

MOUNTAIN BUSHLANDS THE CROWN LANDS OF VICTORIA

The following two articles recently published in country newspapers should be read and heeded by all responsible Parliamentarians before any final legislation is passed relating to the "Recommendations for the Alpine Study Area" by the Land Conservation Council.

When "Seven Shires Say NO to Plan for the Alps" it is certain that another seven shires with a stake in the Alpine Areas would back this move. This means that at least fourteen shires — cities, towns and boroughs — representing the people are opposed.

In the face of this rejection it would be good policy to defer any hasty decision making on any Alpine issue until the views of responsible individual people have been thoroughly investigated.

The proper responsibility lies with the Government to interview these people because, unlike some government employees, they are not paid to carry their messages of wisdom to the seat of their government.

The Land Conservation Council appears to have ignored the advices of these people in the Final Recommendations.

S. J. Treasure

President, Association for Protection of Rural Australia.

J. J. Treasure

President, Association for Protection of Rural Australia.

SEVEN SHIRES SAY NO Plan for the Alps

The Land Conservation Council's plans on future use of the Alpine country was unanimously opposed by seven municipal shire councils meeting in Melbourne on Tuesday. The meeting, initiated by Maffra shire's immediate past president, Cr. Clive Hodge, of Valencia, strongly attacked sections of the council's recommendations. The shires reached three major decisions:

- Implementation of the conservation council's final recommendations should be delayed.
- Government department heads and parliamentarians should inspect the high country with each shire council individually.
- Councils support multi-use of the high country and recreation of national parks but under more lenient conditions.

Councils at the meeting, chaired by Maffra president Cr. Max Rowley, with Maffra shire secretary Cr. Jim Rennick as secretary, were Bright, Mansfield, Avon, Maffra, Tambo, Omeo and Narracan. Unable to attend were Oxley, Upper Murray and Tallangatta.

Cr. Hodge said today that a delay in adopting the conservation council's final recommendations was necessary to enable department heads to gain a better understanding of the plan's effect on people who lived in the high country or were associated with its resources.

"We believe that people should continue to use resources but in a sensible and planned way. We also believe there must be national parks, but we don't believe they should become sacred ground. We support multi-use of the high country — that is let people use it, under control, but don't lock it up for ever. If some of these recommendations are brought in, they will not easily be reversed when their disastrous effects are fully realised.

"Each council with land in the high country has peculiar problems, and we want department heads to come and look and talk with the people who will be affected. Bright shire has already done this, and department heads have gone away with changed ideas."

Secretary of the Association for Protection of Rural Australia, Mrs. Judy Gunter said yesterday that the alps plan was largely devised by people who did not live in the area. She said that the recommendations in existing form would have an enormous social effect on the future of many Gippsland people.

The association, whose president is Mr. Jack Treasure, of Dargo, is actively opposing the locking up of the high country and phasing out of cattle grazing.—From "The Gippsland Times", Sale, Friday, August 31, 1979.