

## Answers needed

This newspaper believes we need some answers before we can be confident that the park will be in any better hands than hitherto. Possibly, the impressive projects listed by Mr Thwaites, to be tackled by volunteers, would be better achieved if cattle were allowed to resume travelling through the High Country, foraging as they go.

Volunteer manpower is notoriously unreliable, after the initial enthusiasm wanes. It is not a continuing resource. On the other hand, mountain cattlemen have historic links with the region that are likely to continue far into the future.

So one good reason for Mr Thwaites to revisit the grazing licence question is that the high country must be preserved for many years beyond the present Government's stewardship. This is why last year's ban need not be the end of the matter.

Nor should the cattlemen abandon their promise of annual protests, or the Government threaten unnecessary and unwarranted penalties. The cattlemen's protest was a modest declaration of resolve. It had none of the violence, personal injury, or high cost to business of many other recent actions by massed urban (and rural) demonstrators.

Significantly, these latter actions attracted no serious retribution nor threats from those in authority. Yet their instigators displayed arrogant disregard for the rights of others. That cannot be said of the High Country riders.