

**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS
to the 40th Conference 1987
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The age of 40 years is considered to be of some importance in Society, when human biological changes and capabilities — perceived or real — sometimes can be a problem to some. This Society was conceived 40 years ago in an out of the way place over tea and biscuits, and since then its growth and maturity has largely evolved around more stronger and dubious fare in carpeted smoke-filled rooms.

Unlike the children of Israel, we have not wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, but have shown a sense of direction and purpose. Although we have not reached the promised land with its environment free of weeds, insects and diseases, the Society gives impetus to the quick communication of pure and applied research, showing a pragmatic approach to the number of immediate and short term problems in our agricultural/horticultural industry — which is still a major source of the nation's wealth.

The Society can be proud that it has been a forum for the presentation of discoveries as well as clarification of overseas research within the context of the New Zealand environment. This is seen over the years in our Proceedings with the increasing level of scientific endeavour and expertise which is already recognised internationally. May the Government give encouragement and initiative by adopting the recommendations of Sire David Beattie's report.

We acknowledge the continuing interest of retiring members who have built the organisation into the strong body it is today. We record the efforts of Bill Leonard, now present at his last Conference as an employee, whose contribution extended into many facets of the Society's life. It is also good to see honorary members, Frank Allen and Bob Taylor maintaining their interest in the Society and its conferences. As more of the early members retire, it behoves the current generation to have continuing fresh vision of the place the Society should have in the future. I believe that is more than a vehicle for the communication of research in the form of a Proceedings or Journal, but an organisation that can promote an awareness of ideas and concerns to those of influence, viz. politicians, consumer bodies and the general public. The local branches do this to some extent, but future Executive Committees should consider this more on a national level. We are no longer under the "umbrella" of Government support — we have to compete and survive along with everyone else.

The horizon is no closer than it was 40 years ago, but it is wider and more interesting. With the multi- and interdisciplinary approach to research, a more balanced result is achieved. However the viability of the Society rests in its acceptance by others, and we should not only actively promote our efforts, but also encourage contributions from those of different persuasions. I think of the environmentalists whose objective and scientific presentations should be subject to the same standard of scrutiny the Society sets itself for its members. Perhaps, if that had taken place in earlier years, the withdrawal of 2,4,5-T from the New Zealand market may not have been announced last week. If there is no scientific dialogue I fear we will become introspective and the so called "dirty dozen" will become a list containing more than 12. We need to present and promote a "clean image" — hopefully not by means of a fire brigade hose!

For the present, the Society is still in good heart and health, both in membership and financially, and the interest in the inaugural sessions at this Conference regarding legal aspects of research and initiatives in the area of resistance is very gratifying.

I record again the invaluable efforts of our Secretary Alison Popay who together with Helen Dick our Treasurer carry out the week to week running of the Society, thereby giving it a quality image.

On a more personal note, I express my thanks to my Executive Committee who have supported me during the term of my office and greatly assisted in the planning and the running of the Conference.

Thank you very much.