

The Editor,
Sir,

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Some members who are paying \$4 p.a. for their journal and other services feel that the Life Member is getting off with very much less, especially the earlier ones who receive the services for a very small fraction of the \$4. This can be so if his Life subscription has not been invested and kept invested as capital. This ensures that when he dies, as he must, the interest on his subscription will continue. It will eventually wipe out the difference in cost of supply of journal, etc., when he was alive and from then on will be a permanent source of income. Since the year ending in 1969 Council has been using 10% of the Life Subscriptions Reserve Fund for current expenses, thus defeating the only way in which Life subscriptions can be made profitable. This is the less excusable since there is no real shortage of funds. The amounts deducted should be put back into the fund.

The reply I received to my protests to Council was that this deduction was "sound business practice." It definitely is not. Capital funds may be used for business extension but no business man would use them for current expenditure, nor should any society, more especially where, as in this case, it is cutting off future income.

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(Past Hon. Treas. OSNZ)

P.O. Box 45,
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20 December 1973

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The Editor,
Sir,

EMPLOYMENT OF BIOLOGISTS BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES

I note with interest the comment on local authorities employing biologists made in the review of "The Coastal Ecology of a Recreation Resource Area Kawakawa Bay to Miranda" published in *Notornis* 20 (3): 296-297, 1973.

I am a civil engineer with 21 years experience in both county and municipal local government. Hardly ever in that time have I found a professional officer in a situation where he can report as he feels. Usually the preparation of a report is influenced prior to completion or the report is completely suppressed. The local body I am employed by has recently retained both a consulting industrial chemist and a biologist to report on a major project. This, in my opinion, is the only method of obtaining unbiased information. This was borne out by the biologist, a university lecturer who would accept expenses only because he wanted it to be seen that the local authority was not influencing him. This is not to say that I don't admire the Auckland Regional Authority for breaking new ground. I, too, am enthusiastic about Miss Bacon's work. I believe part of the Kaipara Harbour is or has received a similar investigation by ARA staff.

L. HOWELL

11 Gardner Road,
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