

Sunday Star Times 3/11/13

to their value and contributions to society as a whole. Reason often says things that strike me as truthful, things that some would sooner not hear, let alone consider. Keep him on, please.

Brian Turner, Oturehua

Taking pride

I SAT down last weekend and watched the rugby finals. Monday's report said the Canterbury women lost their final to Auckland, adding that their execution was sloppy. I would add, so was their appearance; only four Canterbury players had their socks up for the whole game. Winning rugby starts with pride in your province on the field, ask your male counterparts – they all had their socks up.

Gary Tibbotts, Christchurch

Pest control

REUBEN WILLIAM'S letter (October 27) continues the myths about the Department of Conservation's so called "pest control" operations. While most trapping is humane, DOC's preferred method is aerial 1080 which is certainly not. 1080 is a metabolic toxin that kills anything that uses oxygen as part of its processes, it was originally registered as an insecticide, it also kills birds and even, sometimes "pests".

As I understand it, "pests" are excluded from the provisions of the Animal Welfare Act. However, endangered native species, such as kea are not. Nearly 80 per cent of a tagged

population of endangered kea were cruelly poisoned at North Okarito by the very people who are charged with their protection – DOC.

It is poisons, not pests, that are killing our birds, and the same poisons also kill the insects necessary for the breakdown of forest litter and soil making processes, so it is DOC, not pests that are also slowly killing our forests.

Bill Benfield, Martinborough.

IN YOUR October 20 issue two separate letters, one from Paul Livingstone of TB Free and the other from Ed Abdool, reveal that the New Zealand authorities TbFree and Department of Conservation are proceeding with animal control operations under completely false pretences, hoping the public will continue to accept the ever-growing mountain of misinformation they keep putting out.

Livingstone tells us that if possum numbers reach 50 million we will see the extinction of native flora. He seems to have forgotten that, for many decades, we were told the possum population was at 70 million and yet there still remained some native bush worth saving. How can this be?

Livingstone tells us that under Landcare trials cattle were artificially introduced to possums with Tb and some cattle caught the disease. However this transference of Tb to cattle from possums does not seem to be happening in the real world. There have been more than 70 new outbreaks of Tb this year. All of them have been the

result of stock movements.

A few weeks ago we were told that 70 per cent of new Tb outbreaks were caused by possums. Now Livingstone admits that this figure is perhaps 60 per cent. Very soon Tb Free will be telling us that stock movements have always been the major cause of Tb spread.

How long will it be before Tb Free does something about it?

John Veysey, Coromandel