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PLANNING FOR PRIVATE FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT
IN NEW ZEALAND:
A STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

A Thesis Presented In Partial Fulfilment
Of The Requirements For The Degree
Of Master Of Arts
In Geography At
Massey University

Jane Elizabeth Abbiss

January 1985

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ABSTRACT

Conflict has developed between forestry, pastoral and other land uses in New Zealand over the last twenty years despite attempts to plan for the 'wise use' of land and thereby resolve conflict over changing land use patterns. The planning response to land use conflict is made within the taken for granted ideology of capitalism which governs land use allocation within the capitalist system. Capitalist society is continually transforming itself in accordance with underlying economic structures. Planning decisions are therefore constantly evolving through human action and interaction to effect land use change consistent with capitalist development. Hence, issues of conflict in land allocation and use cannot be considered in isolation from the dynamic social system in which they emerge, are altered, maintained or subside.

Conflict of interests is inevitable in a capitalist social system and consequently a planning solution, as opposed to resolution, of conflict is impossible. Planning structures are created within the capitalist socio-economic system and are therefore endowed with the ideology of capitalism and associated contradictions, which precludes problem solution. Resolution of conflict thus represents a cosmetic change where the nature of conflict is altered but the underlying capitalist forces creating conflict remain unchanged.

The inherent contradictions inspired by capitalist ideology mean planning problems will emerge despite good intentions to effect conflict amelioration. Capitalism is the preferred socio-economic system in New Zealand and the desirability of capitalism is not challenged herein. Rather, claims of capitalist institutions and structures to be ideology free are disputed as such beliefs may lead to false optimism about the ability of planning to identify and solve, as opposed to

resolve, conflict. The practice of planning for forestry development in New Zealand bears witness to this.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AJHR	Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives
ARA	Auckland Regional Authority
CNIPS	Central North Island Forestry and Transport Planning Study
DSIR	Department of Scientific and Industrial Research
LUAC	Land Use Advisory Council
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
MOWD	Ministry of Works and Development
NDA 1979	National Development Act 1979
NZFC	New Zealand Forest Council
NZFP	New Zealand Forest Products Limited
NZFS	New Zealand Forest Service
NZTPA	New Zealand Town and Country Planning Appeals
PRIFOS	New Zealand Forest Service Private Forestry System
RCC	Rodney County Council
TCPA 1953	Town and Country Planning Act 1953
TCPA 1977	Town and Country Planning Act 1977

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PREFACE

The forestry versus farming conflict in New Zealand is a poorly understood issue. With the dramatic increase in New Zealand's forest estate and the changing balance between forestry and other farm practices and between state and private forestry in some rural areas as a result of a dramatic upsurge in private afforestation since 1960 there has been conflict among farming and forestry interests. Farming interests have opposed the introduction of large scale afforestation on privately owned property and forestry interests have opposed restrictions on development activity. Such conflict has presented a dilemma to County Councils, which are required to plan for the 'wise use' of New Zealand's land resource by the TCPA 1977. The emergence and reemergence of conflict raises questions about the ability of the mechanisms of institutional planning to cope with the 'problem' of forestry development and concomitant issues of land allocation between different uses.

It is intended to discuss in this thesis the innate features of institutionalised planning which may preclude or effect the resolution of conflicts over land use in general and the forestry versus farming issue in particular. Deliberation on the role of planning in defining what is the wise use of land and instituting land use restrictions to effect wise land use is conducted from a theoretical base - that of structuralism. A county example is drawn upon to illustrate the theoretical conceptions of the nature and role of planning and the social 'verdict' these intrinsic features place on rural communities in practice.

For the purpose of this thesis any county in New Zealand would suffice as an example of planning in practice. Rodney County is selected, however, not because it has experienced widespread and vocal opposition to forestry development

compared with other counties, but because it is not so remarkable. Over the last ten years large scale private afforestation has been undertaken in Rodney County but forestry has not been subject to severe planning restrictions. By outlining the nature of planning for forestry development in Rodney County it is hoped to illustrate the features of particular land use planning decisions about forestry development which are attributable to the nature of the planning system rather than locationally and historically specific circumstance. Consideration of the Rodney County example is an integral part of a theoretical dissertation, illuminating the inseparability of assumed ideology and planning practice.