with the four main firms that handle the export of the product, one of them the Dunedin based company Wilson Neill Ltd.

Mr Elworthy said at the seminar he hoped consumers would

one day be able to buy venison in the butcher shop.

## SUCCESSFUL SALE

He said some had been sold in shops in Oamaru and Timaru with some success. It had been sold at a ten to twenty per cent premium above the price of steak.

"But people bought it and then came back for more," said Mr Elworthy.

Another speaker at the seminar, Mr Paul Baigent, farm advisory officer (economics) in Dunedin posed the question, "Is there a buck in deer farming?"

He took a hypothetical farm and compared the profitability of deer and traditional sheep systems. The farm was a 120 acre semi-extensive property carrying 650 ewes. The comparable deer farm carried 300 hinds.

The gross margins he had obtained favoured the deer system by about \$6,000.

**The conclusion he reached was that there was a "buck" in deer farming but it did involve risks because of the high capital involvement and the possibility of price fluctuations.**

He also came to the conclusion that deer farming allowed little room for error in the husbandry field. Even a small drop in the calving rate could mean a substantial drop in the return from the deer.

## STOCKING

Discussing stocking and finance Mr Euan Talbot, farm advisory officer in Alexandra said the limited supply of hinds was currently a major problem. The only sources of hinds was from other farms or live capture.

He suggested the Rural Bank and the Marginal Lands Board as two possibilities for financing deer farms.

The amount needed to finance a farm was put by Mr Baigent at about \$106,000. He

estimated about \$90,000 would be needed for stock, \$15,000 for fencing and \$1,000 for yards.

Mr Bryan Booth, senior livestock officer in Alexandra explained the licensing system that controls deer farming. He said a prospective farmer had first to obtain a licence from the New Zealand Forest Service to run a noxious animal in captivity.

About sixty such licences were held in the province. But only four deer farming licences were held. A deer farming licence required that stock be killed in a mobile slaughter house and that they be identified with a registered brand.

Sir, — Your correspondent John Bamford has many misconceptions about the Mount Aspiring National Park. The board does not meet behind closed doors as there is a representative of the Press at all its meetings. The board does not hide behind the National Parks Act but carries out its provisions as it is bound to do by law. Nowhere does the Act mention "pristine state" but it does say "as far as possible in their natural state" and there is a world of difference in these two statements.

It is against the policy of the Mount Aspiring Park Board to allow any hotels or motels within its boundaries. The only road through the park is the Haast Pass Highway which was already there when the park was formed. It is against the policy of the board to allow any commercial development on this highway. Many airstrips the park have been closed down except for noxious animal control under N.Z. Forest Service permit which means hunters and deerstalkers become the privileged few while climbers and trampers must walk there. Some cattle and sheep grazing remains because the Mount Aspiring National Park Board made a solemn promise at its inaugural meeting that it would not deny rights to traditionally used grazing lands.

The Mount Aspiring Park Board has never made one dollar from the shooting of animals and the income it has made from the new huts provided for the public in the Routeburn Dart, Young and Siberia valleys does not cover the maintenance which along with the capital cost is provided by the taxpayer.

The Mount Aspiring Park Board has never regarded the hunters as a minority group any more than the 6,000 people who walk the Routeburn track or the thousands of tourists who cross the Haast Pass but would I hope resist any attempt by any group commercial or otherwise, to gain exclusive use of any area of the park.

G. N. Ellis.

[Abridged.—Ed.]

## RECREATIONAL HUNTING

Sir, — I congratulate the Upper Clutha Branch, and Mr Wilson on their efforts to have a few animals left in our National Parks for the recreational hunters. I read with concern the letter by "Park User" (3.11.76) where he snipes at Mr Wilson's attitudes on deer and National Parks. For "Park User" to use his knowledge of Mr Wilson's position seems rather underhand, when he himself hides behind a non-de-plume. Both "Park User" and Mr Shaw (in his comments to a letter), suggest that approaches be made to the Aspiring Park Board. This has been tried by others. For Mr Shaw to decline to make serious comment by way of newspaper correspondence is interesting: all recreational hunters would be interested in his comments, not behind closed doors, but in public. Recreational hunters are tired of being lobbed off with platitudes, and N.Z. Parks Boards hiding behind the National Parks Act.

The National Parks Act calls for parks to be kept in

a pristine state. How many N.Z. Parks Boards are not guilty of some transgressions of this act? Do they allow hotels, motels, roads, air strips, or power schemes to be built within their boundaries? Do they allow introduced fish, bird life, cattle or sheep to remain within their boundaries? If the answer is yes to any of these, then our Parks are not being kept in their natural state. So what is it about game animals that they are being picked on for eradication? The mighty dollar seems to be the guideline parks boards follow. Shoot and sell anything worth money: build anything which will make money—i.e. commercialisation.

"Park User" must realise that recreational hunters and deerstalkers are not a minority group. If Park Board members must continue this "witch hunt" of our game animals and ignore commercial activities, then perhaps it is time these members are not appointed, but elected in a democratic manner.

John Bamford.

[Abridged.—Ed.]

## RECREATIONAL HUNTING

Sir,—Charlie Hollows states that "national park boards will not recognise that private shooting within parks should be fostered and not downtrodden as at present." I can only answer for Mt Aspiring National Park Board in reply to his sweeping and incorrect assertions. Can Charlie Hollows quote a case of a deerstalker being denied a permit to shoot in Mt Aspiring National Park? As I said publicly before, the Board welcomes private shooting and does not in any way discourage it.

What Charlie Hollows did not say, but is inferred from his comments, is that the Mt Aspiring National Park Board will not agree to manage any portions of the park to cater specifically for deerstalkers. If I have interpreted his inference correctly I would agree with him and the Board will stand firmly on this policy.

Mt Aspiring National Park is for the benefit of all New Zealanders and not for any sectional interests. The Park is visited by very many thousands of people and I can

assure Charlie Hollows that excepting for the Haast Pass Highway and the Routeburn Walk most of these are young and fit New Zealanders for whom he expresses such needless concern.

J. A. S. Shaw,  
Chairman.  
Mt Aspiring  
National Park Board.

## RECREATIONAL HUNTING

Sir,—I would like to express my opinions about private shooting within national parks. It seems to me that it is a great pity that national park boards will not recognise that private shooting within parks should be fostered and not downtrodden at present. We are continuing hearing of youths with little do, drinking, vandalising generally making a nuisance themselves. Boys have a natural love of the outdoors many are intrigued with arms. Surely it is far better to encourage them to handle rifles safely and utilise available areas like national parks for recreational hunting, to criticise them for their actions on the streets. Unfortunately at present I could recommend to young shooters to try their hand at bagging deer within Mt Aspiring National Park on our step, as they will be very appointed.

Are national park boards insensitive that they do not appreciate that deer are an asset to a park? Perhaps board members are still living in the past and too set in their ways to accept change. This being the case it is time they resigned and elected someone with a responsible outlook on the overall situation. I want the country overrun with game animals but the policy of extermination in national parks is stupid and is driving young shooters to the area available to them. I boards, you have much answer for in not catering the needs of youth throughout the country.

Charlie Hollows

## RECREATIONAL HUNTING

Sir,—I would like to rectify your correspondent "Park User" when he makes reference to my report of the letter from the Upper Clutha Branch NZDA. Firstly, I am not have never been president of that organisation. Secondly, your correspondent is incorrect when he states that I am a staunch opponent of National Parks and their policy. It would be true to say that I am firmly opposed to National Park policy game animals, but the principle of National Parks is generally I most strongly support.

I would again commend the Upper Clutha Branch NZDA for their second letter. It is indeed a pity that the chairman of the Mt Aspiring National Park Board does not see fit to make public answers to the questions they raised and this surely suggest there could be something to hide from the public. I trust the NZDA not let the matter rest. Finally I would like to say that I am happy to sign my name to what are truthful opinions, and it is a pity that others have not the courage to do likewise.

Barry Wilson.





Mr Colin Kelly, of Te Anau, surveys the wreckage of his helicopter after a lucky escape in a crash while shooting deer on Wednesday.

## Helicopter Wrecked In Fiordland

A Hughes helicopter was destroyed following a crash in the Coal Creek Gully, near Te Anau, on Wednesday.

The pilot, Mr Colin Kelly, and his brother John, who were shooting deer, emerged from the bush yesterday morning, crossing the Te Anau control structure. Although shaken neither was hurt.

The helicopter had mechanical failure while shooting in the Coal Creek Gully. As it dropped, the blades hit the side of the gul-

ly, the helicopter bouncing off and then rolling down the face.

All that remains of the helicopter are the damaged seats, the inside of the cockpit and the controls.

A spokesman for Gibson Aero Maintenance in Te Anau where the remains have been stored, described the helicopter as "just a ball of metal."

An Alpine Helicopter Bell Jet Ranger flew Mr Kelly and his brother back to the area yesterday.

A strap was secured to the mast of the damaged helicopter, and it was lifted from the gully. However, the mast broke, and the helicopter plummeted back.

Part of the helicopter controls and seats were taken to Te Anau, and a return journey was made for the rest of the wreckage which was secured under the Bell Jet in a net.

The Hughes belongs to the Dunedin firm of Skeggs Food Limited, and its wreckage will remain with Gibson Aero until it

has been inspected by an insurance inspector.

"I was lucky all right, but it was one of those things," was the only comment from Mr Kelly.

## 40,000 Deerstalkers In New Zealand

Staff Sports Writer

Deerstalking has 40,000 participants in New Zealand.

The Otago branch of the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association was formed in 1948, and sub-branches were formed at Ranfurly, Balclutha and Palmerston. Except for Palmerston, these have since become separate branches.

In the 1950s and 1960s the focal point of branch activities was hunting the deer herds in the Otago back country. But with the onset of commercial meat hunting and later commercial game recovery by helicopter, branch interests spread to competition shooting.

Based on rooms in Malvern Street, Woodhaugh, the club has developed a commitment to use ammunition of adequate power to ensure humane kills.

The club demands that its weapons be sighted in so unnecessary suffering to the animals hunted is prevented.

"There are no natural predators of deer in this country apart from man," Mr Charlie Forsyth, the branch secretary, said. "Our forests would be completely destroyed if the deer were not hunted."

"Recreational hunters contribute thousands of dollars to the economy each year through

sales tax and customs duties on their equipment." An emphasis on safety measures is of prime importance to hunters. Loaded firearms are not permitted in huts or camps. Hunters are allowed to load the magazine only when the hunting ground is reached.

Hunters are urged to use a half-open bolt when in a state of semi-readiness while the target must be identified.



# Wapiti Destroying Native Forest

By STAFF REPORTER  
JOHN BRADSHAW

**There is no doubt that the scene is set for the total destruction of almost all the species of native trees, which have covered the Fiordland National Park for centuries, in those parts of the wapiti block which have been inspected so far.**

Under the canopy of old and maturing trees in the valleys, and on high ridges, young trees have been stripped of their leaves and are either dead or dying. Whether the action taken by the park board when the discovery was made just recently will halt the spread of the destruction is unknown, some of the damage cannot be reversed, and the character of the forest will over the next century be changed drastically.

As we flew by helicopter over the western sector of the wapiti block, it could be plainly seen that the ground cover beneath the canopy of beech trees had vanished. Older trees which had completed their century or more of life stood out whitely.

Younger beeches and other species still clothed the valley sides and floors, but under them was nothing to take their place in the years ahead.

Even though it was mid-day and the sun was hot wapiti were very much in evidence, high on the slopes and not in the shade as would have been expected at that time.

The helicopter landed on a coastal ridge, its skids straddling a mud wallow surrounded by chewed down tussocks, dry and dead, with well trodden tracks

leading to it.

We followed the track along the ridge top in the direction of George Sound. There was little in the way of alpine growth to impede us. Even the tough scrub turpentine has been sampled by the deer. Tussocks, which had obviously been chewed repeatedly until they were dead, were everywhere, it was almost like walking over a carefully cleared tramping track.

Vegetation was completely absent in many places with nothing but a shallow covering of soil, and even this was disappearing to show the rock beneath. Even the hardy mountain daisy had not escaped, it too had been sampled and looked bedraggled.

We climbed down a little from the top of the ridge. Normally this would have been a difficult climb through tree species such as three-finger. Indeed there were one or two saplings with a few leaves left; but for the most part there were just white bleached and stunted remains.

These trees would not have been easy for the animals to reach, but it appeared they had been hungry enough to make the effort and in the process kill them off. Naturally, there was no sign of tender regenerating growth around them.

On the other side of the valley spaces could be seen between the larger trees on slopes prone to erosion.

From the ridge the helicopter took us down to a tributary of the George river and we walked over the river terraces which are usually only heavily browsed by animals when the upper slopes are covered in snow.

Deer sign was everywhere, and big animals at that. But the

most striking aspect was that there was absolutely no sign of regenerating beech trees anywhere. Gaunt dead trees stood under mature tall beeches which obviously must have been seeding for many years. The results of that seeding had been chewed as soon as the seedling appeared, and now there is nothing to replace those mature trees providing the forest canopy.

There was one exception. Pepperwood trees, unpalatable to deer, were growing profusely in patches. Otherwise the ground was bare with not even a frond of the ferns which are usually associated with all New Zealand bush.

Even tough scrub trees were stunted by repeated nibbling.

Trees like wineberry and native fuchsia, which usually take over where there has been any bush destruction, were notable by their absence.

Old trees which die and crash to the forest floor usually disturb the ground and provide a nursery for their young seedlings to grow. This was not the case here—a huge beech trunk in the process of rotting lay on the ground, and the only sapling alongside it was a stunted pepperwood tree. Examination of this showed it was probably an old tree which had not been allowed to grow upwards by hungry animals.

On the other side of the river was a gigantic rock slide which had crashed hundreds of yards from the face of the valley. The boulders were well covered with lichen and moss, the first attempt by nature to restore a forest. The next step, however, the regeneration of the dominant surrounding species of trees was not taking place.

The huge clearing created by

the slide during its descent gave every indication of remaining permanent, flanked by ageing beech and a profusion of pepperwood trees which grow not much higher than 20 feet.

A thought kept recurring while viewing this scene—is the beech forest doomed to extinction in the area which is now being culled heavily of red deer and red deer hybrid wapitis in an emergency measure by the park board?

It is possible there are other parts of the forest in the wapiti block, apart from the part west of the Edith and Pitt rivers, which are in the process of being despoiled. The wapiti is most certainly playing a large role in the process, and the Government caucus recommendation was that the numbers of wapiti should be controlled to levels which would not interfere with other park values. This has never been done and it looks as if the park is now paying the price.

The recent discovery of just how bad the situation in the largest national park in New Zealand really is, now poses many questions for the board and its chairman, Mr J. P. Harty.

Probably the most important one will be, has the time come to wage war on the wapiti, as well as the red deer, in order to save the values of the park? This will be the most difficult decision to make and will undoubtedly raise a storm of opposition from the N. Z. Deer Stalkers Association and Federated Mountain Clubs. It will become a political issue.

But the board has a clear mandate to rid the park of noxious animals through the Forest Service in order to preserve the values of the park.

It could also be supposed that conservationists, who so far have ignored issues connected with the Fiordland National Park, will now take an interest, offsetting the pressures of the deerstalkers and their political lobbying.

Another thorny problem which emerges is whether the Forest Service will decide that 1080 poison is an alternative to the use of helicopters and shooters? If so it will be a bitter blow to those who have invested many thousands of dollars in that industry.

Whatever decision the board makes, it will not be popular with everyone, but the decision must inevitably be one which will halt the destruction of a national park which is being overrun by noxious animals, and not only in the wapiti block. The signs are there that other areas have been affected almost as seriously as the wapiti block.

During a recent speech at a meeting of the Fiordland National Park Board, a member of the board, Professor G.T.S. Bayliss, said: "I would like to say a little about our heritage. I choose the word because the deerstalkers are fond of it. They think it strengthens their case for game management in national parks to talk of deerstalking as a national heritage."

Professor Bayliss said that a heritage should be valued, and asked how many people wanted to shoot deer? Last year, he said, 4500 visitors to the park sought a rifle permit—that number out of a very conservative estimate of 150,000 visitors in all.

He said that this meant that in every 100 who came to the park three wanted to shoot, the other 97 wanted to enjoy the scenery in peace.

## Hunting Heritage

Sir,—I would like to endorse the sentiments expressed by D. Hawless. I know that deer are great survivors. What happens when these great survivors meet man the great exterminator? And now he can exterminate in the name of profit.

I believe the answer must be political. If a political party included in its manifesto, "that all meat (this would include venison and wild pork) shall be officially devalued, as are rabbits, unless it has been killed in abattoirs," then this would, I believe, satisfy the majority of people.

The numbers involved in the minority group would make a large noise about overseas exchange. Their arguments could be disposed of by a 10-year-old. The private shooter who sells the odd deer or pig would probably still go out for a shot even if there was no sale for the animal. And in 30 years' time he could say to his children when they came in exhausted, gory and happy, "When I was your age I used to carry the carcass out and sell it and if that had not been banned, there would be no deer at all now."

If we can find an answer which will save our national parks, our State forests, and our other back country, which used to be readily accessible to all, from becoming unofficial deer farms and areas to be argued over in the name of the almighty dollar, then we will have served the future admirably.

Sir,—I heartily agree with the letter written by "Kiwi Wake Up" on November 26. He is quite correct in what he says about the disgraceful treatment of our wildlife and there are many thousands of people in New Zealand who think the same as he does. Something has to be done urgently, but how can those who care go about it, with the Fiordland Park Board slaughtering animals with helicopters in the high country, and the Forest Service doing the same in the lower lands with 1080 poison? And this is going on throughout New Zealand, costing the Government more than a million dollars.

There is practically nothing left anywhere in New Zealand for the hunting sportsmen. Why do these departments have all the say? Would the Deerstalkers' Association consider starting a campaign with its members, from one end of New Zealand to the other, against this exterminating of our wildlife, which seems the only solution? If nothing is done, now, it must automatically become defunct. I feel, it would gain support from many thousands of people throughout New Zealand. So let all of us who care join together and try to preserve some of this wonderful heritage for the youngsters of today and tomorrow.

I will still offer \$5 when any campaign is started.

D. Hawless

Bluff

## HUNTING TOURS

Sir,—New Zealand was a hunters' paradise, but it is getting harder every year for New Zealand hunters to find good hunting. Animal numbers are now very low because of overhunting by helicopter. Now we have this publicity going to the United States, painting a wonderful picture of the hunting here—how guides can hire helicopters usually at a day's notice, extremely useful to transport hunters into top hunting areas. We have just read lately of our Government's attitude towards the Thar. It is not right that Americans can come out here hunting with all their dollars to spend getting into these top hunting areas when the New Zealand hunter cannot. I would not like to see hunting in this country become like it is in America. As a keen hunter I am against all this publicity about our hunting. Knowing how our Government feels about our game animals I am against Americans coming hunting in New Zealand. Are we that hard up for overseas funds or is it the power of

## RECREATIONAL HUNTERS

Sir,—Sportsmen can take great pleasure from Mr Shaw's comments about a letter from Mr Broere (October 29, 1976). Mr Shaw has indicated that game animals will be in the Mount Aspiring Park for a long time to come, and we must congratulate him and his board for their far-sighted approach to what has been a difficult topic. Can Mr Shaw comment as to the reason for the decline in the number of hunting permits issued over the past three years?

C. I. H. Forsyth.

[Mr J. A. S. Shaw, chairman of the Mount Aspiring National Park Board, replies: "The number of permits issued correspond with the number applied for."—Ed.]





**Fiordland National Park Board's noxious animals officer, Mr P. Gordon, walks a track worn by countless deer in a section of the park's area set aside for wipiti. Bare soil shows and the only young trees are those of pepperwood, unpalatable to browsing animals.**

## DEERSTALKERS CRITICISE PROPOSALS

# Helicopter Hunts In Tararuas

**WELLINGTON (PA).—**The Forest Service has given permission for commercial deer hunting from helicopters in the Tararuas. Deerstalkers yesterday said the decision could have disastrous consequences.

They said the Forest Service's own surveys show that the deer population in the Tararuas has declined in the past 10 years, and that the entry of commercial operators is totally unjustified.

Deerstalkers fear that feuds could develop among operators on the scale that has occurred in Fiordland, and endanger the thousands of recreational users who go into the Tararua Forest Park each year.

It is acknowledged to be the most heavily used of the country's 14 forest parks.

Representatives of the seven Wellington regional branches of the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association were told of the Forest Service's decision to allow helicopter hunting at a meeting in Palmerston North earlier this month with Forest Service officials,

including the Wellington conservator, Mr J. D. Rockell.

Mr Ray Walsh, the representative of the Wellington branch, said deerstalkers were bitter and angry with the Forest Service, which had acted without consulting any of the recreational users of the park or the park advisory board.

"We were told the commercial operators would be confined to the seven catchments, and that their activities would be closely policed."

Mr Walsh said this assurance meant nothing as the "policing" would be done by a Forest Service tally officer, who would be stationed at the point from which the helicopters were taking off.

The Upper Hutt branch of the Deerstalkers Association has been informed of the background to the Forest

Service's reasons for allowing commercial operators into the park.

The letter, signed by the senior forest ranger for the Wellington Conservancy, Mr I. R. Logan, for Mr Rockell, said the operations would be under the daily direction of the Forest Service, and would only be permitted for short periods during "non-peak recreational periods."

"As you are probably aware, the game meat industry is now recognised as a valuable earner of overseas funds. That fact, coupled with the state of the country's internal finances, which precludes any additional Government finance being made available for noxious animal control, has influenced the decision in Wellington to utilise the commercial game meat industry on a strictly controlled basis."

## RECREATIONAL HUNTING

Sir.—We have noted with regret the reply from Mr Shaw, chairman of Mt Aspiring National Park board to our last letter (ODT, November 3).

The object of our previous letters was to have the public kept informed with information that we feel needs to be made available. In view of the reaction we received we intend writing to Mr V. Young, Minister of Lands, to ask that he take steps to have the information requested made available to the public through the news media. We refer particularly to the land taken into or being considered for Mt Aspiring National Park.

Our previous two letters have made a number of points concerning Mt Aspiring National Park that we are unhappy with. There are at least two other National Parks in this country that have a far more agreeable attitude toward game animals and associated recreational activities. It is unfortunate that we can get no

satisfaction from the administrators of this particular National Park when other branches of NZDA are experiencing co-operation on these very same points raise elsewhere. It seems that the interpretation of National Parks policy on game animals throughout the country is varied from park to park depending on the individuals controlling them. We hope that somewhere in the future a more realistic and reasoned approach might be forthcoming.

R. A. Bond,

Secretary,

Upper Clutha Branch,  
NZ Deerstalkers Assn.



## Wapiti Damage

Sir.—John Bradshaw's article in The Southland Times of November 30 reports a gruesome tale of the destruction of national park forests by wapiti. His photo of Mr P. Gordon walking one minute section of Fiordland's three million acres is a pleasant one; unlike the early days when Grave and Talbot slogged and exhausted themselves in an effort to hack their way through this thick jungle.

I guess they are aware that these animals were first liberated in these mountains in 1907 and have been adequately governed by shooting bodies since their inauguration before 1939.

Government policy is total extermination of the vermin of this country, primarily the deer and opossum. Of the latter John Bradshaw made no mention. Extermination, never! Control perhaps? But let's think logically for a moment. Controlling factions blame all the erosion of the eastern sector of the South Island on the game animals, using as an example the Takatimu mountains suffering from severe erosion, but they forget to look west into the national park where deer were first liberated in 1898 where even to this day there's little evidence of erosion apart from nature's causes. "Sure these tracks are left by the animals and these are a great advantage for climbers and trappers alike as these animals know the best, safest, and shortest route to the tops.

John Bradshaw and his extremists should endeavour to push their way through the bush area of the Cleddau Valley where there are no deer at all.

Professor G. T. Bayliss says a little about our heritage but misinterprets the relevant facts pertaining to the requirements of sportsman hunters in this area where he says that for every 100 who came to the park, three wanted to shoot. I would reverse these figures and say that at this moment there are more

youngsters than ever before who want to shoot deer and even rabbits and are denied this first class outdoor recreation. The reason—control and restriction; basically because of all this highly competitive professionalism; all this poppycock and nonsense relating to flora destruction. What percentage of the population is genuinely interested in botany? The Forestry Department is concerned at the park's trees but what steps are they taking to regenerate the massive inundated areas outside the national park? I am appalled to hear that it is their intention to lay 1080 poison in the park. What a horrifying thought.

About 1939 the Government brought in a test period and allocated three rounds of ammunition for every deer tail token presented to the authorities. As a result statistics proved that private shooters and sportsmen shot more animals than the total government cullers employed permanently to do this job at a colossal cost to the taxpayer annually.

In conclusion I would like to say that the 'Wanted for Destruction' poster should condemn man, matches and machines for the erosion situation and extend the "Extermination of the Noxious Animals Act" into Parliament House for when the animals roamed the earth the world was free, but when the animal was born with a brain the world became disturbed.

Let's make some use of this park instead of killing everything in it.

"Des Arster"

Te Anau

## RECREATIONAL HUNTING

Sir.—Both your correspondents, J. A. S. Shaw and G. N. Ellis in their letters (November 13, 1976) have made reference to deerstalkers wanting exclusive usage of an area of Mt Aspiring National Park. Where have these responsible citizens acquired notions like these? I can assure both these gentlemen that the N.Z. Deerstalkers Association wants nothing of the sort and to think that such prominent persons can display such lack of understanding is staggering.

I can only assume that these misconceptions came about from an approach by the Otago Branch, NZDA, on behalf of a number of branches, to the park board some time ago. That approach was to request a particular area to be excluded from commercial meat recovery on a trial basis to establish whether, to the satisfaction of the park board, sportsmen could retain the very low numbers of deer that existed in that area. Nowhere have they requested exclusive use and I believe that their approach was a very realistic and courteous one. That they achieved nothing was bad enough, but to infer that they required exclusive use is an insult that warrants an apology to the party concerned.

Mr Shaw states that recreational hunters have never been refused permits, and Mr Ellis refers to the privilege of commercial air transport available to hunters that are not available to other park users. These comments are superfluous and must surely show a need for these gentlemen to clutch at straws for an argument to refute claims made by recreational hunters. The two letters do much to emphasise the lack of understanding by park boards to the recreational hunters' point of view. I would agree with others who suggest that the public would be better represented by a democratically elected park board than the present system.

Barry Wilson.

# Heavy Culling Of Wapiti

INVERCARGILL (PA). — Immediate measures will be taken to cut down wapiti and deer numbers in the Fiordland National Park wapiti block, where destruction of native bush is serious.

This decision was made after reports from board and Forest Service rangers that high numbers of deer, most showing wapiti characteristics, were causing destruction of vegetation in certain areas of the wapiti block.

They recommended that all animals in these areas should be ruthlessly shot, with the exception of wapiti bulls, as a concession to sporting bodies such as the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association.

The areas were in Catseye River-George Sound and some of the coastal strip between Caswell and Bligh Sound.

The chief ranger, Mr W. Sander, said at a meeting of the board on Monday, November 15, that immediate action should be taken in view of the seriousness of the damage to park vegetation.

The board referred the matter to a specially called meeting of the recreational hunters' advisory committee this week.

The reports of the rangers and a report resulting from an inspection of the affected areas by the chairman of the board, Mr J. P. Harty, and the chairman of the advisory committee, Mr J. McKenzie, were presented at the meeting.

Both agreed that the extent of damage to the vegetation was a real cause for concern, and that something had to be done.

## DISTURBED

Mr J. Fraser, secretary of the board, said yesterday deerstalkers' representatives

at the meeting were disturbed about wapiti being shot. But in view of the state of the area, they felt there was no alternative but to take measures to reduce animal numbers, including those of wapiti.

It was moved that the committee recommend the National Park Board to endorse the action proposed by Mr Sander that all deer except wapiti bulls should be hunted.

However, this was amended to read that the committee recommend to the board that it endorse the action proposed by the chief ranger, carried out over a period of four months, when the position would be reviewed, except that all animals sighted should be shot with the exception of exceptional wapiti cows and bulls.

This motion was carried, but Mr Bamford asked that it should be recorded he voted against the motion.

## HELICOPTER BAN

Another motion was carried that the committee recommend to the board that helicopter operations cease, but only during the four-month period, in that area west of the Edith and Pitt Rivers, with the exception of the problem area.

Mr Fraser said the recommendations were put to the board's executive, and preparations are now under way to implement the committee's recommendations, under the strict control of Mr Sander, who may also do some of the shooting.

Mr Fraser said shooting in the trouble spots would begin within the next few days, depending on the weather.

# 'COPTER MISSING IN FIORDLAND

Two R.N.Z.A.F. Devon aircraft were to begin searching for a vension recovery helicopter missing in northern Fiordland at first light this morning.

The Hughes 300B helicopter, owned by Southland Helicopters, of Te Anau, was reported missing yesterday afternoon after it failed to make contact with its base.

It had left Te Anau with two men aboard at 5 p.m. on Satur-

day to travel to the Kaipo river, south of Martins Bay. Invercargill police reported that it was to have remained in the Kaipo river area or then go on to the Hollyford Valley before travelling on to Haast.

The two men were to have made contact with their base yesterday and, when they failed to do so, the Te Anau police were notified at 2.45 p.m. that the helicopter was missing.

Another helicopter, with two policemen aboard, searched the probable route taken by the missing aircraft between Te Anau and the Kaipo river late yesterday afternoon, without success. The police also checked other possible destinations of the helicopter.

At 7 p.m. last evening the air search co-ordination centre at the Christchurch Airport was contacted and it took over organization of the search.

The centre reported last night that two Devons from the R.N.Z.A.F. base at Wigram would fly into the region at first light today.



# Goats to be Exterminated

(P.A.)

The feral goats of Arapawa Island, in the Marlborough Sounds, possibly the only ones of their kind in the world, are to be exterminated by the Forest Service.

CHRISTCHURCH

Last week, a two-man team from the service in Blenheim visited the island and pronounced the death sentence on them, Mrs W. M. Rowe, the wife of a farmer on Arapawa, said yesterday.

Although the sheep and pigs were to be left alone in the meantime, the shooting of the goats would begin at some time in the future, she was told.

The men did say, however, that because of the rugged nature of the terrain, they might only be able to kill 75 per cent. They could give no undertaking that if lactating nannies were shot they could find the kids and kill those, too.

Mr M. Willis, director of the Willowbank wildlife reserve in Christchurch, said: "I am furious about the whole thing. There is now good reason to believe that this is the only pure stock of its kind left. From what I have heard from goat breeders in Canterbury, these may well

be the Old English goat.

"In England, breeders are trying to breed back to them because there are no pure ones left."

It is thought the goats on Arapawa are the direct descendants of stock left there by Captain Cook in 1777.

Miss I. Ramsay, of Sefton, a breeder of the British Alpine goat, said yesterday the Old English breed was one of the breeds used in the development of the British Alpine.

She is a member of the British Goat Society, and the society's monthly magazine this month had a full description of the Old English, which fitted exactly the goats of Arapawa.

"The description came from a book published in 1897, called 'The Book of The Goat,' by Holmes Pegler, and was used in reply to a letter from a breeder in England who is trying to breed back to the Old English," Miss Ramsay said.

"If the sheep and pigs are to be left, why not leave the goats?" she said.

It was wrong to say that goats caused more damage to the ecology of an area than sheep.

The head of environmental forestry with the Forest Service in Wellington, Mr K. H. Miers, said an investigation of the goats on Arapawa Island had been made following requests from all but one of the landholders there to have them exterminated.

The Marlborough Sounds Maritime Park Board certainly wanted them killed.

"It's not our concern that these goats may be 100 years old or whatever," said Mr Miers. "Without them, there will be better farming, and the quality of the parkland will be improved."

"We are not sure when the extermination programme will begin, and it will depend entirely on our budget."

The budget for the island had not been completed, and Mr Miers said it might be next summer or even next winter before the shooting began.

Miss Ramsay said that although goat breeders in New Zealand could not import stock from Britain, they could export them there. She is so concerned about the possible loss of this breed to the world she has sent a telegram to the Prime Minister, Mr Muldoon, to ask him to intervene.

## Deer Farming In Scotland

(N.Z.P.A. Staff Correspondent)

LONDON

New Zealand could soon encounter increasing Scottish competition on its lucrative venison market in West Germany.

Scotland's Highlands and Islands Development Board has announced plans to establish Britain's first deer farm, a move which, it hopes, will eventually put venison alongside lamb and beef in British butcher shops.

It will also provide more venison for export, particularly to Europe's biggest venison-eaters, the West Germans.

New Zealand, thanks to its head start in establishing deer farms, at present exports more

venison to Germany than Britain does.

On latest available annual figures, New Zealand sent 2.4 million kilograms of venison to Germany of a total export of just over 3.2 million kg.

The German sales were worth about \$4.5 million to New Zealand, but Scottish sales for the same period were put at only about \$1.8 million.

The Scottish deer farm is on a 1540-hectare estate on Scotland's north-west coast, which has recently been used by the hunting, shooting and fishing set.

### Research

But the Highlands and Islands Board will now exploit its farming potential by raising about 100 deer calves this autumn, with the aid of research already undertaken at an experimental deer farm in the north-east of Scotland.

After seven years and a further investment of more than £200,000 the board hopes that about 380 hinds, worth about £23,000 a year on the market, will be produced for slaughter.

Professor Kenneth Alexander, the board's chairman, described the project as the beginning of a major change in Highland land use and a landmark in the development of the highlands.

This (northern) summer a development team will begin rounding up calves on the estate, which already has a good supply of red deer.

They will be bottle-fed through the winter, and eventually graze in fenced pastures—in the same way as sheep—until they are aged between 15 and 18 months. Then some will be slaughtered.

Eventually, the farm will have its own supply of stags and hinds to establish a co-ordinated breeding, rearing and slaughtering cycle.

Breeding will then start in large enclosures on the hills of the estate in the early summer, and young deer will gradually be moved down to better pastures where they will be fattened.

### Cost

Mr Neil Sutherland, the farm's project officer, said the cost of producing deer should be similar to that of raising sheep.

New Zealand now has about a dozen deer farms, mostly in the South Island.

There is also a research deer farm at the Invermay research centre near Dunedin.

The main export market is to West Germany, followed by the Netherlands and Sweden. Little venison is eaten in Britain, and none is imported.

## Hardship For Company

Financial hardship would be caused by the proposed Wallace County District Scheme to Fiordland Venison Ltd, it was submitted to a hearing of the planning committee.

A director of the company, Mr E. Meredith, said that the nature of the venison industry made it impossible to operate at the whim of every new scheme.

The grounds for the objection were that the proposed zoning

would seriously hinder development of land and buildings, hinder upgrading of plant in existing building, and create financial hardship on the owners of the game processing plant.

Questioned by the committee, Mr Meredith said that the game packing plant had been forced to close in February 1976, but the company was taking its case to the Supreme Court on March 14, 1977.

As a result of the closure there existed a situation where game was being processed in garages on private property. Prior to its closure the factory employed 10 men, and with improvements would be able to employ another four.

Mr Meredith told the committee the closure had been the result of a decision by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries to supply inspectors to only certain factories, and was not because the company was not willing to spend money on it.

A decision on whether or not to alter the proposed zoning was reserved by the committee.

## Venison Application Refused

Wellington (PA). — A venison-processing company whose application for a licence for its game packing house at Te Anua was refused last year, has failed in an attempt to have the decision reviewed.

The Chief Justice, Sir Richard Wild, rejected the review application by Fiordland Venison Ltd in a reserved decision given in the Supreme Court yesterday.

He said the grounds on which the Minister of Agriculture refused the packing house licence were not irrelevant, as the company claimed.

The Minister had dealt with the economic basis of the application correctly, despite the company's claim to the contrary, and he had paid due regard to the public interest.

Sir Richard also rejected the company's submission that the Minister had dealt with the matter on an industry basis rather than on the merits of the particular application.

Costs of \$200 were awarded to respondent, the Minister of Agriculture, the Hon D. MacIntyre.

## Desert or destruction

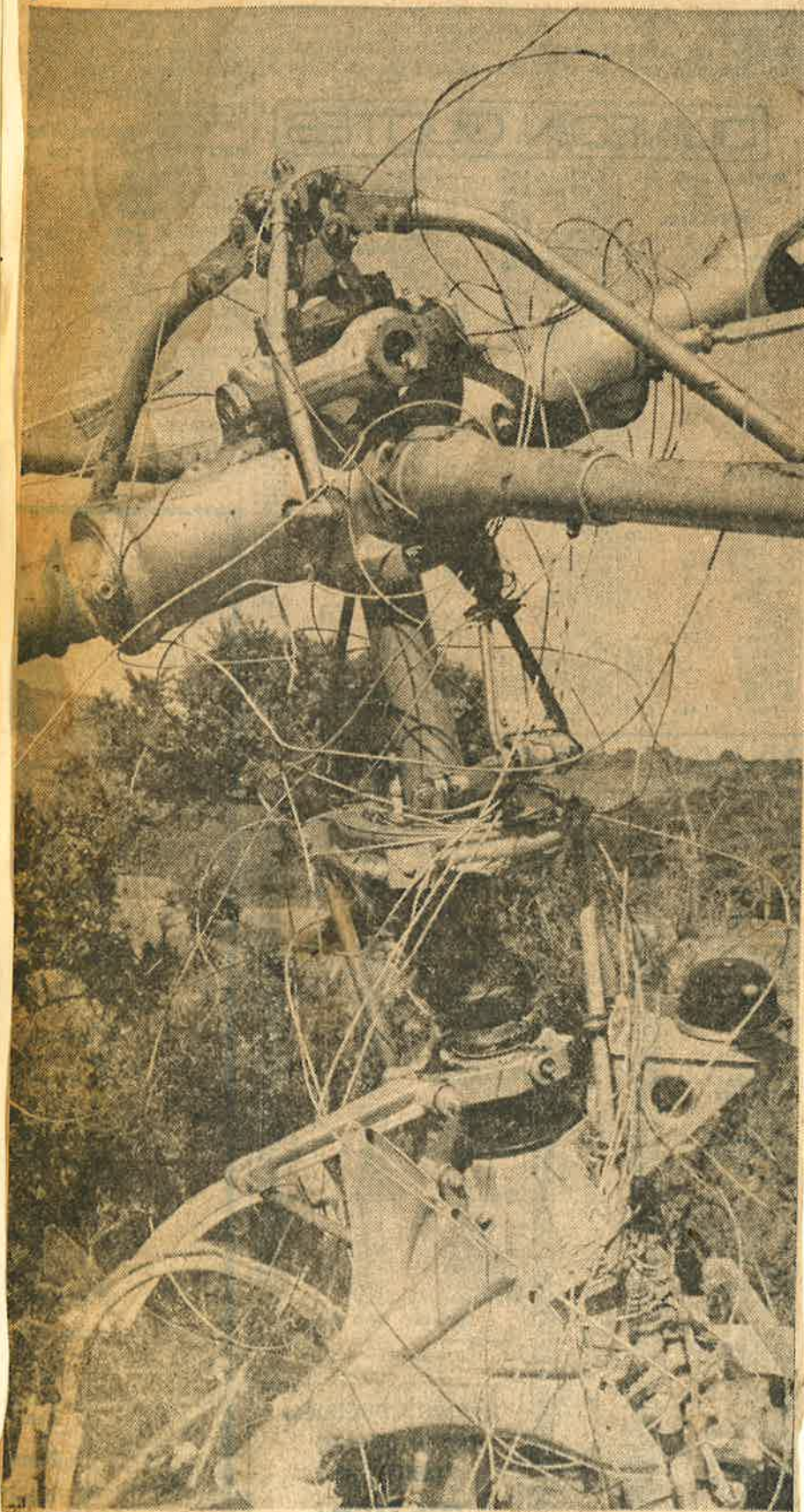
HAS Bush Mate observed a great deal of native bush? Does some of it strike him as eerily silent, when it

should be full of birds? Yes. Because of muddled thinking cats, weasels, stoats, polecats, ferrets, rats and maybe possum, are now in our forests, slaughtering the bird life. But an innocent creature from Europe has become an even greater menace here—the deer. We need desperate measures to control it. Has Bush Mate noticed the awful destruction of native trees by deer? I have seen roots exposed to a depth of six feet and undergrowth non-existent. If New Zealand is not to become a desert, the deer, goats and chamois must be destroyed. — NEW ZEALANDER (Glen Eden).



## Caught In The Toils

WHAT HAPPENS when a helicopter picks a fight with a wire cable! Daily Times photographer Tom Lloyd yesterday recorded (below) the aftermath of the 'copter crash at Waitati. Report, page 5.



## Helicopter Hits Electric Wire

A Mosgiel helicopter pilot is in Dunedin Hospital with back injury after his machine flew into an electric fence supply wire and crashed at Waitati shortly after 10 a.m. yesterday.

The pilot, Garry Donald Cruickshank, of 30 Carlyle Road, Mosgiel, was the only occupant. His condition was given as "fairly comfortable" yesterday afternoon.

The helicopter crashed just after Mr Cruickshank had started a spraying run around the side of a gorse-covered hill on Mr John Thomson's farm on Donald Hill Road.

The machine was spraying gorse and was only a few metres above the ground when it struck a 12.5 gauge wire carrying current to an electric fence at the top of the hill.

The wire wrapped itself around the rotor and rotor shaft, and the machine bounced once before coming to rest in a clear patch of gorse.

The machine came to rest straddling a stock fence less than a metre short of a stout fencepost.

Two ambulances sent from Dunedin were able to drive to the bottom of the hill where the helicopter crashed and ambulance men had only to carry Mr Cruickshank about 20 metres.

The impact had smashed the canopy and broken the tail rotor off the fuselage.



MR JOHN THOMSON, owner of the property on which the helicopter crashed.

The rotor blades were bent and buckled and parts of the machine were scattered for about 5 metres around the crash site.

When Mr Michael Thomson arrived at the scene Mr Cruickshank was still strapped into the cockpit. Ambulance officers were reluctant to move him because of suspected spinal injuries. A second ambulance was sent with a spinal stretcher and Mr Cruickshank was taken to hospital.

The Hiller 12E helicopter, owned by Whirlwind Helicopters, was to have sprayed about 20 hectares of gorse on Mr Thomson's farm.

The wreckage will be inspected by an inspector of air accidents, who arrived in Dunedin yesterday.



# POACHER RODE CHOPPER SKID

A TOURIST guide on a hunting trip with two Americans watched a man on the skid of a helicopter recovering shot thar, he told Timaru Court.

He saw the jet helicopter through a powerful spotting scope, and read the registration number on the machine — ZK-HGG.

The party heard a shot and saw thar rolling down a slope on Lilybank Station, Lake Tekapo, South Canterbury.

The witness, Ronald Benjamin Spanton, farm manager at Lilybank, and a guide for New Zealand Trophy Service Ltd, said he watched while one man recovered the thar and the machine lifted off with six or eight animals.

He was giving evidence in a case in which two men, the pilot and a hunter, appeared on charges relating to poaching.

Graeme Russell Fox, 27, a helicopter pilot, of Fox Glacier, was charged with flying a helicopter below 500ft, landing on Lilybank Station without approval, carrying out an aerial search for wild game without approval, and using an air-

## Timaru Court told of deer hunters' haul

craft to pick up an article without permission.

He pleaded not guilty. He was convicted and fined a total of \$400.

Phillip Jeffery Silcock, 23, a shooter, of Fox Glacier, was charged with shooting from an aircraft and shooting thar at Lilybank without permission.

He also pleaded not guilty. He was convicted and fined a total of \$250.

Mr G. Wagg, of Taupo, appeared for both defendants.

Mr T. M. Gresson appeared for the civil aviation division of the Ministry of Transport, which brought five of six charges against the defendants, and also for the Lilybank runholder, Mr G. D. E. Joll, who brought a sixth prosecution privately.

Spanton said the incident occurred at Mt Ross on August 2. The helicopter was a red and white Hughes 500.

He said he returned to Lilybank Station to inform Mr Joll.

During cross-examination, he said the pilot was not visible. The man who recovered the carcasses was wearing yellow coveralls.

Gary Douglas Ernest Joll

said he contacted the Civil Aviation Division in Christchurch to ascertain ownership of the helicopter.

He was told it belonged to South-West Helicopters Ltd. He said nobody from that company had permission to land, hunt, shoot or recover game on Lilybank Station.

Joll said he went in a fixed-wing aircraft over the area and about the 6000ft level saw a pile of dead thar and two men trying to conceal themselves in nearby rocks.

The animals had been gutted and entrails were lying around in a "gutheap". One man was wearing red coveralls, the other yellow.

Hugh Henry Skilling, an inspector with the Civil Aviation Division, said he established that Fox was the pilot on the day, and spoke to him. Fox denied being in the Lilybank area.

Skilling said Fox told him that he and Phil Silcock had been shooting in the Landsborough river area.

Three witnesses with machines, similar to the one operated by the defendant, said their machines were grounded on that day.

Apart from Fox's machine, the only other Hughes 500 in New Zealand was destroyed in an accident in June, Skilling said.

In submissions on the penalty to be imposed, Mr Gresson said the department considered this as a "typical and classic case of game poaching".

Over the past two or three years, pilots and shooters had made substantial financial gain through poaching.

No doubt the two defendants had made considerable financial gain through their activities on the day in question.

In submissions on the private prosecution, he said many bull thar had been shot and this had had an effect on the big-game hunting service run at the station.

Mr Wagg submitted that there was no proof to Mr Gresson's allegation that the defendants had made financial gain out of the incident. Shortly after the date of the offence, he said, the Forest

Service culled the thar on the station.

Legislation concerning the offence protected "vested interests," said Mr Wagg, and he submitted that it appeared Joll was not entitled to carry out big game hunting activities on the station, as he had only a pastoral lease.

Mr J. D. Kinder, S.M., said the prosecution had proved beyond reasonable doubt that the helicopter working on Lilybank Station on August 2 was the Hughes 500 owned and operated by South-West Helicopters Ltd.

He added that he was satisfied the machine could have flown from its base at Pinegrove, on the West Coast, to the Mt Ross area and returned without refuelling.

## Helicopter Pilot, Shooter Fined For Poaching Thar

TIMARU (PA).—A helicopter pilot and a shooter were yesterday fined a total of \$650 for shooting thar on Lilybank station, Lake Tekapo, last August, by Mr J. D. Kinder, S.M., in the Magistrates Court, Timaru.

Graeme Russell Fox (27), a helicopter pilot, of Fox Glacier, denied charges of flying a helicopter below 500ft, landing on Lilybank station without approval, carrying out an aerial search for wild game without approval, and using an aircraft to pick up an article without permission.

He was convicted and fined a total of \$400 and ordered to pay witnesses' expenses and solicitors' fees totalling \$218.25.

Phillip Jeffery Silcock (23), a shooter, of Fox Glacier, was charged with shooting thar at Lilybank without permission and shooting from an aircraft.

He was convicted and fined a total of \$250 and ordered to pay witnesses' expenses and solicitors' fees totalling \$193.25.

Mr G. Wagg, of Taupo, appeared for both defendants, who denied all charges.

Mr T. M. Gresson appeared for the Civil Aviation Division of the Ministry of Transport, which brought five of the six charges and also for the Lily-

bank runholder, Mr G. D. E. Joll, who brought the sixth prosecution privately.

Evidence was heard on Thursday about how Fox piloted a Hughes 500 helicopter over the Macaulay River area of the station, and while being observed by one of the station staff, the helicopter crew of Fox and Silcock were seen to shoot and recover six to eight thar.

The magistrate said the court regarded this case as one of game-poaching on a large-scale, even though there was no proof of individual financial gain by the defendants. He said the lessees of Lilybank station were entitled to the protection of the law and that the acts of shooting and recovering game on the station were "highly dangerous in the opinion of the court."

The court had been involved in a number of similar cases, the magistrate said, and added that he was aware of the "highly inflammatory situation" caused by game poaching.

He said that this type of offence "is easy to carry out and difficult to detect."



# TWO HUNTERS IN COURT

QUEENSTOWN

Charges brought by the Civil Aviation Department against two Te Anau-based venison meat hunters, heard before Mr E. B. Anderson S.M., in the Queenstown Magistrate's Court yesterday resulted in the two men being remanded to the Invercargill Magistrate's Court for a probation officer's report and sentence.

Both men pleaded guilty to a charge of carrying out an aerial search for deer without permission of the landowner.

In respect of the one defendant, who faced four charges of operating a helicopter illegally, the court permitted the withdrawal of three of the charges, relating to: using an aircraft for picking up an article from the ground without the consent of the occupier; flying a helicopter lower than 500ft; and landing at a place not licensed or authorized for use as an aerodrome, without prior written consent of the land-occupier.

The charges arose from an incident last July 9, when the oc-

cupier of Greenstone Station, Lake Wakatipu, heard a helicopter flying over the property and heard six shots.

## Pilot's Licence

The occupier of the land holds a private pilot's licence, the court was told, and took off after the helicopter, locating it with one deer carcass suspended from it.

He watched the helicopter come down at Home Hill on Greenstone Station.

The helicopter was again followed to enable the landowner to identify the number.

A third man was then picked up by the helicopter from the hillside, and several deer carcasses were uplifted. The landowner followed in his aircraft and saw the deer carcasses released near a truck parked on the Eglinton road. The truck then drove off towards Te Anau.

## Admitted Shooting

As a result of complaints lodged by the landowner, the defendants admitted shooting four deer on the property.

Mr Anderson said the court had given adequate warning about the serious nature of such matters which were subject to six months' imprisonment. He said the court would have to look at the matter carefully.

Bail of \$400, with surety of a similar amount, was allowed.

# Unauthorized

Two men were convicted in the Otautau Magistrate's Court yesterday for unauthorized hunting in a State forest.

Peter William Fluerty, aged 29, of Tuatapere, pleaded guilty to two charges of unauthorized hunting in the Kiwi-Cascade region of the Longwood State forest.

Although a permit was issued to Fluerty, the court was told he went outside the regulations by hunting between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday to Friday, without first obtaining permission.

On April 1, a Forest Service team was doing reconnaissance work in the Longwood forest when it came across Fluerty. He assured them that he had a permit to hunt.

Later, when it was discovered the defendant had not obtained permission, working parties were withdrawn from the bush until the defendant was apprehended.

On April 7, shots were heard in the Kiwi-Cascade region of the forest, and at 3 p.m. Fluerty and Grant Fraser, of Rotorua,

were apprehended, both in possession of high-powered rifles. Both men were hunting for deer.

Fluerty was fined \$60 and \$100 and ordered to pay solicitors fees of \$30.

Fraser was fined \$50, and ordered to pay \$15 solicitors fee. No application was made for confiscation of rifles.

The 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. restriction is for the safety of working parties in the bush. By applying for permission to hunt in these hours, shooters are directed away from the working party areas.

# THREE FINED MAXIMUM

QUEENSTOWN

On charges of discharging a firearm across private land in the Glenorchy district, three young men were each fined the maximum penalty of \$100 by Mr E. B. Anderson, S.M., when they appeared in the Queenstown Magistrate's Court on Monday.

They are Huntly Neville McGregor, of Kinloch, David Gregory McDowell and Glynn Robert Kemp, both of Ohai.

The prosecution had been laid under the Trespass Act and involved an area where people incurring similar charges previously had been warned of the consequences, Mr Anderson said.

"If a warning is going to mean anything it has to be carried out. If there was power to imprison the offenders I would do so, because warning does not seem to do anything to deter them."

"This incident indicates lack of courtesy to the landowner and a danger to lives. The time has arrived when this type of operation has to stop. The only avenue of punishment left to me is a fine, and the maximum penalty for this charge is \$100," said Mr Anderson.

In respect of McDowell, Mr Anderson said he was aware that he had remained in the vehicle, but the operation was all a matter of common purpose, he said.

Sergeant W. W. Maloney, of Queenstown, prosecuting on behalf of Mr David Hugh Miller, of Paradise, Glenorchy, said the charges arose from an incident at 2.50 a.m. on Sunday, April 18, when

four shots were heard in the Paradise area.

A search was made and the defendants, McGregor and Kemp, were located on Mr Miller's property with a firearm.

Mrs Miller spoke to them and asked for names, addresses and the firearm, but after a short exchange between McGregor and Mrs Maloney said.

Mrs Miller and two others found a Holden utility vehicle in the bush on Mr L. Veint's property, with McDowell, Kemp and one other, there, who entered the vehicle and locked the doors.

## Drove Off

The vehicle was driven off and, while manoeuvring, a woman with Mrs Miller was almost run over, Sergeant Miller, they ran off.

The vehicle was followed and stopped at Veint's cattle-yards by Mr Miller, who was waiting there and who also asked for their names and addresses. This was refused.

An argument developed and threats were made, against Mr Miller particularly, and others in general, but McDowell finally gave his particulars.

At the Jordan river an attempt was made by Mr Miller to stop the vehicle, but the driver mounted the verge, almost colliding with Mr Miller, and made off.

Mr Miller later discovered two dead Virginian deer and, with the aid of a dog, four .222 calibre cartridges.

Kemp admitted owning a .222 calibre rifle and was requested to take it to the Queenstown police to have it tested. However, the firearm was later reported as having been stolen.

In evidence, Mr Miller said the Virginian deer were protected in that area for tourist interest and that the shooting had taken place close to a house occupied by a man, his wife and four children.

Acting for the defendants, Mr R. V. Duell, of Dunedin, said they all were keen deer-stalkers and had gone out for the purpose of spotlighting on the Arcadia property adjoining Mr Miller's Paradise property.

They had shot two deer, but were shooting away from the property, where there was no danger to people.

They had been upset when apprehended and had failed to be frank with the police, but had later corrected that error, Mr Duell said.

The deer were not removed from the property.

All defendants entered pleas of guilty.



# Magistrate Dismisses Charge Of Illegal Shooting Of Deer

Staff Reporter

ALEXANDRA.—A charge of illegal shooting of a deer by Kenneth George Smith on April 22 this year at the Minaret Station was dismissed following a hearing in the Alexandra Magistrates Court yesterday.

Smith, who was employed as a shooter by Derek Alexander, was charged under the Civil Aviation regulations. He was represented by Mr C. S. Withnall. Mr C. C. Brunton prosecuted for the Civil Aviation Department.

Evidence was given by the station lessee that he had flown into a valley to start mustering cattle when a helicopter was seen to fly into the same valley. Five shots were fired from it.

The witness said that he got into his own aircraft and chased the helicopter. Alan Henderson (shepherd) told the court that he had taken photographs of the helicopter from the aircraft.

He said that he later returned to the area and found two deer, still warm. He skinned them and had brought one of the deerskins along to the court, he said.

## RECOGNISED PILOT

The aircraft pilot said that he recognised the helicopter pilot as being Derek Alexander. He could not recognise the other person in the helicopter. He said that he had chased the helicopter from his property as it was there without his permission.

Mr B. Cook, an investigating officer with the Civil Aviation section of the Ministry of Transport, said that he had spoken to the defendant on April 25 with regard to a complaint which had been made by the defendant and Alexander concerning a flying incident the defendant had witnessed on April 22.

The defendant gave a written statement about seeing an aircraft parked on an airstrip. When their helicopter was leaving the area, the aircraft had flown between it and the hillside "pretty close."

After being cautioned, he was questioned on an alleged shooting on Minaret property, but had declined to comment. Mr Cook said.

Mr Withnall then submitted that there was no case to answer, as no evidence had been given that the animals shot had in fact been "wild."

Mr Seeman reserved his decision, and the defendant then gave evidence. He stated that he had never been in the area before. He understood that the pilot, his employer, had a permit to shoot on the other side of Lake Wanaka.

He said that at the time of the shooting, he had no idea where he was. He had shot two deer and was chasing two more when the aircraft came along-side.

Under cross-examination, he said that they had been looking for wild deer. He had only found out on the day of the court hearing that the pilot had a licence for an area adjoining the Minaret Station.

Considerable discussion was made by counsel on points of law concerning the Civil Aviation Act and Noxious Animals Act.

## OPEN QUESTION

Mr Seeman found that the prosecution had failed to show that the animals shot were in fact "wild." With the area being grazed there was still the question open that the deer were not wild.

The defendant was entitled to a reasonable belief that his employer did have permits to shoot where he was taken as shooter.

Mr Seeman said that it was highly unsatisfactory for an offence to be committed under a proviso. There was also a repugnance between the regulation (Civil Aviation) and the Noxious Animals Act.

The case was dismissed, but an application for costs by the defendant was denied.

# DEER NOT SHOT FROM AIR

(P.A.)

**MASTERTON**  
The Forest Service's district ranger in Masterton, Mr G.A.J. Greig, has established that deer carcasses were flown out of the Tararua Ranges on Sunday by a Masterton-operated helicopter.

Mr Greig, who has been heading the service's investigation in Sunday's reported aerial deer shoot, said two carcasses were taken out by the helicopter, piloted by Mr Jeff Sayer.

"However, we are satisfied the deer were not shot from the helicopter," Mr Greig said.

"That's the only issue we had to clear up," he added.

He said Mr Sayer's helicopter permit specifies that no shooting can take place from the machine and that a commercial quantity of venison may not be transported out in the helicopter.

What constituted a com-

mercial quantity of venison would now have to be clarified, Mr Greig said.

Earlier, it had been said that no deer carcasses had been transported out of the Tararuas by Mr Sayer's helicopter.

The two deer carcasses had been strapped to the helicopter railings.

Mr Greig added that the five shots heard by hunters in the area of the ranges where Mr Sayer had been operating had all been accounted for.

Mr Sayer had flown into the ranges at about 6 a.m. on Sunday with a Wairarapa catch-

ment board soil conservator to check out rain gauges.

The weather had started to deteriorate and Mr Sayer had decided to pick up three hunters from Cattle ridge before the weather got worse.

Two of the hunters had been picked up. The third hunter had still been hunting.

He had shot a deer, but when he heard the helicopter returning he had left the carcass and ran to meet the helicopter.

## Hind Quarters

Mr Greig said the hunter had then prevailed upon Mr Sayer to fly back up the ridge to pick up two hind quarters he had cut from the carcass.

He added that the three hunters had met up with a Forest Service hunter the previous night. The hunters had not had much luck and the Forest Service hunter said they were welcome to any meat he managed to shoot.

Mr Sayer had decided to pick up the Forest Service hunter, who was located near Bannister basin and explained that he had shot two deer.

These were the two carcasses transported out by the helicopter, Mr Greig said.

He said statements had also been obtained from the soil conservator and one of the three hunters picked up by Mr Sayer.



# Helicopter Bombed Party with Offal

(P.A.)

A South Westland man was fined \$400 in the Greymouth Magistrate's Court yesterday afternoon after admitting to be the pilot of a helicopter that bombarded a group of picnickers with deer offal and then made close sweeps over their heads.

Before the aerial bombardment started, someone called over the helicopter's public address system: "Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, look what we have for you today," Mr N. L. Bradford, S.M., was told.

William Geoffrey McDonald Winefield, aged 35, a helicopter pilot of Mussel Point, near Haast, was fined \$400 (witness expenses \$100) after pleading guilty to a reduced charge of common assault on Wellwyn Harris Collins (known as Joe Collins) at Mussel point on January 22.

Winefield (Mr R. G. Sinclair) had earlier pleaded not guilty to a charge of assault with intent to injure.

Evidence was given that Winefield had been invited to a barbecue at the mouth of the Hahuka river, just north of Mussel point, attended by Collins and some friends.

## Tussock Set Alight

He arrived in a helicopter which hovered only 10 or 12 ft above the group, causing ashes from the barbecue fire to set light to the surrounding tussock.

One witness said he had to lie flat on his stomach as the helicopter, flying in a nose down position, flew only about three feet from him. The incident sparked a fight which culminated in defendant lunging at Collins with an axe, the court heard.

Witnesses spoke of ill-feeling between shooters and helicopter crews involved in the South Westland deer recovery business and described one incident

where the defendant's car was partially rolled over outside the Haast hotel.

Collins, a deer shooter with South-west Helicopters, Ltd, of Fox Glacier, described arrival of the helicopter at the Hahuka river mouth.

It approached at a height of about 50ft, accompanied by the greeting over the loud speaker: "Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, look what we have for you today."

The pilot (defendant) lowered the machine to about 20ft and the person in the passenger's seat (Patrick Nolan), began dipping a bucket into a larger container and bailing out animal offal, said Collins.

The Helicopter then dropped to about 10ft or 12ft and began to chase Colin Tuck along the beach.

At one point the machine, flying in a nose-down position, was only about 3ft from Mr Tuck, who had to lie flat on his stomach to avoid the blades.

Collins said he threw sticks and bottles at the hovering machine to make it move away.

After the helicopter had left, Collins and Tuck drove to Mussel point where the machine belonging to Alpine Helicopters, Ltd, had landed.

Fighting broke out between Collins and Winefield and Tuck and Nolan.

Collins said that at one stage he felt blood running down his cheek and looked up to see Winefield holding an axe in his hand. He was not certain if he had been struck by the axe.

In convicting Winefield, Mr

Bradford said the circumstances of the case clearly indicated a situation where all those involved had not stopped to think of the consequences of their action.

"You and the others involved are living in a remote part of New Zealand that results in you being away from the day-to-day appearance of the law," he told defendant.

"However, I cannot stress too strongly that people living in remote areas doing what is a dangerous occupation are not beyond the law."

Mr Bradford said he had no doubt that following on from the conviction, Winefield's career had been destroyed.

He noted that the injuries to complainant were, fortunately, not too severe.

"Quite obviously bad blood existed between defendant, complainant and others," he said.

## Deer and Birds

Sir,— According to Mr Bell's statement in reply to Mr Collingwood's remarks, Mr Bell says he and his organization, I presume the Dearstalkers Association, are members of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society. Could this be the reason for their lack of concern regarding our wildlife and the sporting people of Southland losing all our rights in hunting grounds? What have they done for Southland? Nothing.

And what has the Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society done? Why didn't they put their foot down years ago to save our New Zealand ground birds from being poisoned by this cruel 1080 poison all over New Zealand when it's known to kill birds? Beats me. Are these people interested in the Forestry Department too?

Please let us write and get this cruel 1080 poison stopped immediately.

D. Hawkless

Bluff

# Deer Hunter Killed

A young man was accidentally shot dead while deerstalking in the Wisp Valley, between Clinton and Owaka, in South Otago, on Monday afternoon.

He was Keith McKenzie Sinclair, aged 21, of Pukeawa, No. 4 R.D., Balclutha.

The accident happened while Mr Sinclair and two male companions, both from Balclutha, were on a hunting trip.

The two men tramped out to Owaka immediately after the accident, and drove from there

to Balclutha to inform the police.

It took them several hours to reach Owaka and, as a result, the accident was not reported until 7 p.m.

A party of police from Clinton and Balclutha, volunteers and the two hunters went back into the bush yesterday morning to

recover Mr Sinclair's body. A detective from Gore was also in the group.

The party returned to Balclutha with the body at 1 p.m.

Balclutha police said Mr Sinclair received shoulder and neck injuries, but declined to reveal how the accident happened.

# Wives Said 'No' to Saunas

(P.A.)

Steam, the very essence of saunas, has put paid to a proposed floating sauna house in the remote Fiordland sounds.

The steam in this instance was that generated by wives — the wives of the fishermen working the crayfish beds and the venison hunters scouring the ranges for whom the leisure palace was intended.

When the little coaster, Ranginui, slipped her moorings at Lyttelton and disappeared into mystery two days after Christmas, she had already had a chequered career — coaster, game recovery ship, and gunboat for an infant republic.

Two weeks after she sailed

from Lyttelton, the Ranginui was "found" again in Deep Cove, in Doubtful Sound.

Work was about to start on her conversion, and it was planned that her refrigerated hold would be torn out to make room for six half-size pool tables and that saunas and massage rooms would be installed in her cabins.

With 400 to 500 men working in the area, men for whom leisure time hangs heavily, the scheme seemed assured of success.

But it was not to be. Once

word of the proposal got out, the opposition from wives mounted.

They felt they saw too little of their husbands as it was, without removing the main reason their husbands came back to "civilization" — the need for relaxation and leisure-time pursuits.

So the Ranginui, already faced with the problem of staffing for the massage parlour, was stranded on an unexpected reef of opposition in the teeth of a rising storm of female fury. Discretion and prudence dic-

tated an end to the plan. The men murmured a bit, but the proposal was dropped.

Today, the Ranginui is moored in Charles Sound, north of Doubtful Sound. Two helicopters bring the deer catches to her refrigerated hold and the fishermen tie alongside to off-load their crayfish and pick up supplies.

One man lives aboard to supervise the day-to-day life of the little ship, once again relegated to the role of floating cool store, and the only steam aboard is from the kettle in the galley.

CHRISTCHURCH



# Will Get Along Without Deerstalkers

"Even though the Southland branch of the Deerstalkers' Association has withdrawn from the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, we will go on quite happily without them. There is no place for either wapiti or deer in Fiordland National Park," said society spokesman, Mr David Collingwood.

Mr Collingwood spoke out strongly on Saturday against the action of the deerstalkers, and Government policy relating to wapiti in Fiordland National Park.

He said that contrary to a statement from the local branch of the deerstalkers the society and the Deerstalkers' Association's principles had never run parallel when it came to having noxious animals in a national park.

"The present Government has got to adopt the findings of

the previous Government caucus. We are determined to maintain the control of noxious animals — even wapiti, which are only noxious animals," he said.

"We have heard long enough that this is a game animal, we are out to protect our forest and fauna.

"Why should our national parks be turned into a cow yard with trampled up mud and the noxious animals excreta everywhere, with the trees polished by animals which exist on them

until the trees fall down?" Mr Collingwood asked.

"The vegetation which has taken centuries to evolve and grow is at risk because these animals need to eat it. What the deerstalkers fail to recognize is that ground cover is being eaten and driven to extinction.

"Not only the canopy trees are being affected but the other species and the birds which depend on them for feed. Areas are being changed to a monoculture — a state where nothing will grow except monotonous

unpalatable trees, altering the structure of the forest.

"Anyone who thinks the present state of parts of the park are desirable must be joking," he said.

Regarding the suggestion that he may have been influenced by Mr L. Henderson, vice-president of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society and a member of the national executive during his visit to the park, he said:

"Les Henderson was with me for much of the time, but I am capable of making my own assessment."

Mr Collingwood said the habitat of the wapiti was unnatural and foreign to its nature, and should never have been brought here. "In its native environment it moves thousands of miles in search of grazing. It would be lucky here if it could move a few miles."

Mr Collingwood said from Wellington that the matter of deer and wapiti in Fiordland was a national issue, and that the society would be bringing all its strength to bear to right the situation.

He said he knew he would be unpopular in certain sections, but he knew also that he had the full support of every member of the society in New Zealand.

He also added that although the society aimed at the total removal of deer and wapiti from the park, they also were well aware that the last one would possibly never be eradicated. This could mean that there would always be an opportunity for the hunter who was willing to tramp into the back country to hunt deer.

Mr Henderson is also a member of the Fauna Protection Advisory Council, which is called on by the Minister of Internal Affairs to advise on the protection of wildlife in New Zealand.

## New Members

Mr Henderson said on Saturday: "We don't like to lose members at all, but at the present time new memberships total 35 a day. It is interesting to note that a large proportion of these are young people.

"They are now much better informed and are showing an intelligent response to the needs of the environment, particularly in national parks."

Mr Henderson said that he and others in the society had been keen deerstalkers but were now content to put first things first.

"It is obvious over the years that we have drawn the public's attention to the damage done by noxious animals. After 50 years it has been proved right."

He agreed with Mr Collingwood's statement that the aims of the society and the deerstalkers had never run parallel. "They have pursued the aims of their society of retaining wapiti in the park," he said. "It is impossible to reconcile park values with the damage done by animals."

Asked about the policy of the society regarding the use of poison for the eradication of deer from the park, Mr Henderson said: "We have been concerned in dealing with the initial population in previously pest free areas, and we are particularly anxious to develop techniques to

prevent these undamaged areas from becoming modified, or seriously damaged like other park areas. Techniques are being experimented with on Secretary Island.

"A technique offering good prospects is one of specific hand applications of poison to palatable plants. This is only possible in areas where we have complete control of entry."

He said the society would have the aim of eliminating deer much in the same manner as rabbits had had to be eliminated when they were scourging the countryside.

"Helicopters are proving a tool in reducing animal numbers, but with the damage done in the park it takes only a few to prevent any vegetation recovery particularly in the bush, which comprises four fifths of the park area.

"As serious administrators of a national park we have to view the future a couple of hundred years ahead, especially when the canopy is composed of many trees with a life span of 400-500 years at least.

## Not Enough

"We have to be concerned that there is not enough regeneration for the canopy replacement even. This means that some time in the future many forest areas will have something very inferior indeed."

Replying to a question about the accessibility of remote areas of the park to ordinary people, Mr Henderson said: "The important thing for most people is that the solitude exists, whether you get there once in a lifetime, or often."

## Breeder stock farmer was copter deer shoot pioneer

FROM helicopters to cows . . . the story of John Williams' business life has had its ups and downs.

Mr Williams is said to have been the first person in New Zealand to use helicopters for commercial hunting and recovery of venison.

In the mid 1960s, at the time venison was fetching high prices

overseas, Mr Williams took the plunge into that high risk but highly rewarding business.

With David Stewart Simpson, of Dunedin, Mr Williams formed Graham Stewart and Co Ltd, later renamed Graham Stewart and Co Holdings Ltd.

That company was said to be the forerunner of what has become a major export-earning venison trade.

Mr Williams employed deer hunters to shoot from helicopters and used the helicopters to recover the animals.

He is also said to have successfully operated other aspects of the business, including opening export markets.

The company also pioneered the export of eels, it is said.

But while Mr Williams was able to see the

potential of helicopters, his company was apparently unable to gain access to the considerable financial resources necessary to keep the business afloat.

His company was taken over about 1969 by T. J. Edmonds Ltd, the food processor, which has also embarked on the game processing business.



Whether deer in the Fiordland National Park should be poisoned in an effort to exterminate them is likely to become an issue. In this article, staff reporter Jack Bradshaw puts forward a personal view in favour of the use of poison. Tomorrow, a contrary view will be put.

# Case For Poisoning Deer

It is apparent that the increasing possibility of deer being poisoned throughout Fiordland National Park is attracting increased interest, and strong argument that it is inhumane, and a sad blow to adventurous youth who would be denied the opportunity to hunt in the wilds. But which of the two, hunting or nature study, will the youth of the future choose?

I have hunted deer in the Ruahine Mountains of the North Island and in the bush of Stewart Island, and I must admit I experienced the "thrill of the chase."

On the other hand I have been into the bush with parties of adults at Borland Lodge, and had explained to me how the glaciers had carved out the impressive valleys, to be clad later with lichens, then moss, and finally with vast expanses of primeval forest.

I have been to Deep Cove and accompanied children into hanging valleys and along forest tracks, and watched their interest quickening.

I have also mustered on walking country, in rugged country up the Awarere valley in Marlborough, and in the snow over Nokomai station on the road to Queenstown, as well as other South Island stations.

Looking back at it objectively, I think the sight of mountain peaks piercing a sea of white cloud from a height of 7000ft was sufficient inducement to climb that high without the necessity to carry a rifle.

I certainly would not subscribe to the notion that botany is a sissy's caper, particularly when it entails hard climbs to discover alpine vegetation, or long tramps through bush and over ridges, just to see some new country, and what grows there.

## Enjoyed Deerstalking

I enjoyed my deerstalking, and the country it took me through. But my appreciation of the environment was nowhere as keen as when I was instructed about what it all meant, and how it had evolved. And, sadly, I cannot say I was remorseful when a stag dropped in its tracks from a 303 bullet.

More significantly, I cannot recall my deerstalking companions discussing the beauty of their surroundings — their conversation, and mine, was centred on the deer that had been dropped on the run, or the stag that had responded to a simulated roar and walked into the sights of a rifle.

In other words, the hunting had been the primary object and the environment had taken second place. I doubt that many deer hunters are really concerned, or even notice that the bush they stalk in has been damaged beyond recall by their quarry.

## Heartless

To many, the idea of poisoning deer will be cruel and heartless. How could anyone kill off such a beautiful animal and justify the action?

A fair question that will be asked by hundreds of animal lovers throughout New Zealand if or when the announcement that poison will be used finally comes.

But strangely there was no outcry when rabbit boards announced their intention of killing off every last rabbit in New Zealand, and using poison in the process. It was also made illegal to keep rabbits as pets, and still no outcry from parents of children who were doing just that.

Apparently there was sufficient justification in the fact that the millions of rabbits, scouring the country from end to end, were ruining the farmers' land.

Even so, like the baby deer, they had been the subject of Disney cartoons and cutely displayed on greeting cards, not to mention their appeal in rabbit pie.

But the rabbiters sprang into action with their packs of heterogeneous dogs, and shotguns, to flush out and eliminate

the rabbit from land eaten to the grey soil.

This operation was followed up by the use of poison — and still no outcry. Those who loved animals as pets or as a target for weekend sport kept their feelings to themselves, or muttered under their breath.

True, they never did kill the last rabbit, and if you know the right place to go, you can still bag a bunny for a stew.

## Justification

But the point was that the rabbits were endangering the livelihood of New Zealand's farmers and the economy of the country. That was sufficient justification for poisoning them off; anyone who thought differently would have been plain silly to have argued the rabbits case.

After all you have to eat, and the sheep and cattle needed all that grass the rabbits were scoffing flat out.

Meat from the cattle, and meat and wool from the sheep were needed to enable people to exist. Even if townspeople did not have a great deal in common with their country cousins, the farmers, they could still see that without them there would be no Sunday joint. So there was justification for the use of poison; it was obvious that the dogs and shotgun had gone about as far as they could in eliminating the "last rabbit."

It would be taking things too far, probably, to mention at this stage that baby lambs have always awakened nostalgic thoughts of spring and nursery rhymes.

Still, the fact remains that those lambs will some day end up in the freezing works, or as dog tucker. But just so long as you don't actually see them killed that roast lamb is far removed from the gambolling, wavy-tailed darling in the paddock.

It may seem that the point has been strayed from, but not true. The idea of poisoning deer will undoubtedly raise



strong emotive argument, and it could be that it will be so strong that no government will dare to risk legislating for it.

The point is that some time ago three and a-half million acres of forest and mountain were put aside, or reserved, for recreation.

## Recreation

Some will say that was a wise piece of legislation, others couldn't care less. However, it was set aside for recreation, and there another argument starts — what is recreation? It depends on your point of view!

Is the park a place to go for an experience of solitude, however brief? Or is it for the hunter who wants to exercise his skill at stalking and enjoy the thrill of the chase?

It is unlikely there would be any real strong divergence of opinions if the

American wapiti had never been landed by ship in the George sound area.

But they were, and the Deerstalkers' Association and the big game hunters now regard them as a trophy animal to be preserved for hunting. The problem is that the wapiti have not led a secluded life since their introduction.

Even though they have not ventured

very far into the park from their original landing place they have mingled freely with the prolific red deer, also classed as a noxious animal by the forest service and the park board.

In fact they have mingled so freely that it is now difficult to tell what is a pure wapiti and what is a hybrid. Certainly it would be impossible to tell if an animal which looked exactly like a wapiti was in fact so, without scientific genetic tests.

This is a fine point, and probably not one that a deerstalker would want to pursue with a wapiti stag lined up in his sights.

## Fascination

It cannot be disputed that many hundreds of New Zealanders have enjoyed tramping through the bush, and climbing the mountain tops in search of a trophy fit to hang on the wall of a room or garage. Hunting has a peculiar fascination that can draw a man back again and again.

Sometimes you can be out for days at a time and not see a thing, and that is when you find out who are the true sportsmen.

Somewhere in all this controversy, which breaks out from time to time, there is a strange inconsistency, maybe more than one.

One cannot help but wonder about the outdoor education schemes run in conjunction with the curriculum in schools. Nowhere is there to be found any mention of hunting in the list of activities enjoyed by pupils at the Deep Cove Hostel or at Borland Lodge.

Their interests are directed to studying native flora and fauna — could this be that the education authorities are biased in favour of the conservationists? Scarcely likely one would think. Bias has no place in education.

It is much more logical to assume that the purpose behind these trips into the back country is to encourage the understanding of the delicate balance of nature. The constant pattern of natural growth and dying — the eco-system which is at once complicated and yet so simple, and which is the substance of the world's economic basis.

In a larger world the unfolding of the fascinating world of nature to a young inquiring mind can lead to far greater consequences, than a mere trip into the country by car.

## Indispensable

This outdoor education is becoming more popular each year. It is now at the stage where such places as Deep Cove Hostel and Borland Lodge are practically indispensable. This has been proved by the response for public assistance to rebuild the crumbling Deep Cove Hostel.

So what! There is no reason why the wapiti and a few remaining deer cannot be left in the park for those who like their sport, it may be said.

But can they? That it takes a lot of animals to ruin the vegetation in an area as vast as the park is admitted, and their numbers are being reduced by helicopter operations, but... it only takes a few hungry deer, or wapiti, to

keep the damage at that level. Meanwhile, the vegetation which is an integral part of the park's character is being changed by the takeover of less interesting species.

An even more powerful factor in the argument for the removal of deer from the Fiordland National Park in particular, yes, by poison if necessary, is that gradually a place to retreat to will become more essential as the years go by.

It is not in the mere realms of fantasy to suggest that human beings require some sort of renewal from time to time. This has been recognized by the acceptance of annual holidays as a normal thing.



It is in this sphere that a national park, with the inherent principle of preserving it in its natural state—"... preserving in perpetuity... for the benefit and enjoyment of the public, areas of New Zealand that contain scenery of such distinctive quality, or natural features so beautiful that their preservation is in the national interest" must come into its own more and more. (The quote is from the National Parks Act, 1952).

Just as it was realized that the rabbit had to be eliminated mercilessly to allow the farming industry to continue, it would seem that it has to be realized that the same applies to the deer in the park.

## More Leisure Time

In an era when there is more leisure time for the public, and the likelihood of still more as automation takes over, it must be evident to many that the need

for recreational pursuits must increase proportionately.

It has already become apparent that people have become more conservation minded, and the popularity of nature films on television is obvious. The number of people without guns visiting the park increases annually, so the need for recreation is not confined to sports such as horse or car racing, yachting or Rugby.

Solitude will have an increasing place, and the logical place for this is in a national park, with areas set aside to enjoy it.

Solitude, for those who do not appreciate the sound of rifle fire, or the sight of primeval forests losing their high canopy of foliage, or their floors being denuded of cover to the bare soil, is difficult to equate with the continued presence of browsing animals such as deer and wapiti in the park.

Other areas than Fiordland National Park have been able to withstand the eating habits of deer, more or less without substantial change of character. Perhaps the alternative to eliminating wapiti, and depriving the deerstalkers of their pastime, would be to transfer them to such areas.

Professor Geoff Baylis, a foundation member of the Fiordland National Park Board, wrote an article in the board's monthly publication, "Te Namu."

He said: "National Parks are places where noxious animals should be eliminated. Deer might possibly be tolerated in other places such as forest parks."

He also was of the opinion that if wapiti had to have a special area then, ideally, it should not be in a national park.

Professor Baylis said in the same article that the use of poison was showing up on Secretary Island as the most promising technique of deer control. But he saw the use of poison only in the final stages of elimination.

It has been said that Professor Baylis could be preparing the way for the board to use poison, or to influence government thinking, by many people spoken to.

But even if this is so, when all other aspects of the park's use have been considered dispassionately, is it really as heartless as it may appear? This is a question which will be harder to answer than the one on the justification for poisoning rabbits or opossums.

Recreation and enjoyment are much more intangible than economy and work, and possibly there is still some feeling of guilt about taking time off now and again to study nature in solitude.

# Attitude to Park Deplored

GORE

The attitude of national spokesman for the New Zealand Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, Mr David Collingwood, over matters concerning trophy hunters in the Fiordland National Park is to be deplored, according to a former secretary of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association's wapiti committee, Mr Warren Taylor, of Gore.

He described comments made by Mr Collingwood in last Friday's Southland Times as biased and said they would be of no assistance in arriving at an acceptable plan to utilize the recreational value of wildlife in the park.

Mr Taylor said he could not accept that Mr Collingwood's remarks truly reflected the opinions of the members of the society on whose behalf he purported to speak.

He continued: "Mr Collingwood should be warned that the retention of wildlife has been a contentious issue for many years and yet the wapiti herd is still there with the tacit approval of central Government. He should be aware that the Government caucus committee report on noxious animals control, published in 1974, recognized (inter alia):

- (a) That the presence of a limited population of introduced animals in the park may be compatible with good land management.
- (b) That the control of noxious animals should take into account the social values at stake.
- (c) That special facilities shall be provided in the park for recreational hunters.
- (d) That the greater public interest is served by policies which retain wapiti as a recreational resource.

Mr Taylor said he was at a total loss as to how to impress

upon people like Mr Collingwood that the hunter of 1977 does not want great mobs of deer roaming "willy nilly" over national parks, "gobbling" up all vegetation to the stage where the landscape was a rocky waste. He said the society's representative on the board, Mr L. Henderson, should be aware of this and questioned why he "had stirred the pot."

"It is significant that Mr Collingwood was directed to the Catseye area which over recent months has received close culling attention to lower the animal population to a level compatible with habitat. It is also significant that the board has not examined in detail all the reasons why animals become concentrated in that area."

## Contribution

"The recreational hunter representatives on the park board sub-committee readily agreed to the culling operation and in fact recreational hunters made an active contribution to the operation."

Mr Taylor commented that it appeared the Forest and Bird representative on the board had unfairly taken the opportunity of using a situation to attack the broader concept of hunting in the park. Did he report to the board at its meeting on March 14 that he had invited Mr Collingwood to inspect the park, either on behalf of the board or the society?

"If Mr Henderson is so opposed to the existence of a properly controlled wapiti herd in the park he should examine closely whether or not he can, in all honesty, continue to sit on the board's sub-committee which, believe it or not, is entitled recreational hunting advisory committee. One should be able to reasonably assume that the members of the committee are genuinely interested in recreational hunters in particular and wildlife as a recreational resource in general."

Mr Taylor continued: "The public, which owns the parks and which provides funds for the wages and careers of those who are employed to serve the needs of the public, is entitled to fair and unbiased service."

"With the Fiordland National Park Board this does not appear to be the case, although this criticism cannot be levelled at all its members."

"That is a broad and sweeping statement which will no doubt be challenged but which can be justified by a close examination of what has happened in the past and what is happening now."

## Cultural Needs

He said it was his opinion a national park gained its character from and should be administered to ensure the recreational and cultural needs of the people who used it or lived in close proximity to it are catered for.

The Fiordland National Park, although owned and paid for by all New Zealanders, was in fact used primarily by Southlanders, who had always made it clear that recreational hunting was an acceptable park usage, and always would be.

"As the caucus committee report of 1974 clearly recognized the value of the wapiti herd as a recreational resource, surely the board is acting in an irresponsible manner if it does not pursue policies directed towards retaining and improving this asset. At the moment the board is clearly selling the recreational hunter down the river by using them in its war of attrition against wildlife in the park."

"National Parks do not exist for the purpose of creating career opportunities for the public service and the sooner this is realized the sooner will the parks be administered in the interests of Southlanders (and others) who have repeatedly said what they want."

Mr Taylor said he was sure that many forestry and park board employees had, in the past seen the merit of and shown an interest in game management but these sentiments he believed had been discouraged and quashed. He was sure too that any present employee of those bodies would be reluctant to openly support wildlife at the expense of his career.

## 'Verbal Garbage'

"As for Mr Collingwood's reference to rocky waste and so on, this is nothing but inaccurate and provocative verbal garbage. He should be aware of the reports put out by the Forest Research Institute, the Forest and Range Experimental Station, and other agencies. Obviously he is not aware and his ramblings do nothing to further the image of the society he purportedly represents, or more importantly to respect the interests of recreational hunters (many of whom are—or were—members of the society) who in recent years have co-operated in no small way with Government agencies to retain a recreational hunting resource in the park in perpetuity, not at the expense of the habitat but compatible with it."

Mr Taylor said not all the blame for the present situation lay at the doors of the park board and the recreational hunters. Both parties were, he was sure, anxious to work together in harmony.

"I have voluminous files of correspondence on this issue going back many years and I do not hold a single letter from any Minister of Lands expressing disavowal with recreational hunting in the parks."

"There is provision in the National Parks Act 1952 for wildlife to be present under control in the park and surely it is for

Cabinet to face up to the situation and make a decision which will enable the National Parks Authority to determine accordingly.

"I assure Mr Collingwood, Mr Henderson and so on, that I am not one of the apathetic silent majority. You should be aware that the Noxious Animals Act was enacted in an atmosphere of emotion when the deer population was out of hand."

With today's control methods the problem need no longer exist and the sooner you realize that the better... in the public interest," Mr Taylor concluded.

## Use of 1080 Seen As Unnecessary

(P.A.) WELLINGTON

The use of 1080 poison and other toxic substances to control noxious animals in New Zealand is unnecessary, according to the chairman and managing director of Consolidated Traders Ltd, Mr T. R. Giles.

In a submission to the Nature Conservation Council, Mr Giles claimed all that was required in New Zealand to control adequately all so-called noxious animals, including rabbits and hares, was sound commercial practice.

Instead of using 1080 and other poisons there were enough trappers, hunters, new school leavers and others to control all the affected areas, he said.

Mr Giles suggested export of meat, fur and hides from these operations could result in a big return to New Zealand in overseas exchange, as there was a virtually unlimited demand for meats, furs and hides overseas.

Mr Giles told the council a specialized fur and game skin processing tannery was being built at Woodville.

"With proper co-operation from Government and with the use of our own companies as a vehicle, we could control satisfactorily all animals concerned without use of toxics," he said in the submission.

He deplored the damage done to New Zealand bird life by the present policy of eradication of noxious animals and said he believed now was the time to take "the necessary stand to absolutely stop the use of toxics for the purpose of control of so-called noxious animals".



# Against Poisoning Of Deer

By JACK MCKENZIE,  
well-known deerstalker and  
member of the Fiordland Na-  
tional Park Board.

After reading recent reports  
on alleged damage by wapiti,  
many readers will look anx-  
iously when they next visit Te  
Anau to see whether the moun-  
tains to the west have fallen  
down, and the lake has emptied  
into the Tasman sea.

A relatively small area of spectac-  
ular damage of ridgetops to the north of  
the George Sound entrance is being ex-  
aggerated out of all proportion to its im-  
portance in an attempt to stampede the  
Government into sanctioning the wide-  
spread use of poison to eliminate the  
last of the deer in Fiordland.

Both wapiti and red deer are highly  
adaptable creatures. Their instinct for  
self preservation has enabled them to  
survive the adversities of centuries.

It is not at all surprising that they  
should move away from the almost in-  
cessant danger from helicopter shoot-  
ing to such places as this maze of jungle-  
filled canyons. To avoid starvation,  
they have been forced to eat some open  
areas of tussock down to the soil.

The problem will continue until they  
move into the sea (in this case), are all  
killed, or until there is a lengthy relief  
from aerial shooting which would per-  
suade them to move out from the bush.

It has been reported that 1080 poison,  
hand-applied to vegetation on the 20,000  
acre Secretary Island, has been effec-  
tive in reducing deer numbers to near  
zero. Efforts to retain the special scien-  
tific characteristics of this island have  
not been disputed, but to extend the  
widespread use of 1080 to the mainland  
will be another matter.

In one fell swoop this action, would  
have the effect of destroying both the  
sport hunting and venison industry with-  
in the park.

Although they have in the past been  
uncomfortable bedfellows, the sports-  
men will find a powerful ally in the well-  
established venison industry. The in-  
dustry has a very large investment in  
equipment and facilities and makes a  
significant contribution to our overseas  
earnings, and employs many people.

As the industry has shown itself ca-  
pable of effectively controlling animal  
numbers, it is unlikely that a govern-  
ment would permit the large scale use  
of chemicals of uncertain potential for  
living creatures — including man.

## No Antidote

1080 poison is tasteless, odourless,  
and it has no known antidote. To quote  
the current slogan of the national cam-  
paign to draw attention to the danger of  
poison to children — "Remember, if it  
is poison, you cannot kiss it better."

Even if the previous objections were  
held invalid, I would object to the use of  
poison because it was being used for the  
total eradication of deer from the park.  
While its tactical use for special pur-  
poses in certain parts of the park may  
be safe and justified, to try to com-  
pletely exterminate by it, or any other  
means, is to ignore the wishes of a sig-  
nificant section of the general public.

There is a clearly acknowledged need  
for the relief of frustration and pent-up  
energy of our young people, and hunting  
is one way of absorbing it. Past and pre-  
sent policies with regard to our game  
animals is having the effect of driving  
our vigorous young folk into the streets.

New Zealand is not old. The pioneer-  
ing spirit persists. An outlet for the spir-  
it of adventure may be quite properly  
found in a variety of ways in a very  
large section of the Fiordland National  
Park. If "hard line" policies are to be  
adhered to, then perhaps as much as 80  
per cent of Fiordland should be reclassi-  
fied as, say, a national recreation area.

## Hypocrisy

Sportsmen objecting to the mass kill-  
ing of game animals are sometimes ac-  
cused of hypocrisy.

"You don't want them killed by us so  
that you can kill them yourselves," the  
critics say.

The true sportsman or woman re-  
spects the quarry. After obtaining a  
quick kill, they try to utilize as much of  
the animal as possible, and ensure that  
sufficient animals remain to maintain  
the species.

Henry Thoreau, the 19th century  
American naturalist and philosopher,  
said that he liked youngsters to go hunt-  
ing. The knowledge acquired taught the  
hunter respect for the quarry and its en-  
vironment, and they became effective  
conservationists as a result.

This finding holds true for most New  
Zealand hunters too.

Recently, while assisting park  
rangers with patrols and inspections, I  
was dropped off from a helicopter in the  
head basin of one of the main valleys  
draining into Lake Te Anau. I had made  
arrangements to be picked up at the  
lake a couple of days later.

I would like to pay a tribute to the  
rangers for their sincerity, dedication,  
and hard work, particularly in regard to  
matters affecting the wapiti area.

In spite of recent reports, which in-  
dicated the contrary, I found the place  
much the same as when I had been there  
at various times over the past 30 years.

Being dropped from a helicopter  
makes for a rather abrupt change from  
"civilization." Until balance is

achieved one cannot help but be affect-  
ed by a feeling of awe at the forces  
which have shaped the place and those  
that exist at the moment. However af-  
ter being buzzed by a squadron of keas I  
took a deep breath, hefted the pack, and  
set off for the lake 10 hours away.

I had expected to hear wapiti bugling  
in this headbasin, but probably because  
of the noise made by the helicopter they  
were quiet during the night and also the  
following morning. There was very  
little evidence of grazing above bush-  
line.

A wallow hole had been used recently  
by a bull wapiti but this appeared to be  
something of the lick and a promise like  
a small boy washing.

A wapiti cow sounded off her alarm  
bark for about five minutes in the eve-  
ning as I strung up my small tent in the  
bush.

## Plaintive Call

The familiar birds all seemed to be  
represented in the company of a  
friendly wren in camp. After dusk I  
heard the plaintive call of a kiwi, and  
the solemn deporks.

As usual, flight was announced by  
blue ducks and kakas. The "feathered  
spies" — the wise ducks — flew over-  
head, warning all the deer that there  
was an enemy in their midst. There  
were occasional pigeons and the usual  
tomtits, warblers, rifleman, fantails,  
tuft, bush robbers, and bush hawks near  
the lake.

Introduced birds were there too —  
blackbirds, chaffinches, and Canada  
geese on the lake. Probably there were  
other species of birds, too, but I did not  
notice them.

There were a small amount of deer  
signs along the way. Their footprints  
could be seen on mud and sand bars. The  
tracks appeared to have been made by  
wapiti. I saw only three animals.

A wapiti now watched me intently  
from her perch on a mountainside as I  
approached. When I came close, she  
strode as ally into a stand of ribbon-  
wood fern. However nimble she  
might have been, she had no chance of  
scrubbing to the tantalizing vegeta-  
tion on the giddy heights above her. The  
other two were merely fleeting forms in  
the thick bush and I could only guess  
that they were wapiti too.

People have often gone to the wilder-  
ness to meditate. As I wandered along  
away from the distractions of civil-  
ization I had an uninterrupted oppor-  
tunity to consider the costly, and time-  
consuming, struggle to retain this noble  
creature for its aesthetic and recreat-  
ional value for future generations.

Wapiti were liberated at the head of  
George Sound in 1905. Ever since the  
area was opened for shooting under li-  
cences, it has been a mecca for big game  
hunters from New Zealand and beyond.

Even this year there were many  
more applicants for trophy blocks than  
there were blocks for them. Over 50 par-  
ties went into the area trying to qualify  
for preference for blocks in the 1978 bal-  
lot during the cull last month.

Why then do some say wapiti should  
be exterminated?

The wapiti area is, of course, in the  
Fiordland national park. Section three  
(2.b) of the National Parks Act states:  
"Except where the (National Parks)

Authority otherwise determines, the  
native flora and fauna shall as far as  
possible be preserved, and the in-  
troduced flora and fauna shall, as far as  
possible, be exterminated." The section  
dealing with introduced species seemed  
savage and out of place in an otherwise  
fine piece of legislation.

In a booklet by Jane Thomson entitled  
"Origins of the 1952 National Parks  
Act" a good deal of the "credit" seems  
to be given to the Federated Mountain  
Clubs. However, as representatives of  
mountain users they must also accept  
the responsibility for serving the death  
sentence on the wapiti. I believe the  
F.M.C. has since repented, but the dam-  
age has been done, and it is exceedingly  
difficult to get the authorities to move  
away from the terms of the Act.

## Retain Wapiti

In its 1974 report, the Government  
Caucus Committee said on page 42:  
"The majority of those who visit the wa-  
piti block are wapiti hunters, and it is  
the wapiti they come to hunt. In spite of  
the fact that this area is National Park  
we believe the greater public interest is  
served by policies which retain the wa-  
piti as a recreational resource, provid-

ing these policies are not detrimental to  
other park values ....."

Later it is stated: "We would empha-  
size that while wapiti have long been  
considered a special case, we believe  
that no other introduced animal  
should receive similar consideration."

Having said that wapiti should be re-  
tained in the park, and that they are a  
special case, they go on to say in the  
same paragraph: "Nor can we accept  
the recommendations of the Deerstal-  
kers' Association, as they have as their  
aim the preservation and management  
of a noxious animal in a national park,  
aims that are contrary to basic prin-  
ciples upon which national parks are  
based."

In their report the Caucus Committee  
recommended that the Fiordland Board  
set up a committee on which recreat-  
ional hunters would be represented. Recre-  
ational hunters are inadequately rep-  
resented on this committee. They have  
found service a traumatic experience at  
times.

This is not surprising as two of the  
board members also serve on the  
boards scientific committee whose pre-  
occupation is the extermination of deer  
from the park.

Park Board, and park authority pol-  
icy, as contained in various statements,  
is the ultimate extermination of all deer  
from all parts of the park. My view, and  
that of the 1974 government caucus  
committee, is that this policy is con-  
trary to the public interest.

Being a member of the board, I regret  
having to reveal this conflict of opinion,  
but this is one matter on which I cer-  
tainly have the courage of my con-  
victions, even if it costs my seat there.

Had the hunting fraternity been repre-  
sented adequately when the National  
Parks Act was being drawn up, then  
quite obviously the serious stumbling  
block which exists now with regard to  
wapiti, and perhaps some other species  
in other parks, would have been avoid-  
ed. Now, since appointments to Nation-  
al Parks Boards are made by the Min-  
ister of Lands, the general public cannot  
express their opinion through the demo-  
cratic ballot paper.





## Doubtful

Beside the tracks of deer in the mud and sand in the valley were the small footprints of stoats. Deer are frequently blamed for the decline in native birdlife because they eat the berry and nectar-bearing plants. This seems a reasonable assumption and may hold good for some areas in New Zealand, but for the wapiti area of Fiordland at least, I very much doubt it.

In 1957, two of us flew to Lake Grave at the head of Sutherland Sound. We hoped that we had anticipated the spread of wapiti and that we would find a great bull capitalizing on the untouched vegetation. We had with us a rubber dinghy and because of this, were able to paddle to otherwise inaccessible places.

We were correct in our assumption that wapiti may have just reached the area, but the only one we saw was in a riverbed about a mile away, and whether he had a great rack or not, we could not determine. We saw three red deer at the head of Sutherland Sound and shot one of them.

Two small valleys we looked into showed no sign that would indicate that deer been in them.

In spite of this, there were no species of birds unfamiliar to us in that area, or did there appear to be a greater abundance than elsewhere.

The bush was a good deal more open than we had expected virgin bush to be. Since then, I have been sceptical as to the role of deer in the declining bird population.

There are areas within the wapiti country where takahe are occasionally sighted. One of these is the Doon Valley, and another is the neighbouring McIvor Burn.

For many years, both these valleys carried a high population of red deer, besides the few wapiti there. In spite of this, the birds still persist there, and two chicks were reported from the McIvor Burn in 1974. It is worth noting that the takahe co-exist with both deer and Canada geese there.

## Co-existence

I am told that the Wildlife Department officers carrying out their search for kakapo are reluctantly shedding preconceived notions on the role of deer. In spite of the fact that deer have never occupied many of the areas they have searched, birdlife is far from prolific.

The one common factor throughout is the ever-present presence of stoats. Of course, deer and birds co-exist throughout most other parts of the world, and as mentioned earlier, introduced birds obviously find Fiordland to their liking.

The heyday of our birdlife would appear to be hundreds of years ago when even moas roamed New Zealand in countless thousands. The largest of these had similar stomach capacities to bullocks.

Andreas Reischek, the Austrian naturalist, in his book "Yesterdays in Maoriland" noted a decline in our birdlife, which coincided with the appearance of rats after their invasion of Fiordland in 1887.

Richard Henry recognized the danger from stoats and spent 14 years shifting ground birds from the mainland to Resolution Island only giving up the ghost in 1900 when he discovered that the tough little predators had swum there, too. Deer were not even liberated in Fiordland until 1901 so to attribute the blame to them for bird scarcity doesn't make much sense to me.

As I contemplated the valley, I had to admit to myself that very little of the valley floor would please the purist botanist. Deer must eat to live.

Very few of the highly palatable "ice cream" plants remained in accessible places. Because of the heavy rainfall, however, these plants still flourish on steep faces quite inaccessible to large mammals like deer. Now, as in years past, I marvelled how plants will grow on overhanging faces.

Any boat-owning reader who has the inclination will find a cavern on the north side of the north fiord, Lake Te Anau, in which a small tree grows down from the roof!

## No Threat

Deer, including wapiti, are never likely to attain their past densities.

Even if they did I am quite positive that, in the wapiti area at least, they pose not the slightest threat to the indefinite survival of any plant species.

In 1950, we built a sod chimney next to our base camp in this valley. Some years ago when passing the spot I noted a sturdy little beech tree growing out of the cinders. There were many other small trees there, too. Over the years scores of deer have been shot on this clearing, yet it is gradually being covered by trees.

Time did not permit a visit to the campsite this time, but I am confident that the process will be continuing. Interested readers will have observed the regeneration of beech on the Eglington road verges, and may know from personal experience that the regrowth of the Manapouri-Monowai transline swathe has necessitated extensive clearance. Many other examples could be quoted.

Some time before I reached Lake Te Anau, I looked into a clear pool in the river. Sharing the spot with a pair of blue ducks was a fine rainbow trout. Perhaps he would have weighed 7lb. I knew of keen fishermen who had tramped here to secure trophy trout. An American friend had landed two. One weighed 13lb and gave my friend the thrill of a lifetime.

Yet these are introduced species. If the Act is to be taken literally, then they should be eliminated. If they are not, and considering the strength of the fishing fraternity, I guess that no one would dare suggest such a thing — then we have a standard for the deer stalker and another for the fishermen.

When I finally arrived at the hut after dark, I found that there were eight boats and 30 people there. In 1950, when we spent five weeks in the valley, we saw no other person. Probably these figures do give an idea of the increase in use of the park and people's ability to reach these spots.

## Fishing

Most of the people were fishing for the introduced trout, and many would have hunted the introduced deer had permits been available to hunt them. (The area was closed just before the wapiti trophy hunt).

There were some allegations of poor trout fishing due to the Mararoa Weir part of Manapouri power scheme which had no rights in a National Park either.

Interested readers may find their next trip to the Eglington-Hollyford region more rewarding if they check for themselves some of the points I am making — where this is possible. For those who do not have the time or inclination, there is no real need to go far from a car.

Go and see Ewan Meredith's fine animals in his "wapiti park" on the Manapouri road. These creatures, in their wild state, have survived predation by man and animals since the dawn of time. Do you agree that to use poison against them is a dirty, uncivilized trick, particularly when it is unnecessary?

Take a look at the bush in the Eglington

Valley, note the regeneration of beech on the road verges and compare this with that which occurs in the shade of the canopy forest. Would you agree that the shade is much more of an inhibiting factor to regeneration of beech than is the presence of deer?

Look at the forest clinging to the walls of the Hollyford and Cleddau Valleys — do you not agree that deer would need uncanny agility to pose any threat to it?

Did you think when you drove through the Homer tunnel from an area where



deer are found to one where they are not, that you were seeing more birdlife either in numbers or species?

Those who wish to take their studies further may read some of the many publications which deal with exploration in New Zealand. It will be seen that much of our birdlife had been declining for centuries. Acceleration of this decline will be seen to be attributable to forest clearance by man, and to the depredations of introduced predators — particularly the stoat. I am sure you will agree that the role of the deer, particularly in Fiordland, is minimal.

At a time when the need for the relief of frustration and pent-up energy by vigorous means is being recognized, present policies are having the effect of driving many young men onto the streets.

## Closer Settlement

The game range is being constricted by closer settlement in occupied run country. Exploitation of the game resource, illegal activity leading landowners to either kill or capture deer on their properties has been a disaster for sportsmen.

Sportsmen looking to unoccupied Crown land and national parks for recreational hunting and who have never studied the fine print of the various Acts of Parliament, are finding that their sport is being obliterated there, too.

Throughout this article, I have tried to make the reader feel involved. If you have checked my statements, you may feel that something more than silent assent is required. Perhaps you may feel disposed to put pen to paper and express your feelings to the public opinion column of this newspaper, or perhaps to your M.P., or you could join the discussion at Mr Hawkless's promised public meeting on May 12.

One of the things I feel is endangered is hunting, one of the more worthwhile parts of the New Zealand way of life.



## HELICOPTER RECOVERY OF VENISON

Submissions about future possible improvements to helicopter venison recovery from Fiordland National Park will be considered by a special consultative committee of the park board.

The submissions have come from helicopter operators in the South Island at the invitation of the board.

The committee will consider the submissions and interview the operators concerned at a future meeting.

The committee elected by the board consists of Messrs J. McFarlane, J. McKenzie, L. Henderson, J. Hall-Jones, with the possibility of other board members joining them.

It was discussed at a meeting of the board that there has been a marginal increase in the numbers of deer taken, but that there was a significant increase in the number of hours flown over the past 12 months.

## Game Animals

Sir, — All the arguments these exterminists use for the eradication of deer by poison are as impracticable and nonsensical as those who claimed that Lake Manapouri after it was raised would be just as attractive and better than ever. The same modern day version of such romantic reverie is being repeated again by your correspondent, Mr Bradshaw, who opens his extermination campaign by asking whether the public interest wants to use Fiordland for nature study or for hunting?

Common justice and observation would reveal that either interest has as much right to appreciate the recreational pursuits of Fiordland as those of bird watchers or trappers. The question is who should choose what exclusive interest should prevail in a national park that has within its bounds game animals that cannot be totally exterminated? It is not a question of extermination — it is a question of public interest in hunting and since the public has various interests for such an area, such use should also be based on multi use concepts. The argument is not one of exclusive rights to any particular group of people who want to exterminate all that is bad for their own individual self gratification and glorification, but an argument concerning the "best use concept," given the fact that animals do exist in this area. Of course most of these glorificationists believe in a state of absolute ecological perfection and use such mythology in their reasoning to bring about their desired ends.

Within the given circumstances the fact that such a state of perfect forest evolution cannot be attained is of no relevance to such perfectionists. Instead of applying common sense and reason to the problem they merely hide behind and quote a nonsensical Act of Parliament that was drawn up in days gone by and is carried out by a group of

safe routiners who constitute our national parks hierarchy.

It has never occurred to the exterminists that groups of people who after having had their appetites whetted by school party trips into the park, eventually extend their natural instincts to hunting and all the associated experiences of exploration and adventure that such recreation can offer.

Has it never occurred to our park boards that such hunting recreation is in the national interest? The government, that is the public, deems that recreation is necessary for our youth by spending millions of dollars each year to foster such activities. The facts are we have an Act stipulating the eventual extermination of the very youthful activities that the Government wants to promote. How stupid. It erases from everyone's conscience the distinction between justice and injustice — between those who want to hunt, camp and explore the wilds, and those who simply just want to look and preserve a state of unattainable perfection of days gone by. The safest way to make laws respected is to make them respectable and this ought to be the recommendation of our Park Board. They ought to see that the public interest is provided for instead of having a policy of exterminating such interests. Of course the Park Board will contend that they only administer the Act. What they mean is they only carry out the persistent wishes of those who for various reasons want to exterminate everything that in their eyes is of no value to their own immediate selfish use.

These park board exterminists say that their poisoning plans are highly scientific and democratic and that there ought not to be disagreement with regard to them and well intentioned people. Administrators cannot be allowed to dictate policies other people aim at.

It is a fact that all people differ in their value of recreational pursuits. It is wrong for a committee of park board officials to over-rule the wishes and recreational plans of other people, and force them to submit to the great all-embracing animal extermination plan of the almighty State.

The only safe way out of this great dilemma is for the administrators to recommend policies that ensure a multi-use concept of Fiordland. They must come to understand that all their extermination policies are unquestionably contrary to the best public use.

Dipton.

Allister McDonald

# Deer Control Full-scale Operations

**Deer control in Fiordland National Park is important and critical, and can no longer be hampered by distinction between deer and wapiti.**

This was said by Professor G. Bayliss at a recent park board meeting. Subsequently the board adopted a resolution of scientific committee to "resume full-scale commercial helicopter operations in the area."

The area referred to was the Stuart and Franklin mountains which reach into the wapiti area from the eastern side of the park.

Mr J. McKenzie, member of the board and chairman of the board's recreational hunters advisory committee, requested that before any killing of wapiti be engaged he should be consulted.

This was further discussed at last week's meeting, and his request was turned down on the grounds that it would restrict the chief ranger, Mr W. Sander, in the execution of his duties.

A further request that the board should first be consulted was also turned down. It was resolved that the chief ranger would consult the chairman of the board, Mr J. P. Harty where it was proposed to shoot wapiti.

Mr McKenzie asked that it be recorded that he was opposed to this, and that he regarded it as

serious. He said that he could not let the matter lie as it was.

### Disagreement

The motion to carry the resolution was carried, but not without some dissenting voices from members of the board.

Mr L. Henderson had said the main requirement was the protection of the land and its vegetation.

Assistant chief ranger, Mr A. Cragg, said shooting was on a moderate basis and should be stepped up.

Mr McKenzie pointed out that if there was any intensification of damage this was due (other than in the Catseye-George Sound area) to the aerial shooting of the tops, driving the animals into the bush. A scientific study was needed.

Concern was expressed that the board should have to wait for a critical situation to arise before making a decision, and it was agreed that the situation should not continue where the chief ranger was unable to take immediate action in the reduction of animal numbers, if the protection of the land and the vegetation was such it required urgent action.

## 131 Wapiti Shot

**The final analysis of the wapiti herd reduction shoot in Fiordland National Park showed that 131 animals were shot, and that it took 58 man hours for each animal shot.**

These figures were released at last week's meeting of the Fiordland National Park Board in Invercargill. There were 136 shooters involved in the culling operation, and they shot 131 animals. This represented 0.9 animals per shooter.

Alpine Helicopters advised the board that during their operations in the wapiti block, under the supervision of park board staff, they removed 2012 ani-

mals.

The board's share of the returns from the operation was \$56,773.30.

Results of 1977 herd reduction in wapiti (seven days starting April 17):

Block A Worsley river, nine animals, nine shooters; B Billy Burns narrows creek three, 7; C Lower Glaisnock, 3, 10; D Upper Glaisnock, 16, 7; E Lugal Burn 14, 8; F Mid Burn, nil, 6; G Hankinson loch burn, 1, 6; H Wapiti R, 5, 10; I Doon R, 3, 6; J Charles sd, 2, 12; K Charles caswell, 15, 8; L Caswell sd, 1, 4; M Mt Tanilba, 2, 3; N White Water, 2, 3; O George sound, 14, 8; P George river, 14, 8; Q Bligh sound, 12, 6; R North western, 8, 9; S Large burn, 6, 2.

Total: 131, 136.

## POISONING DEER

In an attempt to prevent deer getting into the Grebe Valley of Fiordland National Park the Forest Service will be laying 1080 poison in the Transit area.

The operation will probably start some time this week.

Mr J. P. Harty, chairman of the board, said the board had raised no objections, as it had always been its policy to eradicate deer in this area.

Mr A. Cragg, assistant chief ranger, said collars would be used on animals in an attempt to find the direction deer were moving into the Grebe.

16/5/77



# PRIVATE HUNTERS SHOULD GO AFTER OPOSSUMS

The Forest Service should allow private hunters to assist in the reduction of opossums rather than poison them with 1080 poison.

Mr B. Candy, national president of the N.Z. Big Game Hunters' Association, said in Invercargill their skins would prove valuable to the economy. "As it is they are being left to rot after being poisoned," he said.

"Last season opossum hides brought \$7.50 on the market,"

He said that in Mid Canterbury opossum carcasses had been analysed and the rate of T.b infection was found to be only .06 per cent. One farmer whose sheep were in an area laid with the poison lost 160 sheep last July, and had lodged a claim with the department concerned.

"If professional trappers were put in after the opossums they would yield the country a profit rather than be a burden on the taxpayer, as at present," Mr Candy said.

He said the Forest Service wanted to see the opossum declared a national pest, the same as the rabbit was.

## "Excuse"

"This is just an excuse to set up another board like the pest destruction board, wallaby board, noxious animals advisory committee and so on."

Referring to the Mt Luxmore issue, Mr Candy said: "The Mt Hutt ski field at the back of Methven in Canterbury, has a road bulldozed to an altitude of 5500ft, and it is nine miles long."

"During winter this road is

graded and the snow pushed over the edge. It then slides down steep slopes, carrying away vegetation.

"My association would express grave concern at a proposed development entailing roading in Fiordland National Park, as is envisaged by Alpine Development," he said.

Regarding the use of helicopters in the control of deer in the park, Mr Candy said: "Why should Alpine Helicopters, one company, have the right to exploit a public resource in a public domain—the park is a public domain after all."

He said that item 17 on the application for trophy hunters in the park reminded them that to leave litter in the park was an offence under the National Parks Act.

He showed a photograph, taken at Lake Shirley, in the

park, which pictured about 20 deer or wapiti heads. He said these had been left in a swamp, together with the guts of the animals—about 100 heaps in all—lying in a water course to the lake.

"Does this mean the park board has one set of values for the recreational hunters and another for the commercial hunters?" he asked.

Mr Candy said the Minister for the Environment, Mr V. S. Young, had been supplied with this information. But after a recent visit to the park, had told the Big Game Hunters that the board was carrying out its duties in accordance with the National Parks Board Act to eradicate noxious animals within the park.

## Logical

Mr Candy thought it was "logical that if wapiti were in large numbers and causing damage to the park then recreational hunters in the reduction cull in the wapiti block should be allowed to shoot them for trophies."

"Professional shooters are only more efficient because they spend more time at their job than recreational hunters."

"China is already over-populated, yet we are selling antlers in the velvet to them as an aphrodisiac. This is an unethical practice which is gaining the Fiordland National Park Board a bad name," said Mr Candy.

# 'Killing Our Heritage'

"New Zealand has lost many hundreds of acres to foreign interests, and will lose a lot more if we are not careful," the national president of the Big Game Hunters' Association told a meeting in Invercargill on Saturday night.

The public meeting was held primarily to open an Invercargill branch of the association. There were 24 members of the public present.

Mr B. Candy said the Land Settlement Board was a law unto itself and could not be objected to. It was becoming harder and harder to get into the back country, he said.

"And once you get there, there is little to find—the Government is killing our heritage. Helicopters are being used to wantonly destroy our heritage."

He said that farmers have closed access to their land for hunters because the animals were too valuable to them.

## Exploited

He said that 21,000 acres in the Manakau ranges had been exploited by a company which had taken out the native tawas. This was what happened when commercial interests stepped in, said Mr Candy.

"I see here that beech is being mowed down all the time," he said.

Mr Candy said he knew of land critically eroded which had been sold to graze stock—"We wanted this stopped, but there was no way."

"With the formation of a branch here you could provide us with information."

Mr Candy told his audience he was against the appointment of the park board by the director-general of Lands.

"I say we will be taking a close look at this and see if we cannot get this board to come up for election. There should be an equal balance between departmental and other interests."

"When we see the board picked by a Government department we have very little faith in it—you can see the problems we face," said Mr Candy.

"The wapiti situation does concern me. I haven't been into Fiordland, but I have had members in there and they say there is nothing wrong with the park. They cannot see why Government department reports do not say the same. There are not large numbers of deer there, and some areas are inaccessible to them," he said.

It was moved that a branch of the Big Game Hunters' Society should be established in Invercargill. Mr M. D. Wright, of Dacre, was elected as chairman.

There were no nominations for vice-president. Mr P. Hagen was elected as secretary and also treasurer, in the absence of a nomination for that office.

The committee elected is Messrs A. J. Campbell, Invercargill, R. Bailey, Otatara, and D. Hawkless, Bluff.

Mr Candy said that Mr J. Randall, who had accepted the appointment of patron, had several years' experience in the high country.

Mr Wright said some action could be expected now, with the branch established.



This red deer stag showed little fear of the national president of the Big Game Hunters' Association, Mr B. Candy (on right) and Mr J. D. Hawkless, when they met at Queens Park on Saturday.



# Charge Against Helicopter Pilot Dismissed

A charge against a Wanaka helicopter pilot, Alan Trevor Duncan, that he exceeded flight time, was dismissed in the Invercargill Magistrate's Court yesterday.

Duncan was charged that between February 1 and February 20, 1976, in the areas of South Westland, West Otago and the Fiordland National Park, he exceeded flight time.

He pleaded not guilty to the charge, heard before Mr I. Hay S.M.

A Wanaka solicitor, Mr R. G. Sinclair, appeared for the defendant and Mr J. R. Pritchard for the civil aviation division of the Ministry of Transport.

It was alleged that between March 1, 1975, and February 29, 1976, Duncan exceeded the maximum number of flight hours allowed per annum to holders of his class of commercial pilots licence.

Regulations state the maximum is 1100 hours per annum, but Duncan allegedly flew 1399 hours.

## Commercial Licence

He holds a commercial pilot's licence for the purpose of shooting and recovering venison.

It was critical to the civil aviation division's case that Duncan exceeded flight hours while classified as an aerial work pilot.

Because this was not established the charge was dismissed.

Duncan's defence was based on the definition in the regulations of aerial work.

Mr Sinclair submitted that aerial work operations only began once the deer were picked up by the helicopter.

## Searching, Shooting

He said 50 per cent of the time taken for most shooting operations was spent carrying deer or deer carcasses. The rest of the time was spent searching and shooting.

Mr Hay said the real question was for the prosecution to establish the aerial work operations carried out.

He said the aerial search for the deer did qualify as "aerial work operations" under one sector of the regulations.

But he was placed in a "quandary" because Mr Pritchard had based the prosecution on another section of the regulations which could not uphold that the initial search and shoot fell into the definition of aerial work.

"Unless sub-paragraph three is brought into it, I would have to dismiss the charge," said Mr Hay.

Mr Sinclair protested at the change, saying he had prepared his defence on the under-

standing that Mr Pritchard was prosecuting on the original section of the regulations.

The Magistrate adjourned to allow Mr Pritchard time to decide whether he wanted to change the basis of prosecution to the other section of the regulations.

After lengthy consultations both with civil aviation officials and defence counsel, Mr Pritchard did not apply for the change and Mr Hay had no hesitation in dismissing the charge.

## 11 Charges

A total of 11 charges against Alpine Helicopters were withdrawn by civil aviation and one against another helicopter pilot, Wesley Stuart McIvor.

Alpine Helicopters Ltd, had pleaded not guilty to nine charges of operating an aircraft with an unlicensed pilot between September 27, and October 10, 1975.

No reason was given for the withdrawal of charges.

## Not Living in N.Z.

The charge against McIvor, dating between February 1, and February 29, 1976 for exceeding flight time was withdrawn be-

cause the defendant was no longer in New Zealand.

With the dismissal against Duncan and McIvor's non-appearance, two further charges against Alpine Helicopters of allowing flight time to become excessive, were withdrawn.

The company had pleaded not guilty to the charges.

## Hunting

Sir, — One sometimes sees letters condemning certain local bodies for not helping youth. Why then does the Government set out on extermination programmes on pigs, deer and the like which lead youth to fitness, self reliance and memorable healthy, enjoyable times, and destroy and restrict what is natural and then look round for an unnatural substitute for the unnatural substitutes that youth had naturally found?

I support Mr Allan Harrison, of Dip-ton, who knows what he is talking about from his own experiences, time and effort.

Len Butterfield

# Concern Over Conflict

The conflict which has arisen between runholders and helicopter "poachers" in South Otago and Southland is concerning the Southland branch of the Big Game Hunters Association.

The branch chairman, Mr Malcolm Wright, said yesterday it was evident that a serious situation was in the making.

Information from the association's executive indicated the Minister of Civil Aviation was called upon to have urgent legislation passed to provide much heavier penalties for helicopter "poachers."

Mr Wright said the executive advised the Minister it could no longer tolerate the "totally inadequate" penalties and invited him to include three months' licence cancellation for the pilot on the first offence and three years on the second charge.

"If these penalties were imposed, many of the poaching problems confronting runholders would disappear over-

night as no pilot nor company could stand the financial losses which they would incur," he said.

## Monetary Value

It appeared that the Government was not interested in putting a stop to the poaching because of the monetary value of the so-called noxious animals.

Mr Wright said the executive was seeking a meeting with the Minister of Forests.

The association had sought legal opinions, and if the legislation on the revised noxious animals bill shortly to go before Parliament was not to its satisfaction, "certain tactics open to us may be implemented."

# Ranger Condemns Park 'Profiteers'

The assistant chief ranger of the Fiordland National Park has hit out at people whose "only thoughts are how they can make a profit out of the park."

Writing for the park board's publication "Te Namu," Mr A. Cragg said there appeared to be misdirected people who considered national parks were set aside for them to do as they liked.

"These folk consider it is theirs to wreak havoc on, with their only thoughts as to how they can profit from it. In other words, 'New Zealand the way they want it,' and to hell with everybody else."

He considered that as national parks belonged to the people of New Zealand, they could belong to no individuals. For the same reason, park boards were not elected.

"Should they be elected then a general election would be necessary. In plain language, Fiordland does not belong to the people of Te Anau, or Southland, or a busload of tourists, but to the people of New Zealand," Mr Cragg said.

## Parks Act

He quoted the National parks Act that the parks should be so administered, and maintained that:

"They shall be preserved as far as possible in their natural state.

"Except where the authority otherwise determines, the native flora and fauna of the park shall as far as possible be preserved, and the introduced flora and fauna shall as far as possible be exterminated.

"Sites and objects of archaeological and historical interest shall, as far as possible, be preserved.

"Their value as soil, water and forest conservation areas shall be maintained."

"Subject to the provisions of this act, and to the impositions

of such conditions and restrictions as may be necessary for the preservation of the native flora and fauna, or for the welfare in general of the parks, the public shall have freedom of entry and access to the parks, so that they may receive in full measure the inspiration, enjoyment, recreation and other benefits that may be derived from the mountains, forests, sounds, lakes and rivers."

Mr Cragg said: "Those of us who care must see that park values are in no way depreciated by unwarranted development or commercialization. Who are we to take all and leave nothing for future generations?"

"The way I see it is that national parks should be the same in 500 years time, accepting natural changes, as they are today," said Mr Cragg.

ilar circumstances in the Alexandra Magistrate's Court.

In that instance, the defendant helicopter company appealed to the Supreme Court which overturned the Magistrate's decision. The issue is now being decided in the Court of Appeal after the Civil Aviation in turn appealed against the judge's decision.

Takahe Helicopters Ltd face charges of conducting an air search for deer without the occupier's permission and recovering deer without the occupier's permission.

Clement Ogden Goodall was charged with conducting an aerial search for deer without the occupier's permission; recovering deer without the property owner's permission; operating an aircraft at night without a valid licence and operating an aircraft at night in contravention of instrumental flight rules.

On all charges, the defendant company and Goodall were adjourned without plea until the next sitting of the Lumsden Magistrate's Court on July 11.

## 'One of Highest'

## No Plea

Charges referring to the alleged shooting of deer on private property during hours of aviation darkness have been laid against Clement Ogden Goodall and Takahe Helicopters Ltd.

No plea will be entered until a Court of Appeal ruling is known relating to a judgment for sim-

# Deer Auction

New Zealand's first deer auction will be held on June 24 at Criffel Game Park, Wanaka.

The auction, consisting of 333 deer, will be conducted by Wrightson N.M.A.

Most of the deer are seven-month-old weaners, and the remainder are 30 hinds and three stags.

Mr Lester Thorn, head auctioneer at Wrightson N.M.A., Invercargill, is optimistic the auction will be a success.

Inquiries have been received from throughout both islands

and a large number of buyers is expected.

Special seating has been arranged around the yards at the Wanaka property to accommodate everybody and to provide a good view.

The auction will be on Mr Tim Wallis' property, a prominent personality in the deer industry.

Deer farming has developed rapidly in the last few years and Mr Thorn said if this auction was successful the company may hold one on the property each year.



# Farmers ready for war on the deer poachers

from Mike Valintine in Invercargill

Hostility between Eastern Southland run-holders and helicopter deer poachers is on the verge of breaking out into an open battle.

Frustrated by the ineffectiveness of the law, one incensed run-holder has already fired a bullet through a helicopter whose crew were poaching.

Another is considering taking the law into his own hands and stringing trip wires in a valley.

Others have threatened sabotage.

Encouraged by premium prices for both deer carcasses and live deer, the poachers have cleaned out many properties, scattered stock for miles and have even shot and stolen cattle.

The small fines the poachers receive, if convicted, is no deterrent although "pressure" from farmers is having some effect.

"Some of those run-holders out the back are so angry they are talking about taking the law into their own hands," a Waikaiti man said today.

"They are as sour as blazes — some are saying that they'll put a bullet in the next helicopter they see."

"But you can't shoot a fellow — you'd be landed with murder."

## Wires

"Another run-holder said he was going to string out a valley with wires," he said.

The poachers are flying with their identification numbers taped over and some are making pre-dawn raids or flying into valleys near homesteads under the cover of mist.

"We hear them all the time, but we don't often get to see them," a Balfour farmer's wife said.

Many poachers are more daring and openly shoot illegally, but even if spotted they are difficult to identify.

One run-holder said that even if the poachers were identified it was months before they appeared in court and then the case had to be proved beyond any doubt for a conviction.

## 'Peanuts'

"They normally get fined between \$50 and \$200."

"That's peanuts to them — some of these guys are making \$2,000 a day or more," he said.

Because of the ineffectiveness of the fines, some run-holders are finding their own brand of pressure more effective.

"The guy that got shot at skipped off to Australia — the heat was getting too much for him," one farmer said.

Another poacher apparently curtailed his operations after he found a note in his helicopter informing him that unless he stopped poaching "strange things would be put in his oil".

## Leased

According to run-holders, most of the poachers were

either owner - operators or leased helicopters.

They worked individually and were out for a fast buck.

They appeared to be operating from Te Anau, Queenstown and Alexandra.

Most run-holders were unsure of the numbers of helicopter poachers. Estimates vary between three and a dozen.

Most of the helicopters were flying every available day and were shooting or catching up to 20 deer a day.

One farmer said his neighbour had heard a helicopter in the distance and decided to investigate.

## Ridge

He found a stockpile of 18 deer on a ridge, but before he could take any action he was spotted by the helicopter pilot who quickly made off, leaving the deer to rot.

A truck was waiting for the load on a nearby road.

A Waikaiti runholder said that even pressure from farmers had little effect in scaling-down operations.

"As soon as you get rid of one lot another lot starts up — there's just no end to it," he said.

The poachers are apparently receiving between \$100 and \$150 for carcasses and more than \$300 for live deer.

However, these estimates were described as very conservative by a Mossburn runholder.

## No control

He said there would be no control of poaching until the offenders were prosecuted under either the Crimes Act or the Arms Act, instead of the Trespass Act.

"Most of these guys leave themselves wide open for charges under these Acts, but the Civil Aviation Department doesn't seem to give a damn," the run-holder said.

He said pressure brought to bear through conventional channels, such as Federated Farmers, had been unsuccessful.

The high price paid by deer farmers for live animals had further encouraged poaching in the area.

In addition to the widespread killing or stealing of deer on private property, the poachers also caused major problems with grazing.

One run-holder said it had taken him a few weeks to shift his stock to a winter grazing block, but in five minutes a helicopter had scattered the stock over a huge area.

He said it took him several weeks to get the stock back again on to winter grazing.

The poachers were described as cunning by run-holders.

One poacher had recently carried out illegal shooting on a Naseby property.

The next day he returned to the property by car and asked the farmer for rights to shoot there.

He was told by the farmer that as there had already been poachers on the property the day before he might as well have the rights.

## 1080 Poison Reports This Month

(P.A.) WELLINGTON

Reports from two separate official inquiries into the use of 1080 poison to kill opossums and deer are expected by the end of this month, according to the chairman of the Nature Conservation Council, Dr Carolyn Burns. The council considered its interim report on the subject at its meeting in Wellington on Thursday.

The other report is being prepared by the Forest Service and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the two bodies which are chiefly responsible for programmes using 1080. Their investigation was announced by the Minister of Forests, Mr Venn Young, last week.

The report by the Nature Conservation Council is concerned solely with the effects of the poison on bird life, and follows allegations recently that native birds had been killed when they ate carrots laced with 1080 in the central North Island.

Dr Burns said 75 submissions had been received, but further enquiries had still to be made before final recommendations could be sent to the Minister.

## DEERSTALKERS — HUNTERS

### PUBLIC MEETING

will be held on

MONDAY, JUNE 13,

at

Y.M.C.A. 8.00

COME AND JOIN THE BIG GAME HUNTERS ASSN  
Ingill Branch

We want to stop the use of 1080 poison on our Deer and Wapiti also to form a very active recreational Hunting Club.

Guest speaker: Jack McKenzie,  
All Welcome.

90373

## Use of 1080 Problem

A remit requesting that some form of compensation be made available to farmers who lose stock through 1080 poisoning was passed at yesterday's meat and wool section meeting of Federated Farmers (Southland).

Mr F. Stevens (Browns) cited a case of a farmer losing a dog, valued at \$600, through eating a poisoned rabbit.

"The insurance company has declined responsibility in meeting the claim," he said. The farmer was now faced with the prospect of letting off his dogs

only when required for sheep work, he said.

Mr O. Potts (Balfour) told the meeting that he had lost a dog in similar circumstances.

Mr J. McKenzie (Dipton) said that a case he knew of could have had serious results. Some homing pigeons died from 1080 poisoning and an unsuspecting youth had opened up one of the dead birds and carried the contents to him, Mr McKenzie said.

"There must be stricter controls on the use of 1080," he said.

"If the rainfall is not high enough after poisoning occurs, it could be three months before carcasses ceased to be dangerous," said Mr A. J. Hamilton. Public liability insurance covers a wide variety of things, he said, but when neither party was at fault the insurance companies don't pay out. The statute covering the Act must be questioned, he said.

The remit was carried.

## Venison Sales Worth \$11.5m?

(P.A.) WELLINGTON

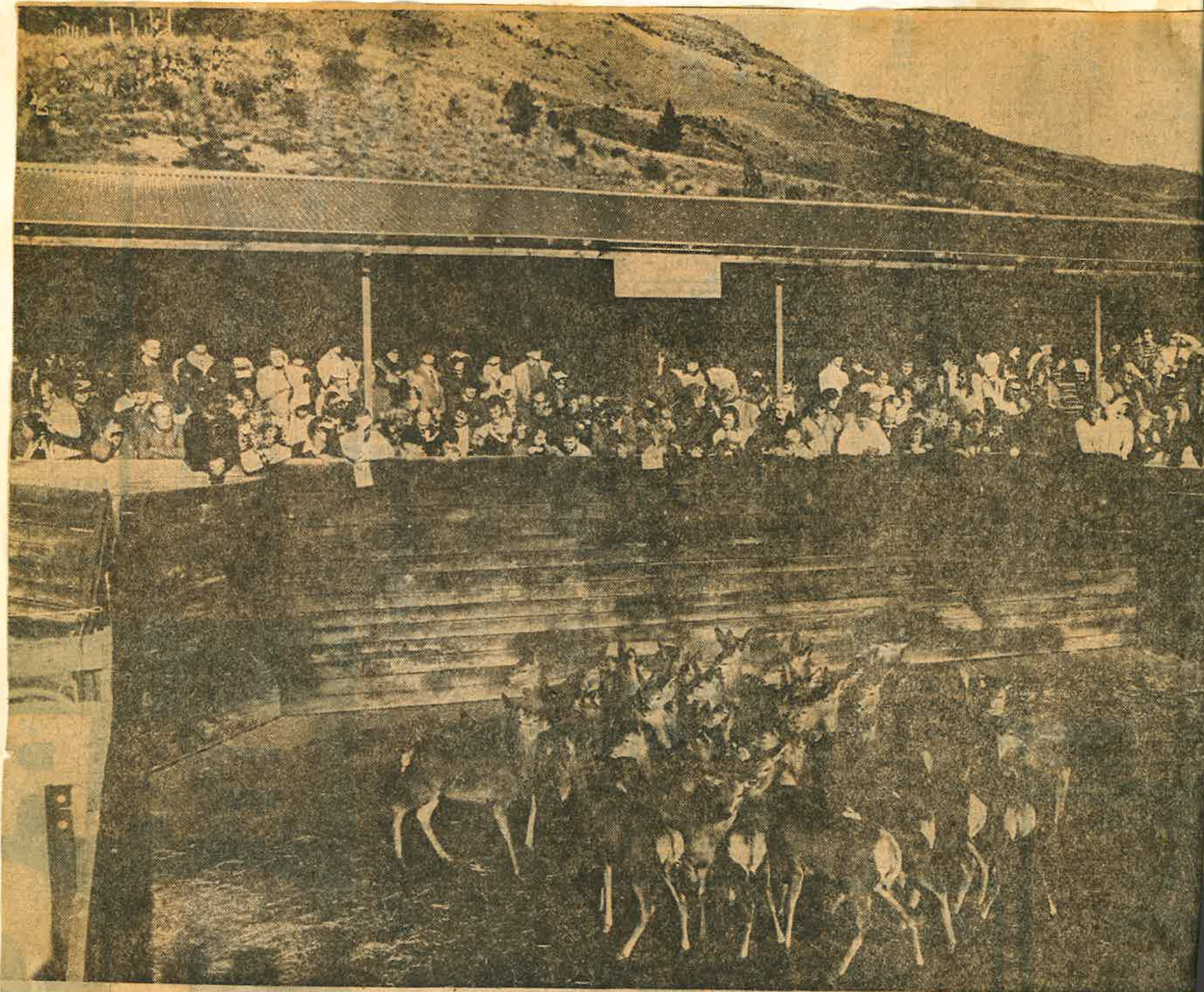
A total of 2750 tons of venison valued at \$11.5million was likely to be exported this year, the Minister of Agriculture, Mr MacIntyre, said yesterday.

For the year ended June 30, 1976 it had been provisionally estimated that 2652 tons worth \$8.17 million had left the country, he said in reply to a Parliamentary question from Mr J. H. Elworthy (National, Oamaru).

Venison exports had reached a peak in 1972 but since then total exports had fallen because more stringent hygiene regulations had been introduced, he said.

Germany at present provided the largest market but it was hoped that as soon as domestically reared deer were available for export "the United States and Australian markets will open up".





A SALE of farm raised deer, believed to be the first of its kind in the world, was held yesterday at Criffel game park, Wanaka. More than 1,000 people attended the auction to see 413 deer sold.

## No Ban on Sales By Deerstalkers

(P.A.)

DUNEDIN

A remit prohibiting members of the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association from selling wild game meat and byproducts for financial gain was deferred at the annual conference of the association in Dunedin yesterday.

It was decided that the association, which already discourages the practice of selling wild game animals, should let the remit "lie on the table".

A life member, Mr John Henderson (Wellington), said the association at this stage should allow a "quiet revolution" against the practice of members selling game meat.

This had already begun with certain branches prohibiting members from selling meat.

"The idea of prohibiting meat sales by members has merit," Mr Henderson said. "However, it would be difficult to put into operation."

He suggested the conference support the Blue Mountains branch in its policy of prohibiting sales by members, and encourage other branches to follow suit, rather than make a decision at national level.

"It is preferable to let the idea grow as a quiet revolution at branch level," he said.

"Let the branches decide so that we have the opinion of the association's members and not just those of delegates.

"This is the single most difficult decision we have had to face, and will probably ever have to," he said.

Mr Henderson received almost unanimous support in leaving the decision to branch level, although several delegates had earlier favoured an amended form of the remit and called for the prohibition to be imposed at the conference.

Mr J. T. Dillon (Taupo) said that if association members did not sell deer meat to depots half the helicopters operating at present would be out of business in three months.

Meat operators relied for between 25 and 40 per cent of their turnover from private shooters, he said.

## Deer Poaching

ILLEGAL NIGHT flying of helicopters spotlighting deer in North Otago's high country is a continuing problem. As members at a recent meeting of North Otago Federated Farmers noted, the offenders are apparently latter-day poachers who can afford to laugh at the present laws.

Night-flying helicopters are difficult to identify or apprehend, and it is claimed that even when the offenders are known, Civil Aviation is reluctant to take action under the existing aviation law. Laws of trespass tend to apply more clearly to deer poachers who drive vehicles on to land without farmers' permission, than to helicopter pilots and shooters who encroach on air space. And in any case, it is suggested that with the price currently being paid for deer, fines are no deterrent to poaching.

We agree that the most effective way to reduce the incidence of such poaching, obviously illegal and inherently dangerous, is to make penalties include the withdrawal of the licence for the helicopter pilot and his machine.





THE AUCTIONEER at yesterday's deer sale at Criffel game park, Wanaka, Lester Thorn (centre), signals to a bidder as assistants Graham Reid (left) and Nugent Dowling (right) keep watch for other bids.

## Wide Interest In Deer Auction

The growing popularity of deer farming in New Zealand was reflected in the presence of many North Island buyers at the first live deer auction held at Criffel game park near Wanaka yesterday.

### N.Z. FOREST SERVICE POISON NOTICE. CATLINS FOREST PARK.

The public are warned that 1080 (Sodium fluoroacetate deadly poison) treated sheep carcasses will be laid by helicopter for wild pigs menace control commencing August 3, 1977, or soon as practicable thereafter, over the following described areas.

Within the Macleannan State Forest 37, being part of the Catlins Forest Park, adjacent to the Wisp Valley run and also within the headwaters of the Macleannan River and along the northern forest boundary including the Athlone Hill and near the headwaters of the Tahakopa River and adjacent to Mr J. K. Blaikie's property.

These carcasses can remain toxic for up to three months and would be a danger to dogs. The public are warned not to take dogs into this area during this period.

R. USMAR,  
Conservator of Forests.

About 1,000 people, mostly farmers, although there were some commercial interests represented, attended the sale of about 400 deer.

The auction grossed about \$172,500, at an average price of \$417. The top prices were paid for weaner hinds, which averaged \$520, while weaner stags fetched \$250 and stags and hinds combined \$750.

Mr Tim Wallace, managing director of Alpine Helicopters Ltd (the game park's parent company), said he was happy at the attendance. The anticipated maximum of 700 people was well exceeded, thanks to the good weather, he said.

The organisers were surprised at the number of North Island buyers present.

"About one-fifth were from the North Island," Mr Wallace said. "We hadn't expected so many because of the higher transport costs."

"However this is an indication of the considerable interest in deer farming, and the desire of North Island buyers to add good South Island breeding stock to their herds."

## New Hunting Regulations

Penalties severe enough to deter breaches of the law would be a feature of proposed amendments to commercial helicopter hunting regulations under a new Noxious Animals Bill, which will be introduced into Parliament this year, the Minister of Lands, the Hon V. S. Young, said last night.

He told the annual conference of the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association that the Bill would help to resolve the current points of contention between sportsmen hunters and large-scale commercial hunters.

The present Noxious Animals Act has been completely re-drafted, with proposed amendments in the fields of recreational hunting and safari hunting as well as helicopter hunting.

The Bill would clarify and strengthen existing legislation while encompassing present day realities, Mr Young said.

Regulating the helicopter hunting industry in the noxious animals legislation and in complementary legislation is of the utmost importance.

The policing of operators legally authorised to helicopter hunt on defined areas is a major problem that legislation alone cannot overcome, he said.

"Penalties must therefore be of such severity that detection and conviction would so punish the helicopter operator that he is strongly motivated to abide by the conditions of his permit," Mr Young said.

He said the Bill would also cover the controversial matter of the ownership of noxious animals.

"The matter of when a noxious animal can be taken or held lawfully must be clarified," Mr Young said.

The present provision, that all noxious animals are deemed the property of the crown might be retained, but there would need to be clarification over the unlawful taking or killing of animals and ownership of the animal or its carcass where it was unlawfully taken.

Safari hunting is not an important issue except where land could be closed to hunting, but some regulation of this type of hunting seemed necessary to enable the Government to retain its right to introduce effective control measures, he said.

Mr Young said he was also proposing to strengthen the law of trespass under the Noxious Animals Act.

Farmers had strongly pressed their concern about the number of occasions on which strangers entered on to private land carrying guns, he said.

Although the use of a firearm while trespassing is an offence under the Trespass Act, it is very difficult to catch an offender in the act, he said.

"It seems to me that in this instance the adoption of the principle that prevention is better than cure would be a wise move," Mr Young said.

He said that it is intended that the Noxious Animals Bill would go before a Parliamentary select committee and public submissions would be sought.





The Noxious Animals Act now being worked on by the Forest Service will be amended so comprehensively it will be almost a new Act.

This was said yesterday by Mr K. H. Miers, director of the environmental forestry division of the Forest Service.

In Invercargill on a visit to the Southland conservancy this week, he is responsible for animal and erosion control, conservation and recreation in Forest Service areas.

Mr Miers said he could not comment on the changes to the Act, as the matter was sub judice. But he said it would be a different Act to the original one of 1956.

Mr Miers (left) is pictured with Mr Max Kershaw, senior environmental ranger of the service in Invercargill.

## TOUGH PENALTIES FOR HUNTING BREACHES

(P.A.)

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"The matter of when a noxious animal can be taken or held lawfully must be clarified," Mr Young said.

The present provision that all noxious animals were deemed the property of the Crown might be retained but there would need to be clarification over the unlawful taking or killing of animals and ownership of the animal or its carcass where it was unlawfully taken.

Mr Young said anyone who committed an unlawful act during the taking of a noxious animal would certainly have no right to the animal or its carcass.

### Safaris

Safari hunting was not an important issue except where land could be closed to hunting but some regulation of this type of hunting seemed necessary to enable the Government to retain its right to introduce effective control measures, he said.

Mr Young said he was also proposing to strengthen the law of trespass under the Noxious Animals Act.

Farmers had strongly pressed their concern about the number of times strangers now entered private land carrying guns, he said.

Mr Young said tougher laws on trespass were needed and a proposal to make trespass with a gun an offence was currently under review.

Although the use of a firearm while trespassing was currently an offence under the Trespass Act, it was very difficult to catch an offender in the act, he said.

"It seems to me that in this instance the adoption of the principle that prevention is better than cure would be a wise move," Mr Young said.

### Sojourn

He said it was intended that the Noxious Animals Bill would go before a Parliamentary select committee and public submissions would be sought.

Mr Young told the association he also believed there was a need for hunting areas where the sportsman could enjoy his

sojourn in the forest without having to compete with commercial hunters for the game.

"The sportsman should have to suffer disruptions to leisure activities from the noise and low flying of helicopters," he said.

Mr Young said the Government, therefore, accepted recreational hunting areas should be set aside as long as it was right to introduce official control operations was retained where hunter pressure was sufficient.

There would be a few of these areas in the pilot stages of experiment and would, by necessity, be restricted to ground where there was a low erosion risk and vegetation and soil were in a healthy state.

Mr Young said, however, the Government had not been asked to agree to request from the South Island branches of the association to create a thar recreational hunting area because there was no suitable area which could be set aside.

But the Government would give serious consideration to the setting aside of low erosion risk areas for deer hunting, he said.



# 12 New Blocks

Six helicopter game recovery operators have been successful in gaining 12 new blocks in Fiordland National Park after a review of last year's operations.

Chief ranger, Mr W. Sander, submitted two alternatives for division of the park for deer control.

It will be divided into 12 blocks drawn on an east-west basis, capable of producing a variable number of animals a year.

The system chosen for operators was that the blocks would be rotated at one to two-monthly intervals — the order of rotation being decided by ballot for the whole year.

No operator would be permitted to shoot in the same block more than once during the period.

The criteria for choosing the applicant operators was:

- Preference for firms with substantial Southland-Otago shareholdings and operations.
  - Preference for existing operators of proven efficiency.
  - That the board did not wish to revert to the previous system of allocation involving processors.
- The successful operators were Alpine Helicopters (5 machines), Southland Helicopters (2 machines) Thompson Bros (2 machines), D. Richardson, F. Wright, and J. A. Kane, all one machine.

Two of the operators, Alpine Helicopters and Thompson, will rotate operations every two months, with a review by the board after six months.

## Using Dogs

An experiment in the use of dogs in ground shooting operations is to be tried. This was suggested by Te Anau operations in informal talks last year.

Mr W. Sander will use pointers with regular commercial ground hunters, and report back to the board.

The present fees paid by operators of 4 per cent on the average buying price, based on a 100lb animal, plus \$20 a month per helicopter, will continue.

Licences will be issued for a term of 12 months from August 1, with a review in June-July, 1978.

# Stronger Laws Sought On Poaching Of Deer

Staff Reporter

OAMARU.—Night poaching of deer in North Otago's high country has led to a call for stronger trespass and Civil Aviation laws to the extent of grounding both the pilot and the helicopter where successful prosecutions are taken.

The incidence of illegal night flying and spotlighting of deer by helicopter was raised at a recent meeting of North Otago Federated Farmers.

The president, Mr J. D. Kane, said helicopters had recently been known to be night flying behind Herbert and to the north. These were difficult to identify or apprehend and even if they were, Civil Aviation would not take action under existing law.

With the price being paid for deer, fines were no deterrent. Mr Kane said the only way to reduce the incidence was to take the licence of the helicopter pilot and the machine away.

A Whirl-wide helicopter pilot, Mr Eddie McGregor, said that last Tuesday night a helicopter was heard, but not seen behind Herbert. It could only be assumed that it was spotlighting deer.

Six weeks ago a helicopter was caught poaching in the Shag Valley. The explanation was that the pilot did not realise he was out of his block.

"We know poaching helicopters come through this area," Mr McGregor said.

"We make arrangements with property holders to work blocks and let them know the day we are flying over them," he said. "Some other guys just don't care. There are prob-

ably not many but they are doing it fairly regularly, not only in this area but in other areas."

He said he would be very pleased to see the trespass and Civil Aviation laws tightened.

Mr McGregor said Whirl-wide was in its fourth year of "darting" deer — paralysing them and collecting them for deer farms. But the poachers shot them as they could not hang around long enough for the serum to take effect.

The poachers cleaned out herds, but those darting were selective in their collection of hinds and stags.

## SHOOTING

High-country runholder Jeff Matheson yesterday confirmed that helicopters were night-shooting his Kakanui Mountain run.

However, he said that there was very little that could be done about it. Runholders realised that they could not always protect their property.

"You can't always see them operating, and when they work the gullies, it's impossible."

He fully supported the Federated Farmers' moves to tighten up on the trespass laws.

"It might be a bit late, as far as helicopter poachers are concerned, but certainly some-

thing has to be done about general trespass."

Mr Matheson cited instances on his property where tractor tyres and batteries had been shot up and gates run down by vehicles.

Deer were not only being poached by helicopters, but by people driving vehicles onto the property without permission.

He said that if people asked to go for a shoot on the run, they were generally given permission.

Poaching has concerned him for some time, as he stocks his homestead deer farm with animals drugged and caught in the backcountry blocks. He has 35 head in the high-fenced section of the farm behind his home, which has a steep bush face and sunny tops.

Another Herbert farmer, Mr Ross McMillan, has also started deer farming. He has 20 stags purchased at the recent deer auction in Southland.

# Crown Land Hunting

The Forest Service will issue permits to hunt and recover noxious animals on Crown land, including national parks and farms, under the Bill to be heard by a Parliamentary select committee in about two weeks.

If the Bill becomes law in its present form it will mean that park boards will not issue permits for helicopter deer recovery operations, as in the past.

They will organize the activities of noxious animal recoveries in the parks, and it is understood they will liaise with the service's conservancies in their noxious animals control plans.

Another area where there is a change, is in station owners on Crown land leases granting permission to helicopter operators to shoot on their leased property. It will now be up to the Forest Service to issue a permit giving the operator permission to shoot and recover animals. Under the provision of the Bill noxious animals are now considered the property of the Crown.

In Section 22 of the Bill it states, in respect of Crown land — including national parks, — that the director-general of the Forest Service would have to seek and give effect to the views of these in control about the areas to be hunted, the periods when the permits were to apply, and any other conditions which the authority in control might consider should apply.

On the other hand, the Forest Service will not be bound to comply with any condition or view expressed by the authority involved, if it is considered it will be against the best use of a noxious animal control plan.

# Hunters' Permits In Jeopardy

Two helicopter hunters recovering venison from Fiordland National Park are to be told their permits will be in jeopardy if they do not come up to requirements.

The operators are Messrs D. Richardson and F. Wright. Mr Wright phoned the park board offices last week saying he was returning a Hughes 500 he had been leasing from Helicopters New Zealand Ltd and wished to use another helicopter of the same type in its place under the same permit.

When asked, he would not tell the board where he had obtained the new helicopter. However, he did say he had not been shooting over his block as it had been "hammered."

Members of the board voiced their concern that both operators had not been operating to the terms of their licence.

Alpine Helicopters complained to the board that the blocks covered by the two operators were being shot over by two other operators and having a "field day."

It was moved unanimously that both operators be warned that other operators would be put on their blocks for the remaining two weeks of the current two months of their permits.

A policy is to be formulated by the board whereby operators not shooting their blocks satisfactorily, by ceasing shooting on them without notice to the board, would have other operators placed on their blocks.

# \$91,000 Spent By Forest Service

More than \$91,000 has been spent by the Southland conservancy of the Forest Service on measures including research on deer control.

This was quoted by Mr R. Usmar, conservator of forests, Southland, at a meeting of the Fiordland National Park Board on Monday night.

He said that the conservancy's total contribution was well above that figure, and there was a need for more consultation between the board and the Forest Service.

"A lot of facts which have been misunderstood between us could have been resolved by discussion. There is a need to review priorities for animal control," Mr Usmar said.

He said the board needed to take some thought on how it would move in the event of a major fire, or an outbreak of foot and mouth disease.

Mr J. McFarlane agreed that the Forest Service was a major operator in the park, and there

should be more consultation with the executive. He hoped that both the board and the service could work forward from now on.

Mr L. Henderson said that a visit by representatives of the board to Secretary Island had been beneficial.

Mr Usmar said this was a case in point where letters gave rise to misunderstanding, whereas consultation helped in gaining an understanding of what was actually being done.

He said it was far better to have a control plan for noxious animals already made out before allocations were made to the conservancies from Government.

He thought that some of the levy from helicopter operations

should be directed towards noxious animal control, and that the Authority had ruled that should be done.

Mr J. P. Harty, board chairman said that was not quite right. The Parks Authority did not specify that, but it did in the case of the wapiti cull fund.

On a question about the use of 1080 poison in Transit Valley and on Secretary Island, Mr Henderson said: "This should be maintained."

Mr J. McKenzie said in view of the Nature Conservation Council's comments on the poison, he thought the board should take notice of their views on the use of 1080 in national parks.

"The Forest Service has demonstrated their responsibility in the use of 1080 in the area," Mr Henderson said.



# The day of the easy deer is well and truly gone

Under increasing pressure from commercial meat hunters, deer are changing their habits and reverting to the way in which they lived centuries ago in Britain, says prominent local deer-stalker Bruce Banwell.

Since their introduction to New Zealand late in the 19th century, deer have made the mountain tops their predominant habitat, usually venturing into the lower forested areas only during periods of bad weather or danger.

Now that the danger is more constant with hunting helicopters roving the open high country, the deer find it safer to remain in the forest.

Because of this change in habits, which Mr Banwell considers will continue as long as meat hunters show a profit on their operations, deerstalking for the man on foot has become more difficult.

Deer are much more cunning and harder to find in their forest environment, and a lack of success on stalking

Preservation of deer, and game management are expected to be two of the main topics for discussion at the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association annual conference which begins in Dunedin today. Daily Times staff reporter Mark Price talks about deer with the Otago branch president, Bruce Banwell.

trips could be turning young people away from the sport.

The day of deer tallies being the talking point among deerstalkers are over, Mr Banwell said. The sport is now returning to the situation of the early days of the animal's introduction, when trophy hunting for heads assumed the most importance.

But the deerstalkers association does not want deerstalking to become the exclusive sport of the rich trophy hunter.

It has been proposing for several years a system of forest parks which give deerstalkers protection of their sport by reserving areas of land for recreational shooting only.

There is a case for much better game management, Mr Banwell believes, and this need not rule out the air-borne meat hunter. There is a place for helicopters, but the open slather practised by meat hunters at present should be curbed, he states.

National Parks boards are not considered by recreational shooters to have their interests at heart and the deerstalkers association considers there are alternatives to the policy of complete extermination of deer.

Mr Banwell believes the deer population has now levelled out because of this policy, meat hunting and through natural causes.

## POLICY CALL

"It is time for a new policy on deer which protects the interests of the recreational shooter, the meat hunter and the environment in which the deer live," Mr Banwell told me.

With more game management in the form of forest parks — already operating successfully in many other countries — the deer of New Zealand can be kept to a level where their effect on the environment is not detrimental.

"A sport which encourages young and old men to venture into the outdoors and to rely on their own resourcefulness must not be discouraged," Mr Banwell said.

In Britain, the deer had been originally a forest animal, but because much of the country's forests were cleared to keep the smelting mills burning during the industrial revolution, deer were forced to make a new habitat in the higher open areas of Britain.

The deer's only real enemy in Britain were the clansmen of Scotland who hunted for meat and hides, and the aristocracy who slaughtered deer in the name of sport.

## TAINCHEL

A hunting form known as the tainchel was developed by the aristocracy in which beaters were sent out into the country to round up a herd of deer.

The beaters drove the herd into a narrow valley where with dogs, knives and swords, the animals were slaughtered.

In 1563 a tainchel was conducted for Queen Mary in which 2,000 Highlanders were employed to drive to the hunting ground a large herd of deer.

In less than two months, they brought together 2,000 red deer, besides roe, and fallow deer. They drove them towards a glen where the Queen and her men were hidden.

The Queen ordered one of the dogs to be let loose on a deer. This had the effect of turning the herd on the Highlanders, but although several were killed or injured part of the herd was cut off. On that day, 360 deer and five wolves were killed.

It was only last century that deerstalking as it is known today in New Zealand was introduced to Scotland.

But the actual stalking at that time was the job of the peasant, while the wealthy shooter did nothing more than kill the selected animal.

This was the way in which deerstalking in New Zealand was first carried out, but with the rapid increase in numbers of the animal it became the noxious animal it is known as today, and the average person was able to shoot where and when he liked.

## Use of Poison Misunderstood

The use of 1080 poison in Fiordland National Park is much misunderstood.

"Basically, its use is considered only in special circumstances where other forms of animal control, like venison recovery, are uneconomic."

This was said by the chief ranger of the park, Mr W. Sander in this month's issue of the board's magazine, Te Namu.

It was also considered where special values needed protecting, he said.

So far its use had been limited to parts of Secretary Island, and a small experimental poisoning programme in part of the Neale Burn in the Clinton watershed.

Mr Sander said this programme was aimed at a small population of goats in the area. Because of the successful results there it was planned to use 1080 again in a limited area against goats in the Neale Burn, and also in the Transit Valley, in an attempt to further reduce already small numbers of deer, where the vegetation was generally good.

## Aspects of Concern

"There are two aspects of concern in this area. The head of the Transit Valley is kakapo habitat, and in the lower part, some areas are still unmodified by deer.

"As there are almost no areas of bush in the South Island not modified by deer or browsing animals, it is worthwhile trying to preserve at least something of what was our national heritage," said Mr Sander.

Deer numbers in the Transit Valley are so low that commercial operations are not financially viable.

"There is a lot of misapprehension about the use of 1080. Some people seem to be-

lieve that it is used in vast quantities, and everything for miles around is poisoned," said Mr Sander.

"This is quite incorrect. In fact, the operator on foot searches through the bush for an area deer are occupying. The animals will have chewed most of the palatable plants within browsing level.

"He will pull down a branch of a highly palatable species to get it to 'deer-eye' level, and spread 1080 gel on some of the branch's leaves. Several baits will be prepared in the area before the operator moves on to find another location occupied by deer.

"At no stage does he wander through the bush just spreading poison. This would be a waste of manpower, time and poison.

## Better than Shooting

"This measure of control can be more successful than shooting, as there is no disturbance to other animals from rifle shots, and the poison keeps working for some time after the operator has left the area."

Mr Sander said this time was shorter in Fiordland because the higher rainfall leached it out. It was non-cumulative and better than anything else used before for this type of work.

He said it was more humane than other poisons previously used, and its use was strictly controlled and available only to licensed operators. Only two staff members handled the poison within the park and both held operators' licences.

## Venison Theft

A large quantity of prepacked venison was stolen from the Southern Lakes Game Foods Ltd Mossburn factory last week.

About \$1300 worth of meat was taken when the refrigerator and store room were entered during last Wednesday night.

Police are seeking further information from the public.

## HUNTERS

CONSOLIDATED TRADERS (SOUTH ISLAND) LTD Are interested in establishing a game depot in the QUEENSTOWN area. If you may be interested in running a depot for us, please contact:-

ERIC STUCKEY  
P.O. Box 33 Winton

For Further Information



# TWO MEN KILLED Helicopter Hit Cable

TE ANAU

**Two men were killed when a helicopter they were in crashed into a flying fox cable stretched across the Upper Waiau river, near Te Anau, late yesterday afternoon.**

One of them was Mr Graeme Fox, the pilot, a single man, aged 29, who formerly came from Dunedin but who was living in Te Anau.

The other man's name was not available late last night.

The helicopter, a Hughes 500 owned by Alpine Helicopters Ltd, and based at Te Anau, broke up on impact when it struck the inch-thick cable

about 3.40 p.m., and crashed into the river.

A fisherman on the bank had to duck for cover as debris spread over a wide area.

Within a few minutes, Alpine staff covered the short distances from the Waiau airstrip, not far from Te Anau, to the scene of the crash.

They were closely followed by police, ambulancemen, the Te Anau Volunteer Fire Brigade and a number of divers.

The bodies of the two men were recovered from the river, about half a mile from the scene.

Both were thought to have died instantly.

## Saw Crash

For Mr T. R. Halford, a Te Anau man, an afternoon fishing trip ended with what he described as "a bit of a shock."

"I was fishing in the Waiau river when I heard an aircraft. I saw this helicopter come over above where I was," Mr Halford said.

"It did a bit of a flip in the air and then went out of view behind a clump of trees.

"Then it came back into view between the trees and followed the riverbed up towards me, about 30 or 40 feet above the river.

"I saw it hit the wire, about 30ft above the water, and then it disintegrated.

The first body was recovered from the river at 5 p.m. and the other about 6.40 p.m.

Shortly after the accident, the control gates on the Waiau river at the outlet of Lake Te Anau were closed, lowering the level of the river by about two metres.

Some pieces of the helicopter, including the engine, had been recovered by last night.

The cable, stretched 30ft to 40ft above the river, was put there about 20 years ago, when investigations were being carried out into the possibility of erecting a high dam near Queens Reach to control the level of Lake Te Anau.

Its removal was being investigated.

The helicopter, which has a replacement value of \$175,000 and was insured, was normally used for venison recovery.

## HELICOPTER FATALITY

**A deer shooter was killed and the pilot escaped injury when a Hughes 500 helicopter crashed on a remote beach in Fiordland National Park on Saturday.**

The dead man was Mr John Unsworth, single, of Te Anau, and formerly of Rotorua.

The accident happened when Mr Unsworth and his pilot, Mr James Shewan, also of Te Anau, were on a deerstalking expedition.

They were flying in the Big River area, east of Puysegur Point, at 5.30 p.m. with a deer carcass on a strop slung under the helicopter.

As the machine made a turn in strong winds, the carcass struck the tail rotor. The helicopter spun and crashed on to the beach.

Mr Unsworth was killed instantly.

Mr Shewan activated the safety beacon, but the wreckage was not found until yesterday afternoon.

The Alpine Helicopter machine had been reported overdue and a Te Anau pilot, Mr Bill Black, found the crash scene yesterday afternoon. Mr Shewan, who was not injured, had stayed with the wreckage.

Te Anau police were taken into the area and Mr Shewan and Mr Unsworth's body were brought out.

The extensively damaged

helicopter was also lifted out and taken to Te Anau.

Saturday's crash was the third helicopter fatality in the area this year. On February 5, two men were killed when a Hughes 300B crashed near Cascade Creek, 46 miles north of Te Anau, and earlier this month two men were killed when a Hughes 500 crashed into a flying fox cable stretched across the Waiau river, three miles south of Te Anau.

## Ducked

"Stuff was flying everywhere and I ducked down for a few seconds," he said.

"I looked around and couldn't see any sign of life, so I jumped in my car and took off for the aero club to tell them a helicopter was down.

"Helicopters and cars followed me back. They came from all directions."

Mr Halford was about 75 yards from the wire when the accident happened. Debris was scattered over a wide area and floating in the river. He helped rescue workers recover what they could before dark.



# HUNTERS' GO

## Ombudsman takes at big-money game

**ALLEGATIONS that a company holding a Crown lease has illegally operated high-priced game safari hunts on Crown land are to be probed by Chief Ombudsman George Laking.**

Specific accusations have been made against NZ Trophy Guide Service Ltd, a partly foreign-owned private company which leases the 27,500-hectare Lilybank Station, near Tekapo.

Mr Laking has also been asked to investigate negotiations which have been carried out between the Department of Lands and Survey, the Lands Settlement Board and NZ Trophy Guide Service Ltd.

### Delaying tactics

Fighting a protracted battle to gain access to the highly prized trophy animals in the South Island high country, the Big Game Hunters' Association claims it has run into departmental delaying tactics and stubborn reluctance by various Government departments to tell the whole story.

If conclusive evidence is produced to show that Trophy Guide Service did not comply with a direction to cease safari hunting on Lilybank Station, the company could lose its lease on the Crown holding.

During the course of Truth inquiries into the allegations made by the hunters' association it was confirmed by assistant director-general of lands, P.H.C. Lucas, that a full report on all dealings with Trophy Guide Service had been requested by Mr Laking.

That report is expected to be on Mr Laking's desk soon, according to Mr Lucas.

### Thorny problem

Safari hunting has been a thorny problem for Crown leaseholders and sportsmen for some time.

But in October 1975, a Land Amendment Act helped clarify some confusion by prohibiting safari hunting on Crown lease land except where the leaseholder had been issued with a recreational permit.

According to Mr Lucas, no recreational permits have so far been issued.

A leaseholder has to satisfy the needs not only of the Lands Department, but also forestry, catchment and soil conservation interests.

NZ Trophy Guide Service Ltd is currently negotiating with the Lands Department on the conditions it has to meet.

Until a recreational permit is issued it is illegal to operate safari hunts on Lilybank Station.

But hunters' association president Bruce Candy, of Ashburton, alleges that high profits have tempted Trophy Guide Service to solicit helicopter safaris charging up to \$2000 a day per hunter, with a guarantee of one thar and one chamois head.

### No. 1 Trophy

"Thar is the number one trophy animal in the world today," said Mr Candy.

"Our association is opposed to people like Trophy Guide Service having exclusive rights over the land at Lilybank."

"The public are not permitted to hunt for recreation on Lilybank without paying the high fees," he said.

Mr Candy alleged to Truth that the operators of Trophy Guide Service had taken advantage of a tangle of inter-departmental bureaucracy to line their own pockets.

But Gary Joll, managing Service Ltd, strongly denied.

Mr Joll said it was true advised as early as August bookings for safaris at Lilybank lease.

Asked by Truth if he had Lilybank Station since August, Mr Joll said: "I don't wish to comment only to inflame a situation we are in."

Told that the Big Game Hunters' Association claimed that he had solicited a safari between October 1976 and November 1977, Mr Joll said: "What's it all about?"

"I have reason to believe the Big Game Hunters' Association is sending us a cable requesting a safari."

In a cable he sent inviting a safari as soon as he could, Mr Joll said he had been waiting for thar and chamois trophies.

"But, there is nothing in the way of a hunt would be at Lilybank Station."

Mr Joll did not deny that he had been at Lilybank Station, but said he had never been in New Zealand.

Mr Joll was asked about the fact that this year to the same American company will recall our exchange of letters in regard to your hunting lodge...

"During January and February we had a flood of bookings for the balance of the year, therefore we would like to have a flood of bookings arriving in the next few months."

Mr Joll said it would not be surprising if such wording indicated that the lodge was somewhere on Lilybank Station.

### "No co

Asked if safari hunts had been conducted at Lilybank Station, Mr Joll said: "We have not had any safaris at Lilybank."

Asked if safari hunts had been conducted, Mr Joll said: "We have not had any safaris conducted here since we have been here seven years."

Asked if safari hunts had been conducted, Mr Joll said: "We have not had any safaris conducted here since we have been here seven years."

He went on: "Hopefully, we will have some safaris in the future, but not through, with certain conditions."

### Free

One of the original proposals was to erect a huge fence around the 27,500 hectares to keep the animals in a "range" situation.

Mr Joll said the enclosure was not part of the negotiations were not part of the negotiations.

Asked about another proposal that New Zealand Trophy Guide Service Ltd should have exclusive rights over the land, Mr Joll said: "We do not have exclusive rights over the land."

He said the conditions of the lease required a person had to pay for the use of the land.

LILYBANK STATION...thousands of hectares of prime hunting land.



# S' GOLD

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But Gary Joll, managing director of NZ Trophy Guide Service Ltd, strongly denied Mr Candy's allegations.

Mr Joll said it was true that the company had been advised as early as August 1976 that if it accepted any bookings for safaris at Lilybank it could forfeit its Crown lease.

Asked by Truth if he had solicited safari hunts for Lilybank Station since August last year, Mr Joll said: "I don't wish to comment on anything like that. It's likely to inflame a situation we don't wish inflamed."

Told that the Big Game Hunters' Association alleged that he had solicited a safari hunt with an American client between October 1976 and January 1977, Mr Joll said: "What's it all about?"

"I have reason to believe that someone in the Big Game Hunters' Association arranged for an American to send us a cable requesting a hunt in New Zealand."

In a cable he sent inviting the American to come as soon as he could, Mr Joll guaranteed a helicopter hunt for thar and chamois trophies at \$2000.

"But, there is nothing in that cable to say that the hunt would be at Lilybank Station," he said.

Mr Joll did not deny that the hunt could have been at Lilybank Station, but said it could have been anywhere in New Zealand.

Mr Joll was asked about a letter he wrote in January this year to the same American, in which he said: "You will recall our exchange of letters during October last year in regard to your hunting with us here at Lilybank Lodge..."

"During January and February we take a large number of bookings for the balance of the season for that year, therefore we would like to place your hunt prior to the flood of bookings arriving here."

Mr Joll said it would not be reasonable to assume that such wording indicated that the hunt would take place somewhere on Lilybank Station.

### "No comment"

Asked if safari hunts had been conducted at Lilybank Station, Mr Joll said: "We have conducted a lot of safaris at Lilybank."

Asked if safari hunts for thar and chamois had been conducted, Mr Joll said: "Many, many, many, — we've been here seven years."

Asked if safari hunts had been conducted since the passing of the Land Amendment Act 1975, Mr Joll said: "Look... (chuckle)... no comment."

He went on: "Hopefully we will be able to conduct safari hunts in the future if all these negotiations go through, with certain conditions."

### Free range

One of the original proposals of NZ Trophy Guide Service was to erect a huge fence around 2000 or 3000 hectares to keep the animals enclosed but in a "free range" situation.

Mr Joll said the enclosure had not been built because the negotiations were not concluded.

Asked about another allegation by the hunters' association that New Zealanders were excluded from Lilybank except when they paid the high charges, Mr Joll said: "We do not."

Asked if the conditions of entry on to the land were that persons had to pay for the services offered, he



OUT FOR TROPHIES... a group of hunters spy out their quarry.

## No permit — and the lease is in danger

**WITHOUT a recreational permit, big game safari hunts at Lilybank Station are finished.**

The company that wants the permit, NZ Trophy Guide Service Ltd, stands to lose a lot of money.

About the middle of last year the company was told to stop its safari operation until a recreational permit was issued. It was told again in April this year.

There is confusion as to exactly when the company was first told to stop safari operations, and this is one of the matters likely to be touched on when Chief Ombudsman George Laking conducts his investigation into the company and its dealings with certain Government departments.

But one thing is certain. Since October 1975 it has been illegal under the Land Amendment Act to operate safari hunting on Crown lease land without a recreational permit.

Lilybank lessees acted illegally, the Lilybank lease could And no such permit has yet been issued to NZ Trophy Guide Service Ltd.

Company managing director Gary Joll declined to comment when asked by Truth if he had conducted safari hunts since the change in the law in 1975.

Mr Joll and his colleagues have a substantial investment in big game hunting — the sport of wealthy, pot-bellied Americans.

According to information held at the Companies Office in Hamilton, where the company is registered, the directors of NZ Trophy Guide Service Ltd are Mr Joll, Canadian; Milton Melvin Cain, a Timaru-based helicopter pilot; Ian Campbell Davidson, a Hamilton solicitor; Ronald Benjamin Spanton, a guide, of Lake Tekapo; Wynne

Archdall Raymond, a Timaru solicitor; and Christchurch builder Maurice Rhodes Carter.

Between them, Messrs Joll, Cain, Spanton, Carter, Raymond and Davidson hold 16,420 of the company's 32,700 shares. The largest single shareholder is Mr Joll with 6300 shares.

Cross Country Rentals Ltd, of Hamilton, holds 1200 shares and Atlantic and Pacific Travel Ltd, of Auckland, holds 1920 shares.

Both these companies would have considerable financial interest in a recreational permit which would put more business their way.

About one-sixth of the shares are held overseas. H. M. Weichlein, of Munich, holds 1800 shares; Wata Investments Co, of Geneva, holds 3000; and F. Phillips Williamson, of Texas, holds 300 shares.

According to shareholder Geoff Laugeson, the managing director of Cross Country Rentals Ltd, Trophy Guide Service was a widely based company formed in 1971 with both New Zealand and foreign interests in it.

Mr Laugeson said he thought that Wata Investment Co had affiliations with the World Association of Travel Agents.

Mr Laking's investigation could have crucial significance for the future of safari hunting at Lilybank.

If it is found that irregularities occurred or that the Lilybank lessees acted illegally, the Lilybank lease could be in jeopardy.

While private big game shooters might approve, such a course would spell the end of a venture both profitable to its operators and as an earner of overseas funds.