

# High country preservation

AUSTRALIANS have developed a potent sense of self-engendered righteousness, evidenced by the innumerable strikes against real or fanciful injustices that affect their enclaved areas of interest.

Is there any sector of our society that would not resent a grievous threat to its very way of life, particularly if such a threat is made to justify a false premise based on factual inconsistencies?

The mountain cattlemen of Victoria are faced with just such a situation, which promises to destroy the livelihoods of 100 families in the Victorian Alps, if the recommendations of the Land Conservation Council are approved.

For over 200 years, cattle breeding in East Victoria has been assisted by summer agistment in the Victorian Alps, currently supporting some 15,000 head of prime beef cattle.

Some agronomists, ecologists, environmentalists and recreationists have declared, on very flimsy evidence, that the ecology of the alpine country is threatened by the presence of these herds.

They would prefer to see a system of zoning, devoid of economically productive grazing, policed by costly Government officials under the authoritarian control of a Government agency.

The Victorian mountain cattlemen welcome the concept of the Association for Preservation of Rural Australia, and would willingly offer a fund of expertise in its formation and management.

Amenities and controls, already there, have been placed by the cattleman, at his own expense.

An understanding of the ecological sensitivity of the area is a part of his hard-earned knowledge and care for the environment.

—S. J. Treasure, President, Association for Preservation of Rural Australia, Dargo.