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Chapter Six

The Political Rights of Ethnic Minorities in New Zealand

1990-1999

Introduction

Civic republican and liberal citizenship theorists might disagree over whether humans are by nature primarily political or material creatures, but both nonetheless agree that full citizenship requires the ability to participate and be represented in the act of collective self-government. The right to stand for political office and to participate in the selection of those standing for political office remain the standard political rights of citizenship.¹

But the standard political rights of citizenship do not necessarily guarantee effective representation in the processes of government. In a majoritarian electoral system, for example, members of permanent minorities may never see their votes translated into the election of their chosen representatives. Electoral minorities such as ethnic minorities may thus find their interests, their perspectives, and their identities, continually unrepresented in government.

Does this lack of representation justify some form of special ‘identity-based’ representation? The idea that ethnic groups require special representation rights is a controversial one, for a number of philosophical and practical reasons. Given these controversies, and given neo-liberalism’s general aversion to the political expression of group interests, it may seem surprising that Bolger’s National Government held two referenda on the electoral system, the results of which led to the introduction of the Mixed Member Proportional electoral system (MMP) which was recommended by the

¹ Although civil rights, such as freedom of expression, conscience, association are, of course, also crucial to citizen’s ability to participate politically.
Royal Commission on the Electoral System in part because it improved the chances for minority representation. The National Government also established a new government agency designed to represent non-Maori and non-Pacific ethnic minorities in the policy-making process – the Ethnic Affairs Service – in 1992.

Upon closer examination, however, it may be seen that the National MPs were almost unanimously opposed to the introduction of the MMP system, while their commitment to establish an Ethnic Affairs Service sprang as much from foreign and economic policy considerations as those relating to the welfare of ethnic minorities in New Zealand. Moreover, the Government’s attitude to the Ethnic Affairs Service after 1992 was one of equivocation – if not outright indifference. Despite a growth in the ethnic sector during the 1990s, the Service constantly struggled with a declining resource base and ended the decade with less than a full-time equivalent position within the Department of Internal Affairs. Similarly, the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, established by the previous Labour Government to represent Pacific peoples’ interests in the policy development process, also operated under severe resource constraints for most of the decade.

Yet the National and Coalition administrations did not reject outright the idea of political representation of group interests, and the political representation of groups actually improved markedly during the period in which they were in power. The attitude of the administrations towards the idea was complicated: on the one hand there was a recognition that the special representation of women and ethnic groups was an idea whose time had come and that to actually stand in the way of it might have been electorally damaging. On the other hand their commitment to a public choice prescription for a minimal government led them to be very suspicious of the political representation of group interests via dedicated agencies. This ambivalent attitude towards the representation of minority group interests meant that inertia, inadequate funding, inter-group competition and poor institutional structures played a greater role in frustrating the political aspirations of minorities than they might otherwise have done.
The focus of this chapter is on how the National and National-led administrations between 1990-1999 considered questions of political representation as they affected non-Maori ethnic minority people. It begins by outlining the standard political rights of ethnic minority individuals in New Zealand, and then goes on argue in favour of group or ‘descriptive’ representation in some situations. The discussion then turns to an examination of how well ethnic minorities were represented in the New Zealand political system during 1990-1999.

Two types of political representation are discussed. The first is that of the political representation of non-Maori ethnic minorities in Parliament. The second form of representation considered is the institutional recognition of Pacific Islands people and ‘ethnic’ minority groups in the public policy process through the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs and the Ethnic Affairs Service within the Department of Internal Affairs respectively. Both agencies were established to present the specific interests of their client groups in the public policy development process (although the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs did also operate as a service delivery agency for a period between 1992-1997).

I.

Protection of standard political rights in New Zealand

Consistent with New Zealand's excellent record of human rights protections overall, the standard political rights of ethnic minorities were provided for in New Zealand law during the 1990s. All citizens and permanent residents were entitled to vote in national and local body elections, as were those who had been resident in New Zealand may vote in local government body elections within the local body of which they are a resident. There is also a ratepayer franchise available in respect of a multiple-owner property or corporate occupiers which can be exercised by a nominee. Any parliamentary elector may stand as a candidate for local body government anywhere in New Zealand. 'There is no residence requirement but there is a "double-hatting" prevention i.e. you cannot be on both a regional council and a district or city council at the same time.' See Graham Bush, Local Government and Politics in New Zealand, (2nd ed.),
Zealand for at least one year. All citizens were also entitled to stand for political office. These basic political rights were outlined in Section 39 of the Electoral Act 1956, Section 74 of the Electoral Act 1993, and in Section 12 of the NZ Bill of Rights Act 1990.

New Zealand law gave additional attention to the political rights of linguistic minorities. Recognising that linguistic minority individuals might be frustrated in accessing their standard political rights if they could not read the ballot paper, the Electoral Act 1993 allowed an individual whose understanding of English was not good enough to 'vote without assistance' to have an interpreter with them in the polling booth, and to have a third person of their choice inspect the ballot paper before it was deposited into the ballot box. It also allowed a Returning Officer to use an interpreter when communicating with a voter.³

The New Zealand Electoral Commission (charged with promoting public awareness of election matters through educational and information programmes) was also concerned to assist linguistic minority individuals access their political rights. It provided information brochures about elections and voting matters in a variety of Pacific and Asian languages before the 1991 and 1996 elections.

New Zealand law and practice thus provided ethnic and linguistic minority citizens residents of New Zealand with the standard political right to participate in elections, and allowed ethnic minority citizens to stand for political office. The purpose of voting rights in a representative democracy is to ensure that voters may choose someone to represent them in the political process. Was New Zealand law and practice, however, sufficient to ensure that ethnic minorities were represented in the processes of collective decision making? It is to this question, and to the general question of whether minority groups can and should be represented that the next section turns.

³ Sections 170 (1), 158 (1) and (8) (b), 165 (1) of the Electoral Act 1993.
The idea of representation generally, and of group representation more specifically

While the idea of representation is central to modern democracy, beyond this, little definitive may be said about the topic. Political theorists remain divided on the subject of who should be represented, how, and by whom. Nonetheless, A. H. Birch and Hanna Pitkin both identify three main usages of the term 'representative'.

The first is the view that a political representative has been authorised to act on behalf of those he or she represents; an authorisation that is given before the act of representing occurs, usually at an election. Birch calls this the 'agent' or 'delegate' role.4

The essence of representation is the delegation or granting of authority. To authorize a representative is to grant another the right to act for oneself. Within the limits of the grant of authority one is, in fact, committing himself in advance to the decision or will of another.5

A second view is that a representative should share a number of characteristics with those they represent, ideally 'reflecting without distortion'.6 A representative assembly, then, would be one whose composition mirrors that of the society it represents: an 'exact portrait, in miniature, of the people at large' which should 'think, feel, reason and act like them'.7 Pitkin calls this form of representation 'descriptive'.

The third view also involves representatives standing for others, only, in this usage the representation is symbolic. A symbolic representative 'calls to mind or serves as a concrete embodiment of, a whole group or category of persons'.8 An example of a

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6 Pitkin, p.60.
7 John Adams, quoted in Pitkin, p. 60.
8 Birch, p. 17.
symbolic representative might be a student representative on a school or university committee.⁹

An enduring debate exists as to whether representatives, of any sort, are authorised to present only those views directly communicated to them by their constituents or whether they instead have a degree of autonomy, able to act in what they see as the best interests of their constituency. As the former, the representative is a mouthpiece of their constituents; as the latter they are considerably more than this.¹⁰ Others argue, differently again, that a political representative in a party-based political system is bound to follow neither the strict instructions of their constituency, nor their own conscience, but rather the policies set out in their party’s manifesto.

Each of these understandings of representation is problematic in some respects. If a representative is a delegated agent, mandated only to present the views and desires of his or her constituency, what is the representative to do in the face of divided opinion within the constituency? How, indeed, are representatives to ensure that every constituent who wishes their opinion to be communicated via the representative is fully informed about the range of issues on which the representative will be required to make decisions? Equally unsatisfactory, however, is the idea that once a representative agent receives authority to act on the behalf of their constituents they are free from that point on to act quite autonomously of their constituents’ wishes until the period during which they are authorised to do so comes to an end.

Such problems are compounded if we turn to the idea of ‘mirror’ representation. According to this idea of representation a parliamentary assembly composed entirely, for example, of European male lawyers in their middle years would not be ‘representative’ of a diverse society. Yet the argument that an assembly should be composed of parliamentarians who reflect various salient aspects of the populace, in proportion to their incidence in the general population, poses various philosophical and practical difficulties. First there is the question of which aspects of identity ought

to be so represented: gender, race, ethnicity, language, religion, profession, class, ability, sexuality, political viewpoint, geographical location? On what basis should such an answer to this question be developed, and who should develop it? And, even if these first questions were to be resolved satisfactorily, how could members of the identity groups chosen to be represented be sure that someone who shares an aspect of their identity will actually represent them? Groups are internally diverse, so how can a woman or a Maori, for example, claim to represent all other women or Maori? The more closely identity and representation become linked, the more the political significance of identity differences are magnified and the way is opened for a very divisive and infinitely fracturing form of identity politics. As Kymlicka says:

If men cannot represent women, can white women represent women of colour? Within the category of women of colour, can Asian women represent African-Caribbean women? Can middle-class heterosexual able-bodied Asian women represent poor, disabled or lesbian Asian women? Taken to its conclusion, the principle of mirror representation seems to undermine the very possibility of representation itself. If "no amount of thought or sympathy, no matter how careful or honest, can jump the barriers of experience" then how can anyone represent anyone else? 11

The difficulties that the idea of mirror representation present are very considerable and the idea has not therefore received much support from democratic theorists, many of whom might have agreed with Pennock's pithy comment that 'no-one would argue that morons should be represented by morons'. 12 Moreover, the few empirical studies conducted on whether having women or black legislators actually had a predictable relationship to the progression of the issues concerning women or blacks have led to negative conclusions. 13 But many democratic theorists nonetheless feel very uncomfortable with the fact that certain groups, like women and ethnic minorities,

remain under-represented in political institutions, and argue for some limited form of ‘descriptive’\(^\text{14}\) group representation in certain circumstances. Amongst such theorists are Anne Phillips,\(^\text{15}\) Will Kymlicka,\(^\text{16}\) Melissa S. Williams,\(^\text{17}\) Iris Marion Young and Jane Mansbridge.

### i. The case for ‘descriptive’ representation

Iris Marion Young has argued that oppressed and disadvantaged groups\(^\text{18}\) in society should have special representation in political arenas.\(^\text{19}\) In her analysis a person may be represented in three different ways: according to interest, opinion and perspective. Interest is defined as ‘what affects or is important to the life prospects of individuals, or the goal-oriented success of organisation’. Pursuing representation of their interests is a primary activity of, for example, interest groups. Unlike interests, which are ‘self-referring’, opinions are the ‘principles, values and priorities held by a person as these bear on and condition his or her judgement about what priorities should be pursued and ends sought’. Commonly an individual will base her support for a particular party on the values and principles which that party claims to embody.\(^\text{20}\) A person’s perspective on the other hand derives neither from her personal interests or opinions but from her ‘social location’ (determined by class, religion, ethnicity, gender, occupation and so on). While a person’s social location does not determine her

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\(^{14}\) The distinction I am drawing here is between ‘mirror’ representation, where the goal is to have a political assembly composed of members who belong to identity groups in the same proportions in which those identity groups are found in the general populace, and ‘descriptive’ representation, where the goal is to have some representatives in the assembly of most identity groups in society, but not necessarily in proportion to their numbers in the general population.


\(^{16}\) Kymlicka, 1995; Kymlicka and Norman, 2000.


identity, it will have significant effects on the ways in which she experiences and interprets events:

Because of their social locations, people are attuned to particular kinds of social meanings and relationship to which others are less attuned. Sometimes people are not positioned to be aware of them at all. From their social locations people have differentiated knowledge of social events and their consequences. Because their social locations arise partly from the construction that others have of them, and which they have of others in different locations, people in different locations may interpret the meaning of actions, events, rules and structures differently, though not necessarily in incompatible ways. Structural social positions this produce particular locationally relative kinds of experience and a specific knowledge of social processes and consequences.21

Thus, in order for a particular social perspective to be represented, the representative must have experience and knowledge derived from his or her own positioning within a similar social location. This is not to say that all people within a certain identity group see things the same simply because they share common viewing platform. Rather, as Young says, 'the idea of perspective is meant to capture that sensibility of group position experience without specifying unified content to what the perspective sees'.22 For Young, political systems should adopt measures to ensure the representation of diverse social perspectives, rather than simply opinions and interests. Perspectives are largely involuntary – one cannot choose whether or not to experience life as a certain gender, class, race – and specific to groups. Opinions and interests, on the other hand, are to a much greater extent the product of individual choice and not necessarily restricted to members of a specific group.

Therefore:

Inclusive democracy implies that every structured social group's perspective in the polity should be represented. Every perspective should be represented not only for reasons of political fairness but also to maximise the social knowledge needed to reach fair and wise decisions. In societies structured by group based privilege and disadvantage, political

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21 Ibid, p. 366.
22 Ibid, p. 368.
processes of procedural liberalism generally result in the dominance of the perspectives of privileged groups in political discussion and decision making. Democratic inclusion thus requires special measure to enable the representation of oppressed or disadvantaged structural social groups. Ensuring the representation of multiple perspectives gives voice to distinctive experiences in the society and relativizes the dominant perspectives that are assumed as normal and neutral.23

Similarly, and despite identifying a number of serious costs associated with descriptive group representation,24 Jane Mansbridge has argued that disadvantaged groups benefit from being represented by members of their own identity groups in three specific sets of circumstances. First, where groups and their representatives operate in a 'communicative setting of distrust...where the dominant group has learned not to listen and the subordinate group has learned not to trust.'25 In this situation members of minority or subordinate groups might find that 'effective substantive representation depends on their being represented ...by members of their own group, with whom they can communicate easily and by whom they can reasonably expect to be better understood'.26

Second, where there are new 'uncrystallised' issues (issues which 'have not gone through a process of pre-election deliberation and position-taking')27) that minority groups want to place on the political agenda. According to Mansbridge, the process of formulating and presenting the issue as one worthy of consideration is facilitated if there is a representative from the minority group concerned who can 'bear witness from personal experience to the salience of the problem'.28 Third, where historically a group has had a denigrated status in a polity, the presence of members of the historically denigrated group in a political assembly may positively alter the social

23 Ibid, p. 370.
24 One of the costs she has identified is that of 'essentialism', (...assuming a single or essential trait or nature, that binds every member of a descriptive group together, giving them common interests that, in the most extreme versions of the idea, transcend the interests that divide them'). Secondly, by emphasising the importance membership of a subgroup (especially ethnic groups) national ties might be weakened. Thirdly, by emphasising the 'descriptive' characteristics of a representative, voters may be 'lulled into thinking their substantive interests are being represented even when this is not the case'. Mansbridge, p. 108-111.
25 Mansbridge, p. 99.
26 Idem.
27 Idem.
28 Ibid, p. 100

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status of that group. The benefits associated with what she calls ‘descriptive’ representation in these three contexts are, she argues, sufficient to suggest that polities should absorb the costs associated with such representation.

Both Young and Mansbridge’s arguments revolve around the benefits of representation for disadvantaged and minority groups whose voices might not otherwise get heard in the processes of collective decision-making. Group representation in this context is presented as a way for groups to overcome systemic disadvantage and oppression, and derives normative justification from the values of social liberalism. Will Kymlicka proposes another context in which group representation might be justifiable: when national minorities are seeking a degree of self-government. In this context the justification for group representation is based on the right of national minorities to self-government or self-determination at the sub-state level. Social-equalisation goals may also be evoked as a hoped-for outcome of such representation, but they are not primary. (The arguments in favour of group representation for national minorities seeking limited self-government rest on a different justification – although the desire to reduce disadvantage and oppression may also be considered a desirable by-product of self-government. I do not intend to pursue these second set of arguments here because they do not concern immigrant ethnic minorities, except to emphasise that such arguments differ in theoretical justification and practical implementation from the arguments in favour of descriptive representation for oppressed and disadvantaged groups.)

The arguments presented by Mansbridge, Young, Kymlicka and others in favour of increased representation for under-represented minority or disadvantaged groups are persuasive ones, despite the political costs associated with group representation identified by each. Political assemblies in which a wide range of interests, opinions and perspectives are represented will be thought by those they now represent as being more legitimate. They are also less likely to reach collective decisions which further oppress and marginalise already oppressed and marginalised groups. These gains in legitimacy and in social equalisation should counteract to a great degree any costs that
increased minority representation might place on the national political community. Increased minority representation will also increase ethnic minorities’ access to their political rights and thus improve their citizenship status overall.

But having accepted the arguments in favour of group representation for the purposes of assisting disadvantaged and marginalised groups in some contexts, a number of questions remain as to proper institutional design and group definition. First are the questions of how such group representation might be effected. Should, for example, groups be represented in a parliamentary assembly through a number of seats set aside specifically for them, or should there simply be a proportional electoral system which facilitates minority representation? If the former, should the seats be allocated so as to ensure minorities are represented in direct proportion to their numbers in the general population, or simply so as to ensure them a ‘threshold’ representation? And further, should group representation be limited to the parliamentary assembly, or should it be extended to include representation on other non-parliamentary bodies and government agencies, and to veto rights for minorities over those decisions which directly affect them, and even public funding for groups advocating minority group interests?

A second set of questions concern who it is that should be entitled to any such forms of group representation. Iris Marion Young’s assertion that all disadvantaged and oppressed groups should have group representation has been criticised by Kymlicka for seeming to include about 80 per cent of the population. In fact ‘... everyone but relatively well-off, relatively young, able-bodied, heterosexual white males’. And

29 Phillips (1994) has argued that the interests of disadvantaged groups will not be represented unless the number of seats held by members of those groups in an assembly reaches a certain ‘threshold’. Deciding what constitutes a threshold is difficult however. As Kymlicka points out the number of seats necessary to reach a threshold might be quite different to the number necessary to achieve proportionality, and may vary according to the group concerned. Women, for example, might require only around 30% of the seats in an assembly to achieve a threshold, (rather than the 50% necessary to achieve proportionality.) For very small minorities however, representation proportional to their number in the population may be insufficient to have ensure their interests are represented. See Kymlicka, 1995 (a), p.147.

30 Kymlicka’s conclusion was that ‘the choice between proportional and threshold representation may depend on the nature of the decision-making process...the more consensual the process, the more threshold representation may be sufficient.’ Kymlicka, 1995 (a), p. 147.

31 Kymlicka, 1995 (a).

32 Ibid, p. 145.
Young gives little guidance as to who should be entrusted with deciding which groups deserve representation, and what processes should be available to those groups who wish to dispute a representation issue. 33

These are very difficult questions to answer in terms that could be applicable across a range of countries, given the complexities within and diversities between countries. Nonetheless, some guidance might be found in the distinction that Arendt Lipjhart draws between institutional arrangements which decide in advance which groups can and should be represented (what he calls ‘pre-determination’) and those which simply facilitate the voluntary emergence of minority group representation (‘self-determination’). 34

Although Lipjhart himself has advocated power-sharing arrangements between pre-determined groups in ‘deeply divided’ societies 35 there would seem to be range of political disadvantages associated with pre-determining which groups should get representation and how much, especially in societies where the divisions are not perhaps as deep or enduring as in the countries Lipjhart describes as ‘plural’. These include the risks that identity groups will become ‘essentialised’; that identities and differences will become frozen through their pre-determined institutional representation. Groups have less opportunity to develop cross-identity alliances if their right to representation as a group is predetermined, and such institutional arrangements will encourage identity groups to always think of themselves as having

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33 Young has argued that a system of ‘communicative democracy’ might assist such a decision-making process. In a communicative democracy group-structured inequality may be ameliorated in political settings open to a variety of communicative forms. Such setting will not privilege the form of communication employed by dominant groups -argument- over communicative forms employed by oppressed and disadvantaged groups - such as impassioned rhetoric. Thus the viewpoint of oppressed groups will be heard during the decision-making process. This still, however, leaves the question of who should be represented outstanding, as it does the problem of fracturing groups, as sub-groups within groups claim that they too need to be represented. See Young, ‘Deferring Group Representation’, in Ian Shapiro & Will Kymlicka, (eds.), NOMOS XXXIX Ethnicity and Group Rights, 1997.


35 According to Arendt Lipjhart’s classic formulation, for example, countries in which there are deep divisions along religious, ideological, linguistic, cultural, ethnic or racial lines are best governed under a ‘consociational democracy’ in which a ‘grand coalition’ between the leaders of each of the major segments of society govern together. See Lipjhart, The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1975; and Democracy in Plural Societies. A Comparative Exploration, Yale, Yale University Press, 1977.
specific, even opposing interests to other identity groups. For these reasons systems that facilitate the voluntary emergence of minority group representation seem infinitely preferable to those that pre-determine group representation at the level of parliamentary assemblies, except perhaps where there is a claim to self-government by a national minority.

Proportional representation electoral systems around the world have tended to lead to diverse assemblies, and are particularly effective in increasing the representation of women. The diversity of representation they foster springs both from the fact that under proportional systems mass parties generally have diverse candidates on their party lists, and from the improved electoral chances of small, ethnically-based parties (as the New Zealand Maori-Pacific party could be categorised) under proportional systems. Proportionality thus caters to those ethnic minority individuals who see themselves as sharing interests and opinions with non-minority individuals, but who nonetheless wish to see their group perspective represented, as well as to those who feel that their identity as a minority determines their interests, opinions and perspectives. Proportional systems therefore facilitate minority group representation without necessarily also facilitating a divisive form of identity politics.

Proportional electoral systems also remove the need to make politically contentious and potentially divisive decisions about which groups are eligible for group representation and how many seats eligible groups should be granted. Proportional systems are thus to be favoured over a policy of reserved seats in polities where there are politically under-represented ethnic minority groups.

However, while there is not a strong case for pre-determined group representation in the form of reserved seats in parliamentary assemblies, the situation is reversed at the level of policy development within government agencies. As part of the executive arm of government, public servants have a crucially important role in advising Ministers as

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to the likely costs and benefits of any particular policy. The advice that they give needs to be informed by the widest possible understanding of the implications of policies, including the implications, if any, for ethnic minority groups. Given that the public service – at least in Westminster systems – is appointed not elected (and therefore a proportional electoral system will not operate there), it may be necessary to adopt specific measures to ensure that minority perspectives are taken into account in the development and evaluation of government policies. There are a variety of such measures that may be adopted: positive discrimination policies to increase the number of ethnic minority employees within government; the appointment from various ethnic communities of community boards to advise the Minister; the establishment of cultural advisory sections within government agencies with specialist understanding of the needs of ethnic minorities; or the establishment of specialised agencies charged with providing specific policy advice on ethnic minorities. A combination of some of these measures is necessary in order to ensure that disadvantaged and marginalised minority group interests are represented during the policy making, implementation and evaluation processes of government.

ii. ‘Public choice’ theory and representation

So far the arguments presented have been in favour of group representation where groups are under-represented, disadvantaged or marginalised; and they are premised on a social-liberal idea of justice. In contrast, neo-liberals use a public choice analysis to argue that a representative’s role is to be a delegate, and in that role must they rise above the self-interested views of groups in society and act instead in the ‘public’ interest. The public choice conception of utility-maximising individuals leads neo-liberals to construct the ‘public’ merely as an aggregate of self-interested individuals. Consequently, the ‘public interest’ is best served when optimum conditions exist for the pursuit of individual self-interest. As state intervention in the economy interferes with the production of social and economic information, and thus with the ability of individuals to make rational, utility-maximising choices, the ‘public interest’ is best
met when markets are able to produce information as freely as possible, and governments restrict themselves to those activities the market cannot spontaneously provide. Claims for the specific representation of group interests, on the other hand, are construed as promoting ‘vested’ interests, contrary to the public interest. Governments, such neo-liberals have argued, should have strong executive power, but limited jurisdiction.

So here we have three different views about the representation of minority ethnic groups. The first view (that of Young, Mansbridge and Kymlicka) sees descriptive representation as legitimate in order to counter the disadvantaged position of minority groups. The second argues in favour of descriptive representation for national minorities because it will enhance their capacity to be self-governing, and the third view (the public choice view) dismisses descriptive representation as the illegitimate institutionalising of vested interests.

All three views were articulated in New Zealand political debate during the 1990s. The following section focuses on that debate and the forms of minority representation that resulted from it. The focus of the section is primarily on the debate between social-liberal arguments in favour of descriptive representation for the purpose of ameliorating under-representation and marginalisation of non-Maori ethnic minority groups, and the neo-liberal critiques of such arguments (although the question of descriptive representation for the purpose of self-government did also arise in relation to Maori).
II.

The Mixed Member Proportional Electoral system and the representation of ethnic minority groups


Before the introduction of the Mixed Member Proportional system at the 1996 general election the two main forms of representation were geographical representation by the electorates, and party representation through the political parties. In addition, the Maori seats provided a form of 'descriptive' representation, although the number of seats was not proportional to the Maori population. Further, each of these forms of representation fulfilled several functions. Geographical representation enabled representatives from each electorate to act as agents for their constituency, as well as for representatives of certain interest or identity groups (such as farmers), and of course, for individuals. Likewise, party representation provided representation both of interests and opinions.

But before 1993 neither Pacific Islanders or Asians had ever had won seats in the New Zealand Parliament, despite both having significant and growing populations in New Zealand. Pacific Islands people were disadvantaged across the spectrum of socio-economic indicators, and, like Asian people, had frequently been the butt of both popular and government discriminatory rhetoric and policy throughout the twentieth century. Unsurprisingly therefore, questions of descriptive group representation came to the fore during the debate on whether or not New Zealand should drop its majoritarian First-past-the-post electoral system in favour of the Mixed Member Proportional electoral system.

38 There had, however, been earlier ethnic minority candidates. Kenneth Yee, for example, stood for the seat of Manakau East in 1987.
39 See Chapter Three of this thesis.
In keeping with their generally reformist attitude upon entering government, the fourth Labour Government had appointed a Royal Commission on the Electoral System in 1985, instructed to consider whether New Zealand should consider adopting an alternative electoral system. The report of the Royal Commission, *Towards a Better Democracy*, presented a number of arguments concerning the representation of ethnic minority groups. The Royal Commission lent their support to the idea that group interests require representation in democratic systems:

> Democracy demands that interests be given their due weight in the competition for influence on public policy, and this in turn requires that they be adequately and effectively represented. Since the identification of the individual representatives with their groups is likely to have a strong bearing upon their effectiveness as representatives, democracy also recognises the need for the direct and fair representation of diverse groups by members of those groups. However, the mere presence of a group in the legislature does not guarantee political effectiveness. Other conditions, such as the character of the electoral system and the ability of the group to exert leverage on the Government are also important.40

'Effective representation of minority and special interest groups' became one of the ten criteria against which the Royal Commission judged the various electoral systems it considered as alternatives to First Past the Post (FPP). Other criteria included 'effective representation of Maori' and 'effective representation of constituents'.

The Royal Commission specifically rejected the idea of separate group representation through an arrangement such as special seats for ethnic minorities (including Maori), as had been proposed in some submissions from Pacific Islands communities:

> As far as Pacific Island people are concerned, their numbers are small, but they come from many diverse societies, and it would accordingly be very difficult to arrange for appropriate representation for them. In any event... the Commission sees great disadvantage in separate electoral representation for any group. On the basis of the Maori people's experience, we believe such arrangements would only serve to promote separation and division over issues that are of vital concern to... the Pacific Island community. The better course is to ensure that political parties recognise their responsibilities to facilitate the adequate representation of... minorities.41

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41 Ibid, 240.
But the Royal Commission did argue that the FPP system had led to the under-representation of minority ethnic groups, and that adoption of a proportional electoral system such as MMP would substantially improve the chances of ethnic minorities, including Maori, gaining effective representation in New Zealand.

The advantage of MMP, they argued, was that the existence of national party lists would free parties from the obligation to select as candidates only those who would be 'widely acceptable' within an electorate. Under the MMP system a party would need to appeal to a national constituency through their party list, providing it with an incentive to present a balanced (ethnicity, gender, geography, occupation, and so on) list. Indeed, the Commission argued, 'parties would increasingly appreciate the greater significance of the votes of members of minority and special interests groups, who, in turn, would be likely to support parties that acknowledged their importance by seeking representative candidates and by proposing appropriate policies.'


Despite having appointed the Royal Commission, and Prime Minister Lange's inadvertent promise to hold a binding referendum on the electoral system at the 1990 election, Labour did not act on the recommendations of the Royal Commission. In fact, an Electoral Law Select Committee established (at Deputy Prime Minister Geoff Palmer's suggestion) to consider the Royal Commission's Report and public submissions on its findings was in general opposed to MMP and recommended instead that FPP be retained. Disagreement within the committee – which comprised four Labour and three National MPs – led, however, to the additional recommendation

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42 Ibid, p. 50
43 Five years after surprising his party colleagues and the public by assuring them - during a televised leaders' debate - that New Zealand would hold a referendum on electoral reform following the findings of the royal commission, Lange claimed that his comments had resulted from a 'mistake' in his briefing notes. See Keith Jackson, 'The Origins of the Electoral Referendums', in Alan McRobie, (ed.), Taking it to the People? The New Zealand Electoral Referendum Debate, Christchurch, Hazard Press, 1993, p. 18.
44 Steven Levine and Nigel S. Roberts, 'MMP: The Decision', in Raymond Miller, (ed.), 1997, p.28
that ‘an indicative referendum be held at the same time as a referendum on the term of Parliament as to whether any increased number of MPs be elected on a plurality or a Supplementary Member basis’.45

In the event, only the first of these referenda was held in 1990, prompting National to decry Labour’s failure to deliver on its promise, despite a distinct lack of enthusiasm within its own members for MMP. Indeed, in its own 1990 election manifesto National went so far as to promise to hold a binding referendum on the electoral system in 1992.46 Jackson and McRobie believe National could sense a sea-change in the public mood in favour of MMP and felt that there was political advantage to be made in pre-empting Labour by announcing a commitment to hold the referendum. They were in effect ‘outflanking’ Labour, ‘on an issue that had originally been its own’.47

That it did so is nonetheless surprising. Among those National MPs known to be opposed to the Mixed Member Proportional system were the high ranking Bill Birch, Doug Graham, Simon Upton, Tony Ryall, Don McKinnon, as well Prime Minister Jim Bolger.48 Bolger had publicly argued that if there was to be constitutional reform designed to increase the accountability of the executive and remove excessive executive power it should take the form of a Second Chamber. National’s general lack of enthusiasm for the MMP system derived from aspects of the system other than its likelihood of increasing the diversity of representation. Specifically, it disliked the idea of coalition governments, and the reduced power of the larger political parties within any coalition government. Neither was it enthusiastic about the prospect of small parties holding the balance of power. However, National held an indicative, not a binding referendum in 1992, and got a very clear response. Nearly 85 percent of the

55.2 percent of New Zealanders who participated in the referendum voted to change the electoral system. The battle between MMP and FPP was then on.

The economic and political resources at the disposal of those in favour of maintaining the status quo were formidable. Numerous big business lobby groups became involved: the Business Roundtable, the Employers Federation, the Auckland Chamber of Commerce, and the directors of the ANZ, Ceramco, and Mobil New Zealand all spoke out against MMP. The main lobby group representing the anti-MMP cause emerged as the Campaign for Better Government, headed first by the chairman of Telecom, Peter Shirtcliffe, and then by a former president of Federated Farmers, Owen Jennings. Many parliamentarians added their voices to the anti-MMP side of the debate: most of the National caucus (excluding Michael Laws and Christine Fletcher), as well as Labour MPs Helen Clark and Mike Moore. The most comprehensive criticism of the Mixed Member Proportional System was that commissioned by the Business Roundtable, entitled An Analysis of Proposals for Constitutional Change in New Zealand. Using a public choice analysis, the authors argued that in an MMP parliament gains in minority representation would occur at the expense of the majority of voters.

Lining up to support a change to MMP were many of those who had been marginalised during the previous decade of economic and political restructuring. Realising that minority representation would in all likelihood improve considerably under MMP, many Maori and women’s groups were amongst those to publicly support it. The Maori Women’s Welfare League, the Auckland Maori Council, the National Maori Congress, Mana Motuhake, the National Council of Women, and the Women’s Electoral Lobby all supported the MMP cause. At its National Conference in 1993 the Ethnic Council of New Zealand encouraged its members to support MMP. Joining these voices in opposition to those of big business were the Council of Trade Unions, the Public Service Association, and a number of academics, including

Idem.
Ibid, p. 58.
political scientists Helena Catt and Jack Vowles. Parliamentary support came in particular from the minor parties which stood to gain so much from a change to a proportional system: Jim Anderton, Leader of the Alliance, Winston Peters, Leader of New Zealand First, Derek Quigley, a member of the ACT (Association of Citizens and Ratepayers) Party. Labour’s David Caygill and Geoffrey Palmer were also supporters, although theirs were relatively lone voices amongst their caucus. The group which emerged as the main lobbyist in favour of MMP was the Electoral Reform Coalition, which came to be seen as something of a David in comparison to its main opponent, the Campaign for Better Government, whose funding sources were assumed, given the group’s support from big business, to be positively Goliath-like. The capacity of MMP to improve representation was one of the most significant and persistent claims of the pro-MMP lobby.

The questions of minority representation were part of a wider set of questions about where power lay in post-1984 New Zealand. Underlying the debate between the two sides was the ongoing question about the appropriate role of government in the economy. Many of those in favour of retaining FPP, such as various members of the Business Round Table, argued government’s role should be restricted to creating the conditions appropriate to economic growth. Using a public choice analysis, FPP advocates like Bob Mathews (vice-chairman of the Business Round Table) argued that under MMP New Zealand would be in danger of returning to political system in which ‘vested interests’ could exercise power at the expense of the ‘public interest’. MMP’s capacity for minority representation and its tendency to result in coalition governments would, he argued, weaken the executive power of government and increase the opportunity for vested interests to push for greater government intervention in the economy – to its detriment.

But where the opponents of MMP preached ‘more market’, those in favour of it resoundingly called for ‘more politics’. They argued that after a long period of broken

53 Ibid, p. 57.
election promises and the foisting of market reforms upon an unsuspecting public, MMP would return power to the voters: it would more accurately translate votes into seats; the need for negotiation and compromise under coalition governments (highly likely under the new system) would slow down the policy process and knock the radicalism out of policy proposals; the representation of minority interests, previously cut out from representation by a system of majority voting, would increase. All these features, it was argued, in combination with the greater number of parliamentary members (from 99 to 120), would increase the possibilities and sites for democratic discourse, and counter-act, at least to some extent, the anti-democratic effects of market reforms. They would empower both minorities and majorities feeling disenfranchised by excessive executive power. MMP, in other words, was seen as a mechanism for the re-democratisation of the public sphere.

Two distinct versions of citizenship were at stake here. Arguments like Bob Mathew’s were founded on the ‘economic man’, who considers governments instrumental to his private ends. Those who argued for MMP on the grounds that it would improve political participation, representation and accountability objected to this instrumental view of government. For them such instrumentalism simply translated into a non-interventionism that suited an elite section of the population. What was important for the pro-MMP camp was for citizens to wrest political and economic control out of the hands of an elite and return it to the citizenry as a whole.

The issue was put to the public at the December 1993 election when a binding referendum was held to decide whether New Zealand would retain its First-Past-the-Post electoral system or change to the new MMP system. The turn-out for this referendum was much higher than for the first one - 85.2 per cent of eligible voters – and FPP received a much higher level of support than it had in the previous referendum. Nonetheless, MMP won over FPP with a nearly eight percent lead.\(^{275}\) New Zealand thus adopted a proportional electoral system, via the Electoral Act 1993.

As had been anticipated by the Royal Commission on the Electoral System, political

\(^{275}\) MMP gained 53.9 percent of the vote, FPP 46.1 percent. See Levine and Roberts, 1997, p. 33.
parties contesting the first MMP election in 1996 were conscious of the need to appeal to a national constituency via their party lists. National’s list included Pansy Wong, at number 26, intended to appeal in particular to the new business-oriented migrants from Asia, and Arthur Anae, a Pacific Islander from Auckland Central at number 19. Labour’s list included part-Samoan Mark Gosche at number 5 on the list, who joined sitting Otara MP Taito Phillip Field, also a Samoan. A number of ethnic minority parties also sprung up, hopeful that the new electoral system would facilitate their minority party representation. Most of these small ethnic parties were Maori-based, but two were specifically for non-Maori ethnic minorities: the Auckland-based Ethnic Minority Party of New Zealand, composed of a range of Asian and Pacific members, and the similarly-composed the Wellington-based Asia Pacific United Party, both of which registered in late 1996.56

The first election under MMP was held in 1996, and, as the pro-MMP advocates had argued it would, the proportional electoral system markedly increased the representation of ethnic minorities within parliament. Two new Pacific Islands MPs, National’s Arthur Anae and Labour’s Mark Goesche, joined Labour’s sitting Samoan MP Taito Philip Field.57 And New Zealand’s first Asian member, National’s Pansy Wong, was elected. All three of the new ethnic minority MPs got into Parliament via their party’s list. Neither the Ethnic Minority Party of New Zealand, nor the Asia Pacific United Party reached anywhere near the five percent threshold required to gain a seat in the House.58 But the New Zealand First Party, which was strongly Maori, gained eleven list seats, all five of the Maori electorate seats, and the seat of Tauranga, giving the party the balance of power in the next Government. The Mana Motuhake (Maori sovereignty) Party was one of the parties within the Alliance, which gained a total of 13 seats.59 What this indicated was that while MMP had improved the chances of minority parties gaining representation in parliament, Maori were the only ethnic group large enough to have been able to take advantage of this fact. The increased

57 Taito Philip Field (a titled Samoan) was elected to Parliament in 1993 and was New Zealand’s first MP of Pacific Island descent.
58 The Ethnic Minority Party gained 0.12% of the national party vote, while the Asia Pacific United Party gained 0.002% of the national party vote. Electoral Commission, The New Zealand Electoral Compendium, Wellington, Electoral Commission, December 1997, pp. 18-19.
representation for non-Maori groups came not from minority parties, but from the inclusion of ethnically diverse candidates on the party lists of the main parties.

Each of the non-Maori ethnic minority MPs in the 1996 parliament were clearly aware of their role as representatives of an ethnic minority as well as of their party (and, in the case of Taito Phillip Field, his electorate). In her maiden speech Pansy Wong immediately identified herself as the New Zealand’s first MP of Asian origin, and devoted the entire speech to discussing the history and current status of Chinese people in New Zealand, stating her hopes that under MMP it might at last be possible for Chinese and other ethnic minorities in New Zealand to participate fully in New Zealand politics:

...It is with humbleness, great pride and a sense of trepidation that I deliver the maiden speech as the first MP of Asian ethnic origin. It has been over 130 years in coming and the path leading to parliament is paved with tears, blood, hard work and determination. It is the first step taken by New Zealanders of Asian ethnic origin into this House of Representatives and a positive step towards the concept 'One Nation, Many People'

For a long time, the Chinese, Indians and other ethnic minority groups have not taken an active part in the planning of our nation’s future, they have not been vocal in expressing their aspirations for this country. They retreat and confine their aspirations to their individual self and that of their families...This time, it will be different, we are known for innovative and progressive attitude, our anti-nuclear stand, drive for equality of genders and recent economic reforms all lead me to be positive that we can show the way towards the ideal multi-cultural state. It needs to be a true partnership approach between ethnic minorities and the dominant groups. It needs to be bottom up from every one of us, and top down from parliament...This parliament can lead by example in changing attitudes, we should be proactive and genuine in seeking input from all ethnic communities and mindful of their lack of resources in participation.60

... It is a real privilege to be able to serve in the House of Representatives; it was made possible by the new MMP political system. The support from Chinese, Korean and other ethnic communities throughout the country is overwhelming and I am deeply indebted...

Labour’s Mark Gosche, who was part Samoan, explicitly identified himself with the Pacific Island constituency in his maiden speech, saying ‘I am proud to stand here as

59 Idem.
one of three Pacific Island Members of Parliament elected to represent our people and their aspirations'. Likewise, Taito Phillip Field emphasised the Pacific character and population of his Otara electorate, and focussed on the social and economic status of his Pacific constituents. Arthur Anae clearly also saw himself as providing a Pacific Islander’s perspective in parliament, saying ‘I thank the National Party who believe in [my] ability, and positioned me so highly on their party list to ensure that Pacific Islands people have a voice in the National Party.’

The presence of four ethnic minority MPs in the New Zealand parliament after the introduction of the MMP electoral system seemed to prove that MMP had improved ethnic minorities’ access to their political rights in New Zealand by making their votes count a great deal more than they did under First-Past-the-Post, and by making it more likely that the mass parties would include minority candidates on their party lists. The new proportional electoral system thus had a beneficial effect on the citizenship status of ethnic minorities.

Did the presence of these ‘descriptive’ representatives in the New Zealand parliament actually mean that the interests, opinions or perspectives of the ethnic minorities so represented were taken into consideration during the public policy process more than they might have been otherwise? Whether the presence of Wong, Anae, Field and Gosche in Parliament changed policy in favour of the respective ethnic constituencies is a matter for future empirical research. But it must be remembered that only two out of the four ethnic minority MPs elected into the New Zealand parliament in 1996 were actually in Government, and even they were lowly-ranked backbenchers – Pansy Wong was, after all the last person on the National Party list to enter parliament at the election. Moreover, much policy development occurs outside the party caucus meetings – indeed outside Cabinet – within the state sector itself. For this reason the next section considers the ways in which the interests of ethnic minorities were considered in the public policy making process within the state sector.

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61 Although National’s Annabel Young joined parliament shortly thereafter, following the resignation of Jim Gerard.
II.

Institutional representation through 'client-based' agencies

i. Questions of institutional design

The creation of agencies designed specifically to represent the interests of certain population groups was part of the fourth Labour Government's wider project of comprehensively reshaping the 'machinery of government'. Influential in the establishment of client-based agencies such as the Ministries of Pacific Island Affairs, Women's Affairs and Youth Affairs, and the creation of the portfolios of Consumer Affairs and Senior Citizens' Affairs, was the theory that the organisational structure of a bureaucracy be conceived around a principle of 'similarity'. One such similarity principle related to the clientele served by a particular bureaucracy, suggesting that the establishment of client-based agencies might be appropriate. Labour's motivation for establishing such agencies seemed to be a desire, as Boston puts it, to 'ensure that disadvantaged groups, or groups which lack a strong base of institutional support within the bureaucracy, are able to exert more influence on public policy.' The attempt to combine the efficiency and accountability benefits of a neo-liberal restructuring of government with social justice and equity concerns was characteristic of many of Labour's reforms during the period.

Both the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs were developed in direct response to prolonged periods of lobbying by women's groups and Pacific Island communities. Each argued that their respective groups had suffered as a direct result of their under-representation in the policy-making process and that they needed agencies of their own in order that their specific interests be fed into the policy-making process.

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The fourth Labour Government considered various ways in which women's and Pacific Islands people's interests might be represented in the policy process. After all, client-based agencies are not the only method of enhancing disadvantaged groups’ access to it. An alternative institutional structure is for individuals or units within each of the 'mainstream' agencies to have responsibility for presenting the perspective of specific groups during the policy process. Each form of institutional representation – client-based agencies and mainstreaming – has advantages and drawbacks.

A great advantage afforded by the existence of client-based agencies for the clientele is the representation of their interests by a Minister and a departmental head. Without representation at this level, the concerns of particular clients may well be ignored at the highest levels of decision making. Specialised representation through a client-based agency also provides a team of staff dedicated specifically to understanding and furthering the interests of that clientele and who will not have their attention and time diverted by non-clientele-based departmental demands. Furthermore, a specialised agency is highly visible to the clientele they represent, making for greater ease of communication and consultation between the agency and the clientele.

On the other hand, a specialised agency runs the risk becoming 'ghettoised'; not only will the agency be isolated from the main agencies responsible for the delivery of policy advice and services, its very existence may cause each of those main agencies to assume that the interests of the client group are already being addressed elsewhere, leading to their neglect in the mainstream agency. In this way client-based agencies may experience reduced rather than enhanced access to the policy process. Even when they do gain access to policy making in the mainstream agencies, the ability of a client-based agency to further the interests of their clientele is influenced by the point at which they gain access to the decision-making process. If they are involved in the policy development right from an early stage, the likelihood that their clients' interests are taken into account in the formulation of that policy is much greater than if they are merely asked to respond to a policy which is close to being finalised. Where the mainstream agency delivers services, the distance between the client agency and those

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who provide services might also be disadvantageous. Such problems may suggest it is preferable for representation of disadvantaged groups to occur within mainstream government agencies.

The presence within a mainstream agency of a client-based advisor may mean a greater awareness of, and access to, policy development and service delivery within that agency. The concerns of particular groups may be considered as of right within each mainstream agency, and duplication of advice and communication roles may be avoided. However, mainstreaming bureaucratic representation of disadvantaged groups also presents difficulties. Foremost among these is the possibility that the interests of a small client base may be swamped within an agency dedicated to serving the public as a whole. Again, the point at which access is gained by the client-based advisor to the policy process is critical – if an advisory position is at a strategic management level, the client groups’ interests will be considered from the start. If the position is at a much lower level, or is separated institutionally from the rest of the organisation, their responses can be largely reactive ‘add-ons’ to a substantially finalised policy process.

While the fourth Labour Government clearly favoured the client-based department, establishing five such agencies during its two terms, it was also committed to the view, derived from public choice and agency theory, that policy advice, funding decisions and service delivery functions should be institutionally separated. As a result client-based departments such as the Ministries of Pacific Island Affairs, Women’s Affairs and Youth Affairs were designated as policy and communication agencies only, with services to each of these client groups continuing to be delivered via other agencies, with the notable exception of Maori Affairs. The vision of Te Urupare Rangapu/Partnership Perspectives, released in 1988, was of Maori development via devolution of various government functions to local Maori iwi (tribes). A Ministry of Maori Affairs and an Iwi Transition Agency were established to provide policy advice, and to support the process of transferring greater responsibility to iwi.
National largely followed the rationale employed by Labour in its organisation of the institutions of government, but, unlike Labour also extended it to apply to Maori. The release of Ka Awatea in 1991 marked the end of the emphasis placed on iwi as a vehicle for Maori development. The Ministry of Maori Affairs and the Iwi Transition Authority were replaced by a Ministry of Maori Development/Te Puni Kokiri, in 1992. Responsibility for delivering services to Maori was largely transferred back to the mainstream agencies, although they in turn were involved in the purchase of service delivery from a variety of service providers.

Questions of institutional design were to occupy the minds of various policy-makers and Cabinet in relation to the Pacific Islands people’s and other ethnic minorities’ representation within the policy process over the 1990s. Their conclusions were to have great implications for the effectiveness and priority given to the agencies designed to represent non-Maori ethnic minority groups: the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs and the Ethnic Affairs Service.

**ii. The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs**

New Zealand’s sense of responsibility for the welfare of Pacific peoples in New Zealand may be traced back to its colonial involvement with the islands of the South Pacific early last century. The relationship began in 1901, when administration of the Cook Islands and Niue was transferred to New Zealand by the British government after active lobbying by Prime Minister Richard Seddon, who had, according to J.R. Hanan, ‘permitted himself to indulge in dreams of a South Pacific empire controlled by New Zealand’. While Seddon’s dreams were never fully realised, Western Samoa became a mandated territory under New Zealand’s administration after the First World

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War and the Tokelau Islands were transferred by Britain into New Zealand possession in 1925.67

Following the decolonisation process under the auspices of the United Nations, Western Samoa became first a Trust territory and then fully independent in 1962. The Cook Islands and Niue became self-determining nations in free association with New Zealand in 1965 and 1974 respectively, while Tokelau remained under the administration of New Zealand.68 Cook Islanders, Niueans and Tokelauans became New Zealand citizens with automatic right of entry into New Zealand. Western Samoans were not automatically New Zealand citizens, but following the passing of the New Zealand Citizenship (Western Samoa) Act 1982 had automatic citizenship rights upon the granting of permanent residence in New Zealand.

The historical and continuing relationship with these Pacific Islands instilled in New Zealand governments a sense of special responsibility for the welfare of Pacific peoples in New Zealand throughout the twentieth century. Discharge of such responsibilities, (albeit in a very limited fashion) was a role that fell first to the Department of Island Territories (1943-1968), then to the Department of Maori and Island Affairs (1968-1975) followed by a period, (1975-1992), when there was a small service delivery unit for Pacific peoples, Tangata Pasifika, within a restructured Department of Maori Affairs.69 The Tangata Pasifika division was responsible for providing housing assistance and trade and vocational courses to Pacific Islands people as well as subsidies for Polynesian community centres, and administration of the Pacific Islands community officers programme.70

A commitment to appoint a Minister of Pacific Island Affairs was included in the Labour Party’s election manifesto in 1984 and after its election that year it duly


68 Under the free association relationship New Zealand retains responsibility for the external affairs and defence of the Cook Islands and Niue, but these responsibilities may only be exercised at the express request of the Cook Islands or Niuean governments. Tokelau forms part of New Zealand territory, but exercises a considerable degree of self-government.


appointed Richard Prebble as the first Minister of Pacific Island Affairs. A year later the Labour Government created a small policy-focussed Pacific Islands unit within the Department of Internal Affairs. Pacific Islands communities had lobbied hard for some institutional representation of their interests over the previous few years and Labour’s assistance towards meeting this goal was in part an acknowledgement of the support traditionally given to the Labour Party by Pacific communities in New Zealand. Then, in July 1990, the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs was created by the Labour Government as a stand-alone, policy-focussed Ministry.

When National became Government in October 1990 it said it was committed to the continuation of the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs. At that time the Ministry’s Statement of Purpose read that the Ministry existed to:

1. Initiate and promote policies appropriate to the aspirations of Pacific Island people
2. Influence and monitor the development and implementation of policies of government departments
3. Affirm the contribution that Pacific Island people have made, are making, and will continue to make to New Zealand’s cultural, social and economic life
4. Build on the strengths and diversity of Pacific Island people
5. Promote Pacific Island leadership which fosters self-reliance and full participation in all facets of New Zealand society

Assistance was provided to the Minister of Pacific Island Affairs – initially Bill Birch, and then from October 1991 Don McKinnon – in the form of a Minister’s Advisory Council, comprising 12 members who between them represented the main Pacific communities in New Zealand: the Cook Islands, Fiji, Niue, Tokelau, Tonga and Samoa, and the Pacific Islands Development Scheme.

In its first two years of operation as an autonomous agency the Ministry focussed on providing policy advice to the Minister, servicing the Advisory Council (which also advised the Minister), and administering a number of Pacific Island grants. Then, in 1992, responsibility for the delivery of Pacific social services was transferred from the

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Department of Maori Affairs to the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs as a result of the 'mainstreaming' of Maori social services following the release of *Ka Awatea*. The transfer of the *Tangata Pasifika* programmes was contrary to the Government's overall policy of mainstreaming as outlined in *Ka Awatea*, but it was only ever intended as a short term measure. The Cabinet State Sector Committee agreed that the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs would operate the service delivery arm only until 1995, at which point there would be a review.

For its part, the Ministry said it welcomed its new role as service provider, seeing it as an opportunity to better co-ordinate policy advice and service delivery. An Operations Division was established within the Ministry, with offices in Auckland, Tokoroa, Hastings, Porirua, Christchurch and Nelson operating employment, training and liaison services. A Ministerial Advisory Board, the Pacific Island Employment and Social Development Advisory Board was established at this time to report to the Minister on the delivery of programmes and to advise the Operations Division on the delivery of those services.

But during the period 1992-1997 when the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs was operating a service delivery arm its policy advice role suffered badly. Criticisms began to come in from the central government agencies: the State Services Commission, Treasury and Audit New Zealand argued that the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs was 'not fully meeting expectations'. Moreover, even within the Pacific Island communities the Ministry was 'not as well regarded as it might be.' Mr Apii Rongo-Raea, Chief Executive of the Ministry between 1990 and 1995, argued that the Ministry's poor performance could largely be explained by very inadequate government funding. He said later that the lack of staff (in 1992 for example there were thirty two operational staff but only two policy advisors in the Wellington Head

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77 Idem.
of Office\textsuperscript{78}, technology, and access to information severely limited its ability to carry out its policy advice role competently.\textsuperscript{79}

In 1996 an experienced officer from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Kate Lackey, was seconded to the Ministry, following the departure of Rongo-Raea. Lackey oversaw a review of the Ministry in 1997, established to look at a recommendation by the Pacific Island Employment and Social Development Advisory Board that a Crown ‘One Stop Shop’ be set up to deliver services to Pacific Islands people in New Zealand. The Review Committee disagreed with the proposal, arguing that because the proposed ‘One Stop Shop’ would be Auckland-based it would not meet the needs of Pacific people outside Auckland. Besides which, they said, it posed ‘significant accountability and fiscal risks to the Crown’. They proposed instead that the public choice rationale of separating policy and provision functions – and thereby avoiding client capture – be applied to the Pacific Islands portfolio.

In line with the Review Committee’s recommendations, the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs was recast as a policy communications and information agency in 1998. Its operational arm was disbanded and the programmes it administered transferred to mainstream agencies, although it retained a role as the instigator of pilot service delivery schemes and had a new responsibility for assisting Pacific Island communities and individuals gain access to mainstream services. Some of the mainstream agencies were already operating Pacific Island or ‘cultural’ units, and one goal of the mainstreaming initiative was to reduce any duplication that might be occurring.

The recasting of the Ministry as an agency dedicated to public policy rather than to service delivery would, according to Kate Lackey and the new Chief Executive appointed in 1998, Fuimaono Les McCarthy, have entirely beneficial effects on the representation of Pacific people’s interests and perspectives in the policy process. Despite the ‘heartfelt pain’\textsuperscript{80} experienced during the transition (those in the Operations

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item[78] Lockwood, p. 31.
\item[79] Interviews between Rachel Lockwood and Mr Apii Rongo-Raea, 31.08.98, quoted in Lockwood, 1998, p. 31.
\item[80] Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, Annual Report of the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs for
\end{itemize}
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Division were made redundant and the regional offices of the Ministry were closed), the benefits of a strong, effective policy Ministry would be felt by many more Pacific Islands people in New Zealand than the localised benefits of the regionally-based delivery units.

After the restructuring the Ministry focused on increasing its profile and connections – and repairing its somewhat damaged reputation – within the public policy community. It assiduously pursued positions on various inter-departmental committees and working parties, and attempted to forge ‘strategic alliances’ and ‘protocols’ with other state agencies, through which it hoped to be involved at an early stage in the policy-making process in the key areas of health, education, housing, welfare and employment. In the Chief Executives’ Report in the Ministry’s 1999 Annual Report, Fuimaono Les McCarthy wrote:

> At the end of the 1997/98 year the Ministry was all but unrepresented in the decision-making circles of the public sector. Today it is represented on over 100 department steering groups, working parties and ad hoc committees. This increased profile and policy participation by the Ministry can only add to its capacity to improve outcomes for Pacific peoples in New Zealand.\(^{81}\)

Undoubtedly the restructuring of the Ministry into a policy-focussed agency improved its ability to effectively present a Pacific Islands perspective to the public policy-making process. But also of crucial importance was the release in late 1997 of the ‘Pacific Islands Population Projections’ based on the 1996 census data. Les Cook, Chief Statistician, presented analysis of the data at the 1997 Population Conference (promised by the New Zealand First Party in its election manifesto). The analysis he presented made it clear that as a percentage of the total population the Pacific Islands groups were increasing much more rapidly than the national population as a whole and that as a consequence, Pacific Islands people would more than double as a proportion of the national population over the next fifty years, from six to twelve percent. By 2051 it was projected that there would be over half a million Pacific Islands people...

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living in New Zealand.\textsuperscript{82} The data also revealed that Pacific Islands people were, in 1996, more likely to be economically-disadvantaged than other New Zealanders, with the exception of Maori.\textsuperscript{83} While the Government had seemed hitherto unsympathetic towards arguments based on the desirability of social equalisation, it was beginning to be convinced by the viewpoint that a significant increase in a sector of the population that was under-educated, under-employed and more welfare-dependent than the national average posed serious risks to future Governments. According to analysts within the Ministry, it was this growing conviction on the part of the Government that led it, and key agencies, to prioritise the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs' policy role in a way that had not occurred previously.\textsuperscript{84}

In 1998 the Ministry embarked on a consultation process with Pacific Islands communities around the country to work out ways in which the Ministry could assist Pacific people to 'have greater input into the development of proposals for policy initiatives and programmes that could lead to improving the outcomes for Pacific peoples'.\textsuperscript{85} The result was the 'Pacific Vision' strategy which involved the Ministry in preparing a series of reports about the status of Pacific peoples in New Zealand, holding an international conference about issues and policies of concern to Pacific people, and finally, the preparation of a report – entitled the \textit{Pacific Directions Report} – outlining the strategic direction of the Ministry.\textsuperscript{86} Much of what the \textit{Pacific Directions Report} advocated came out of the recommendations developed at the Pacific Vision Conference held in 1998, described by the Ministry as a 'landmark event [which] provided Pacific peoples, for the first time in 100 years of settlement in New Zealand, with a powerful forum through which to voice their concerns and priorities'.
The *Pacific Directions Report* criticised the fact that the various Government initiatives that were in place to improve the socio-economic position of Pacific Islands people were not linked together by any 'blueprint or strategy for providing a comprehensive cross-sectoral approach to policy development or service delivery for Pacific peoples'. What was needed, the Ministry argued, was for a much greater level of coordination between all government agencies so that they could pursue a shared goal: to improve life outcomes of Pacific peoples in New Zealand. And the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs positioned itself so that it would be able to build the framework capable of providing such a coordinated strategy. Through close working relationships with various key government agencies, such as the Ministries of Commerce, Foreign Affairs and Trade, Education, Health, Justice, Labour and Social Policy, the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs hoped that each of these agencies would now seriously consider the interests and perspectives of Pacific Islands people when formulating public policy. Being a Ministry (rather than a policy unit within another Department) was of crucial importance in this positioning period. A Ministry has both a Minister and a Chief Executive, and the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs ensured that inter-departmental collaboration occurred at Ministerial and Chief Executive level, as well as at levels further down the bureaucratic ladder.

While the Ministry achieved considerable success in getting other government agencies to coordinate their Pacific strategies with each other and with the Ministry, it nonetheless faced considerable difficulties in achieving the improved social and economic outcomes for Pacific peoples it hoped for. These difficulties stemmed foremost from the overall social and economic policy direction of the National and the National-Coalition Governments. Pacific peoples had been amongst those most adversely affected by the removal of protection for the manufacturing sector and by the consequent reduction in employment opportunities in the manufacturing sector. The comparatively high rates of unemployment experienced by Pacific Islands people by the early 1990s (28% of the Pacific Islands labour force were unemployed in 1991, compared to 14% of the total New Zealand population)\(^88\) meant Pacific Islands people

\(^{87}\) *Idem.*  
were disproportionately affected by the reductions in welfare assistance introduced in 1991. Arguably, the position of social and economic disadvantage experienced by Pacific people and identified in the 1996 census data had been exacerbated, if not caused by, the market liberal policies of the Government. However, while the National and Coalition Governments were not adverse to implementing some specific strategies designed to lessen Pacific Islands people's disadvantage, such strategies did not include an increase in income assistance, nor a reversal of the market-rents policy, both of which had had such detrimental impacts on all low-income New Zealanders. Even if the Ministry could coordinate the policy responses of government agencies to the issues facing Pacific people, the problems of high unemployment, low incomes and very poor housing conditions still remained.

On the other hand, however, the Pacific Population Projections provided the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs with something of a strategic weapon. After their release the Government began to accord Pacific social issues a priority they had never previously received. That it did so largely in response to risk management arguments presented by the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs represented a curious inversion of the origins and intentions of risk management strategies. Risk management had been attractive to neo-liberal governments precisely because of its utility as a tool for rational individual self-governance, at a non-political level. Individuals, like corporations, had been increasingly urged to take responsibility for their present and future well-being, to minimise and manage the level of risk they carried, to maximise their economic outcomes through a process of continual, rational, consumer choices. Such self-government was not to be a political activity, carried out in association with others, but an individualised process of self-government, using market information and risk management strategies, outside the public sphere. Ideally, according to the logic of neo-liberalism, a responsible, independent populace would be one where all individuals could be relied upon to manage their own lives in this way, so that

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89 These are explored in the following chapter on the social rights of Pacific peoples in New Zealand.

government could get on with its role of protecting individual freedom and ensuring the unfettered operation of the market.

The Pacific population projections threw into doubt some of the logic of this assumption by demonstrating that over time the relationship between ‘independent’ (largely New Zealand European/Pakeha or, as Pacific Islands people called them, Palagi) citizens and ‘dependent’, (largely Maori and Pacific Islands), citizens would be at least partially reversed, as the large group of retired Europeans became increasingly dependent upon the earning potential of younger generations, which would by then constitute a large percentage of Maori and Pacific people. Not only did this suggest an interdependence between individuals in the market sphere (always an assumption of neo-liberalism in any case), it also acknowledged the power relations underlying the dependency rhetoric, and, crucially, the role that politics might have to play in avert ing undesirable future scenarios. The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, were fully aware that arguments based on self-interest had a chance of persuading government of the urgency of Pacific people’s social needs in an environment where social justice or social rights arguments did not. Pushing self-interest arguments, using the language of risk management, allowed the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs to end the 1990s with a secure institutional base and commitments from all major government welfare agencies to work rapidly towards closing the gaps between Pacific Island people and other New Zealanders.91 Pacific peoples in New Zealand had an agency within government that was solely dedicated to representing and promoting their interests within the public policy process, and, more importantly, that agency was at last receiving some priority within the public policy community – even if prioritisation had come only as the result of the position of entrenched and cyclic disadvantage amongst Pacific Islands people in New Zealand. Without the Ministry it is doubtful whether Pacific Islands peoples’ issues would have received the attention they did.

iii. The Ethnic Affairs Service

a. The National Federation of Ethnic Councils and its request for ethnic representation in government

A new politicisation of non-Maori, non-Pacific Islands ethnic groups in New Zealand occurred in 1989 with the creation of the New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils (NZFEC). The Federation of Ethnic Councils brought together a number of existing regional ethnic councils representing a variety of ethnic communities from non-English speaking backgrounds. Among the objectives of the new federation were the preservation of ethnic customs and languages throughout NZ, the monitoring of legislation and other policies that affect interests of ethnic minorities, and promotion of New Zealand as a 'multi-ethnic' society.92

In 1989 the Federation of Ethnic Councils held its inaugural conference. The conference was significant for two reasons: first, because it was the first opportunity for ethnic minorities 'get together to find their common interests and goals',93 and second, because it led to the articulation of political demands around issues specifically relating to non-Polynesian ethnic minorities. Representatives from different ethnic groups expressed at the conference the difficulties and concerns their community group members faced in New Zealand. Virtually all of the speakers felt government should be playing a far greater role in assisting with such things as language and cultural maintenance, English language tuition and translation services, and the provision of settlement services.

One of the key objectives of the inaugural conference, entitled 'Multi-ethnic New Zealand: A Commitment for the Future', was to 'identify the needs, goals and aspirations of New Zealand's ethnic groups for the future and to examine whether

present Government policies help or hinder the attainment of these. Discussion of this objective produced the first explicit call from the united voice of ethnic community groups for institutional representation of their interests. Ethnic communities present were aware of the more advanced state of ethnic representation across the Tasman and saw that they as ethnic communities in New Zealand were not receiving the attention and services their counterparts in Australia received. They proposed that the Government:

Establish a Ministry of Ethnic Affairs with responsibility to ensure that Government policies and all institutions which provide services to the public effectively acknowledge, reflect and respond to the ethnic and cultural diversity of New Zealand society.

In making this proposal the NZFEC was fully aware that it faced two main obstacles to its acceptance. One lay in convincing Government that their members had a legitimate claim to institutional representation. A second was to convince Maori that the Federation’s vision of a ‘multi-ethnic’ New Zealand would not come at the expense of Maori’s hard-won ‘biculturalism’. Aware that the treacherous territory which lay between biculturalism and multiculturalism threatened to swallow their proposal before it ever got off the ground, they addressed the second problem first.

Tactically, the Federation made the Treaty of Waitangi and biculturalism the focus of their first conference. Three Maori – Sir Hugh Kawharu, Peter Rikys and Kuni Jenkins – were invited to join the conference and participate in a panel discussion with the Federation about the Treaty of Waitangi. Philip Khouri, President of the Auckland Ethnic Council opened the discussion with these comments:

One of the purposes of this conference and this session in particular is to dispel any doubts about where the NZ Federation of Ethnic Councils stands on the Treaty. The reason for this is that multiculturalism has become synonymous in some circles with "One New Zealand", with an attempt to relegate the Maori people and their aspirations and status to just another ethnic group without any special rights, either historical or for the future. The Federation of Ethnic Councils is committed in its constitution to raise the consciousness of the ethnic communities of New Zealand of the special status, the aspirations and needs of the Maori people. We have also worked out that a definition which we can accept for the future of New Zealand is that New Zealand is a multi-ethnic country, which reflects its diversity, but it's also a country in

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95 Ibid.
which the Maori people have special status as tangata whenua which we don’t have, and which we don’t claim, even though we were born here, many of us, and in which the Maori people have special rights under the Treaty of Waitangi, which we do not have and we do not claim.97

Conceiving of New Zealand as a ‘multi-ethnic’ state would, Khouri felt, provide a sense of inclusion for all that was not possible under biculturalism. He expressed this notion thus:

...the Treaty was signed by representatives of two cultures, and now that there are two parties - there are Maori people and there’s the Crown. And we feel, well especially those of us whose forefathers were born here, my family has been here for 98 years, we wonder. Isn’t this dialogue leaving us out?98

If it was an endorsement of their ‘multi-ethnic’ vision that the Conference organisers hoped for out of the dialogue with Maori, they were to be disappointed. Each of the Maori speakers emphasised that biculturalism was ‘inextricably interwoven’99 with the Treaty and that the Treaty was of central importance in Crown-Maori relations. It was important, they said, that the ethnic communities understood that biculturalism, which was fundamentally about Maori-Crown relations, was firstly non-negotiable and secondly unrelated to issues facing other ethnic communities. Peter Rikys presented the common Maori view, referred to by Khouri, that the agenda behind multiculturalism was to deny or diminish the unique constitutional status of the Maori by placing them on an equal footing with migrant minority populations:

...when it comes to tauwi, our white friends in power, if they really don’t want to address the Treaty debate or if they really don’t want to respond to the challenges of biculturalism, one red herring they love to drag across the tail is multiculturalism. So they say why should we acknowledge the place of the Maori, why not the Chinese, why not the Tongans, why not the Lebanese?100

For Maori, there was more at stake in the biculturalism-versus-multi-culturalism debate than simply a threat to recognition of their status as the indigenous people or of

96 Publicity leaflet, NZ Federation of Ethnic Councils Inc, 1990 Conference.
98 Ibid. p.36.
100 Idem.
the rights they held under the Treaty of Waitangi. What was at stake was the power they laid claim to as one of only two equal Treaty partners. Conceiving of New Zealand as a bicultural nation was central to Maori claims to tino rangitiratanga – to self-government – and to the call for ‘partnership’ between Maori and the Crown. Biculturalism, in other words, was not simply about the recognition of two ‘cultures’ in New Zealand, it was the basis for political claims to power sharing. Philip Khourí’s suggestion that biculturalism and ‘multi-ethnicity’ need not be mutually exclusive, and that a compromise could be found in the term ‘multi-ethnic’ did not, therefore, elicit support from the Maori participants at the conference.

This dialogue between the Maori and non-Maori ethnic minorities at the conference thus confirmed the non-Maori’s suspicions that the bicultural framework not only failed to symbolically acknowledge their presence, it positioned their political aspirations in direct conflict with those of Maori. And dialogue had failed to move them out of this zero-sum position. Nonetheless, it had provided an opportunity for the Federation to publicly state that in making their bid for political inclusion it was not their intention to remove status or rights from Maori. It now remained for them to convince Government of the merits of their proposal.

The President of the Ethnic Federation, Mr Rama Ramanathan, put the Federation’s proposal for an Ethnic Ministry to Bill Birch, National’s new Minister of Immigration, in early 1991. Birch in turn suggested to the Minister of Internal Affairs, Graeme Lee, that the Department of Internal Affairs would be an appropriate place for an Ethnic Service (although not a Ministry), to be established. Graeme Lee took up the suggestion, and in August 1991 Lee and Birch (this time in his capacity as Minister of State Services) submitted a memorandum to Cabinet, suggesting that he Department of Internal Affairs should become a ‘contact department for ethnic groups in New Zealand’.

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102 Cabinet Minute (91) M38/7, 1991.
For the purposes of the Ethnic Affairs Service the Lee-Birch memorandum successfully proposed, 'ethnic' was to mean 'having different customs and culture from the prevalent culture and customs'. The Service was to 'seek to represent all ethnic groups in New Zealand excluding Maori, Pacific Island and Anglo-Saxons' (despite the fact that 'Anglo-Saxon' had never been an official ethnic category). Maori and Pacific Islands people were to be excluded from representation on the grounds that they already had institutional representation within government. 'Anglo-Saxons' by whom was obviously meant Pakeha, were presumed to be already represented in the mainstream agencies of government.

The Lee-Birch memo proposed a service whose primary function would be to act as a conduit for the flow of information between government and the various ethnic communities. Although the Ethnic Councils desired the proposed service to have a much wider role, Lee and Birch stated that the level of funding available would not make this possible. No additional funding would be made available for the establishment of the Service. Internal Affairs was to meet the costs of the service within its existing budget.

Cabinet gave approval to this proposal in August 1991, and planning for the service began. Having lobbied Government to establish the Ethnic Affairs Service, the Federation of Ethnic Councils felt a strong sense of ownership of the proposal and remained closely involved with its development. At a meeting with the Department of Internal Affairs in December 1991, the Federation presented a list of things on which they wanted an Ethnic Affairs Service to focus. These included the collection of information about ethnic organisations; information about the provision of translation and interpreting services to assist with access to health services and other language barriers to government services; more detailed ethnic statistics; learning from the Australian and Canadian experiences in state multicultural policies; and liaison and communication with the Ethnic Councils - especially assisting the Councils to secure

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103 This group includes Chinese, Indian, Dutch, Greek, Polish, Yugoslavians, Austrians, Hungarians, Czechoslovakians, Ukrainians, White Russians, Sri Lankans, French, Danes, Swedes, Italians and Romanians. Many of these categories themselves contain significant ethnic divisions, as discussed in the chapter on statistics.
funding; and acting as a channel between the Federation and the Minister and Government.  

Following its consultation with the Ethnic Federation, the Community Development Agency within the Department of Internal Affairs developed a strategic plan for the new position. Three main roles for the service were envisaged: liaison and networking, policy development and special policy projects. Much of what the Federation of Ethnic Councils had envisaged for the Service was included, save a direct commitment to improve the funding base of the Federation or any of the Regional Ethnic Councils.

b. The establishment of the Ethnic Affairs Service and its first Review  
The Ethnic Affairs Service (EAS) was established in April 1992 as a one-year pilot scheme and began operation in May 1992, with the appointment of Lalita Kasanji, a third generation NZ-born Indian, as a Senior Advisory Officer.  

At the launch of the Service, Graeme Lee gave a brief rationale for its establishment and placement within the Department of Internal Affairs:

It is appropriate that the Department of Internal Affairs has been given responsibility for this task. Our mission statement is to provide services that protect and develop all the disparate elements that make up our character, identity and heritage. Following that job description means providing support to the Crown, government agencies and communities. We are charged with helping New Zealanders develop their local communities. Indeed an important part of meeting our job description is providing the link between government and regional communities. I am happy to state that we have extended that component. We can now say an important task is now to provide the link between central government and ethnic communities.

Clearly, and in line with its role primarily as a policy and information agency, the Ethnic Affairs Service was to represent the interests of ethnic communities, not individuals, within the policy making process. The underlying presumption was that those in the ‘ethnic’ category, like women, or Maori or Pacific Islands people, had

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104 Minutes of a meeting between the NZ Federation of Ethnic Councils Inc. and the Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington, DIA, 8 November, 1991.

certain interests deriving from their membership of a minority group within society, and that it was those group interests that deserved representation within the policy process.

Establishing exactly what those interests were, and whether an Ethnic Affairs Service was needed to respond to them, were the key objectives of the Service during its first year of operation. A first priority was the collation and analysis of information about the demographic profile of the ‘ethnic sector’. An early activity therefore was the distribution and analysis of a questionnaire sent to ethnic communities asking them to identify their activities and concerns. The response indicated that a number of issues were common to ethnic communities: immigration legislation, access to social welfare services, information about New Zealand’s bureaucracy, and translation and interpretation issues. In attempting to address these issues during its first year in operation the Service worked with the Race Relations Office to publish a National Ethnic Communities directory, completed Guidelines for Interpreters in New Zealand, and worked towards the publication of a statistical profile of ethnic groups in New Zealand.

In February 1993, almost year after its launch, a review of the Ethnic Affairs Service was undertaken to establish whether the service had been effective in meeting its designated roles and whether it should continue. To this end a Steering Group comprising representatives from Internal Affairs, the State Services Commission, the New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils and a consultancy firm, Rivers Buchan Associates, consulted with government and non-government agencies as to whether they perceived a need for the Service and whether, to date, the Service had been meeting that need. The conclusions of the Review Team were that there was a need for the Service, that it had been meeting at least some of that need and that it should therefore continue.

107 Department of Internal Affairs, Ethnic Affairs Newsletter, June 1992, Wellington, Department of Internal Affairs.
The Review presented six grounds on which it argued that Government could benefit from assisting ethnic people in New Zealand to meet their needs. Combining anti-discrimination arguments with those of economic efficiency and risk-management the Review Team argued first, that 'it is a primary responsibility of Government to ensure that the nation’s citizens have equitable access to goods and services and are able to contribute effectively to society. As a signatory to the UN Covenant to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination it also has an international obligation to do so.'

Second, it was in government’s interest to create a society that could ‘celebrate ethnic diversity and maintain a single national identity’ and thirdly, ‘it is economically inefficient if the most appropriate people are not accessing or providing services at the appropriate time...More effective, efficient and appropriate use of those services by ethnic groups could bring about significant economic benefits.’

Fourth, new migrants and refugees come here at the invitation of the government, the Review team argued, and the government’s responsibility as ‘host’ to those who accept that invitation should extend beyond the immigration desk. Fifth, Government risked losing some of the more skilled migrants and refugees to Australia, where the level of support to migrants is much higher than that provided in New Zealand. Having successfully recruited skilled migrants to New Zealand the government has an interest in retaining those skills. And sixth, ethnicity created barriers to people co-operating with New Zealand laws and regulations. While New Zealand authorities could resort to coercive powers to ensure compliance this would be ‘less effective and efficient than co-operative relationships’

The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs contested the grounds listed above, and said: ‘[T]he establishment of a government service in addition to services provided through mainstream agencies should be based on grounds such as disadvantage due to lower socio-economic status, special needs for particular services, and/or constitutional obligations and responsibilities’. The Ministry did not feel that these grounds were present in the ‘ethnic’ category.

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109 Ibid.
110 Ibid.
Notwithstanding the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs’ arguments, the State Sector Cabinet Committee accepted the Review Team’s recommendations that the role of the Ethnic Affairs Service would be to:

- foster the maximum potential contribution of minority ethnic groups to New Zealand society;
- encourage the equitable access of minority ethnic groups to government and other services;
- foster appropriate government intervention which addresses the needs of minority ethnic groups; and
- enable members of minority ethnic groups to identify with their ethnicity as well as with New Zealand.

The Ethnic Affairs service, in carrying out these roles, was to provide:

- policy advice to Ministers and advice and assistance to Departments and Ministries on the delivery of services for minority ethnic groups; and
- information and assistance to minority ethnic communities in maximising their contribution to New Zealand society, and ensuring their access to available services.  

Recognising that funding restrictions had limited the ability of the Service to fulfil its policy role, Cabinet also agreed to a ‘fiscally neutral transfer of funds’ within the Department of Internal Affairs in order that a second staff position devoted to policy advice be established within the Service. This position was established in the Service in November 1994.

Why did a Cabinet composed of Ministers known for their opposition to the political representation of ‘vested interests’ and their commitment to the individualism of market liberalism accept the Federation of Ethnic Council’s proposal for the establishment of another population-based government agency?

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111 Memo from Internal Affairs to Minister of Internal Affairs, 28.5.1993.
112 Cabinet Minute STA(93) M 15/2.
As is detailed in the immigration chapter of this thesis, the period 1992-1993 (when the Ethnic Affairs Service was set up) was one of domestic conflict over the new immigration policies, as well as a time when Government was actively pursuing a strategy of ‘Asianisation’. Probably a central factor from the government’s perspective was the growing importance of the Asian market to New Zealand and the role it was hoped Asian immigration to New Zealand would play in stimulating the domestic economy and fostering personal and trade links between New Zealand and Asia. No doubt these were the concerns in the front of the Ministers’ minds when the original memorandum had suggested that another potential role of the Service would be ‘to assist through ethnic groups with the expansion of trade’.113

An Ethnic Affairs Service could serve several functions that would assist with Government’s wider economic strategy. It could play a role in attracting and retaining both the skilled and the entrepreneurial Asian migrants arriving here in large numbers after the 1991 changes to the Immigration Act 1987. It could also assist migrants to access available services, thus hastening the process of assimilation, and it could promote the positive aspects of non-European immigration to wider New Zealand society, thereby reducing any local antipathy to Asian immigrants. A lack of access to resettlement services, on the other hand, combined with local antipathy to increased rates of migration, might dry up the flow of business migrants and Asian investment that the National Government was so eager to attract.

Not only did the ‘ethnic’ sector contain an increasing number of migrants likely to be economically beneficial to New Zealand and worth, therefore, accommodating, it was clear that the ethnic population would soon reach a politically significant size. After the Immigration Amendment Act in 1991 the Asian population in particular looked set to become a small but significant electoral force. While National could never expect to gain the bulk of either the Pacific Island or the Maori vote, there were many in the ‘ethnic’ sector, present in New Zealand as a result of the Business Immigration or Economic Immigration Categories, who might see their political interests aligned most closely with National.114 Under an MMP system the ethnic vote could be

113 Cabinet Minute (91) M38/7, 1991.
114 In a poll conducted by the Chinese Express Newspaper in Auckland of Chinese people’s
collected across the country. One might speculate that an awareness of this provided National with another reason to appear accommodating of the New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Council's request representation of their interests in the policy process.

It may also have been, as Karen Johns has suggested, that the status of refugees in New Zealand following the arrival of refugees after the Iraq war also contributed to a 'climate in which the establishment of an Ethnic Desk [was] seen to be timely'.115

c. The Ethnic Affairs Service becomes permanent 1995

In 1995 a third review116 of the Service was completed by an officials' committee within Internal Affairs, in consultation with the State Services Commission and Treasury. This committee once again considered the issues of whether the service should be established permanently, or cease; and if continued, whether the functions and objectives then in operation were appropriate, what the Ethnic Affairs Service should do in the future and where the service should be located. Their report to Cabinet in July 1995 recommended that the Ethnic Affairs Service should be established permanently but that its role and functions should be more tightly defined and tied in more closely with the strategic direction of government policy as a whole. They also recommended that the Service remain within the Department of Internal Affairs.

This officials' committee expressed a concern that 'the wide-ranging and detailed mandate given to the Service'117 [by Cabinet memo] creates a risk that its functions and roles will become out of step with Government's strategic direction, and gives rise to

preferences for the political parties contesting the 1996 election, 56.16 percent said they would vote for National. The next largest group were those who said they would not vote at the next election (15.75). Only 13.36 percent of Asian voters said they would vote for the Labour party and 3.42 percent for the Alliance. See Yongjin Zhang, 'The Chinese Community and New Zealand Politics: What Does a Poll Tell Us?' in Yongjin Zhang and Manying Ip, (eds.), The Chinese Community and New Zealand Politics, Proceedings of the Symposium on Learning and Practicing Democracy: The Chinese Community and New Zealand Politics, held at the University of Auckland, 29 August 1996, pp. 59-66.

116 A second Review of the Service was held in 1994. This Review supported the mandate given to the EAS by the First Review the previous year.
117 Under Cabinet memo STA(93) M 15/2.
some conflict between its roles in relation to the ethnic sector and to Government. Specifically, (and noting a criticism by the NZ Immigration Service that the Ethnic Affairs Service lacked understanding of ‘the line between policy advocacy and capture’) it felt that the service might engage in inappropriate lobbying on behalf of the ethnic sector. Consequently the committee recommended that the much wider mandate given previously by Cabinet be replaced with a requirement simply that the Department of Internal Affairs provide policy advice to Government on ethnic affairs.

This provision of policy advice ‘should encompass the provision of information and resources to Government agencies to enable them to better serve the needs of their clients, and continued communication with ethnic communities.’

The Government’s ‘strategic direction’, referred to by the Review Committee was outlined in the document Strategic Result Areas for the Public Service 1994-1997, released in February 1995. Nine Strategic Result Areas (SRAs) were defined, and were said to ‘set out the contribution the public sector will make to achieving the Government’s strategic vision for New Zealand.’ They formed the link between ‘the Government’s long-term objectives and the operational activities of departments’ and were to ‘cut across departmental boundaries and require inter-departmental co-operation’.

In other words, the Strategic Result Areas sought to spell-out to the public service how their current activities should contribute to longer-term governmental goals. The SRAs were published with the Budget Policy Statement and a document called Investing in our Future. These, together with the 1993 document Path to 2010 set out the ‘strategic direction’ the Bolger government wanted to pursue.

The practical implications of the SRAs were that public servants who were involved with policy making would have to ensure that policy proposals they put forward contributed to the SRAs and thus to the long-term goals of the government. While the SRAs could not be read as a blueprint for the limits of proper public service activity, public servants could assume that a policy proposal which did not fall within an SRA

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119 Idem.
was less likely to be favoured by government than those that did. Read together, they sketched a public service whose primary function was to develop and promote policies that would lead to sustained economic growth, continued internationalisation of the economy and the development of self-reliant individuals through education and training programmes and targeted social benefits. The values of the market economy were also to inform the public service in carrying out its roles of policing, punishment of criminals, provision of efficient health services, protection of the environment and the settlement of Treaty claims. They were a prescription for a minimalist government, and by suggesting that the Ethnic Affairs Service tie its activities more closely in with the SRAs the Review Committee was in fact suggesting that the Ethnic Affairs Service abandon its ongoing attempt to persuade the Government that there was a need for greater levels of government assistance to its ethnic constituency.

Yet, while the Report suggested a reduced mandate for the Ethnic Affairs Service, the Review also led to a suggestion that Government work towards developing a co-ordinated settlement policy for new migrants. The suggestion came from the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Don McKinnon) and Trade Negotiations (Philip Burdon) both of whom were concerned about the potentially adverse effects upon New Zealand's foreign relations if new migrants received no assistance and continued to be victims of racism in New Zealand. In a submission to the Cabinet Committee they argued that:

We are set to receive a steady flow of immigrants into the foreseeable future, on top of the substantial numbers who have arrived in recent years. If the country is to realise fully the benefits of these inflows it is our view that considerably more needs to be done to assist immigrants to settle effectively, and to promote acceptance by New Zealanders of a more ethnically diverse society.

Of particular concern is the worrying level of anti-Asian sentiment. It is our view that the Government could do considerably more to promote understanding of New Zealand social practices among immigrants from Asian and other countries. This could help to alleviate the prejudices generated simply as a result of poor understanding of very basic practices (right down to queuing in banks for example).

A commensurate effort needs to be directed towards encouraging more informed and receptive community attitudes towards immigrant groups.

If we do not confront these issues we risk undermining the efforts the Government and many other New Zealanders are putting into developing New Zealand’s links with Asia. These links are crucial to New Zealand’s future economic well-being and to our acceptance as a trusted and committed member of our region.\(^\text{122}\)

For these reasons McKinnon and Burdon were in favour of an ‘enhanced role for the Ethnic Affairs Service, both in the provision of more comprehensive services for the settlement of immigrants and in the promotion of community acceptance of immigrants.’\(^\text{123}\) The Chair of the Committee consequently invited the Minister of Internal Affairs in consultation with the Ministers of Immigration, Foreign Affairs and Trade, Trade Negotiations, Finance and State Services to form an inter-departmental committee to ‘consider the best method of enhancing the delivery of services to immigrants to assist them to assimilate in the community, including whether the Ethnic Affairs Service is the appropriate group to undertake such a role, and to report back to the Committee by 30 August 1995.\(^\text{124}\)

The Ethnic Affairs Service seized upon this suggestion, seeing it as a ‘window of opportunity’ for it to develop a role as the provider of settlement advice and/or services. In the event however, Government decided instead to introduce the English language bond in 1995 and the inter-departmental initiative fizzled out.\(^\text{125}\) Ethnic Affairs had survived its third Review and finally become permanent, but its role and resources remained very limited and, as became evident, precarious.

\section*{d. The demise of specialist ethnic policy advice}

In 1996 the Department of Internal Affairs initiated a restructuring process that was to spell the end of the Ethnic Affairs Service as a unit with staff designated specifically to represent ethnic interests in government. The Department’s Strategic Plan of 1996-

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\textsuperscript{122} Submission to the Cabinet State Sector Committee, STA (95) M 9/1.
\textsuperscript{124} State Sector Committee Cabinet Minute STA (95) M 9/1
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2000 identified the core business of the Department as supporting executive government, strengthening national identity and building strong communities. These ‘business activities’ were to contribute to the Government’s strategic objectives of maintaining economic growth and building strong communities and a cohesive society.\textsuperscript{126}

Once again the Ethnic Affairs Service attempted, during the restructuring, to position itself to play an expanded role in presenting the interests of the ethnic population to Government.\textsuperscript{127} A comprehensive Ethnic Affairs Strategic Plan was developed, in which potential future activities of the Service were carefully tailored to fit into the Department’s strategic goals. The development of comprehensive policy advice on migrant settlement issues, the promotion of positive inter-cultural relations, policy advice regarding language and cultural maintenance, and the provision of policy advice regarding, and support for, ethnic groups in New Zealand would all help towards ‘strengthening New Zealand Identity’ and ‘Building Strong Communities’.\textsuperscript{128}

But rather than strengthening their role during the restructuring, the Ethnic Affairs Service became a victim of its own low profile and priority within the Department. In the struggle by Departmental managers and staff to retain their areas of control and jobs under the restructuring, the Ethnic Affairs Service was under-represented. It had no staff at a managerial level and no Output Class to call its own. By 1998 both the full-time policy and operational positions specifically dedicated to Ethnic Affairs had been lost. The operational/communication role was incorporated into the Community Development Division, with one staff member responsible for the ethnic communication role amongst other responsibilities. The position devoted to policy analysis, development and advice was simply disestablished. Responsibility for ethnic policy advice now fell to staff within the Policy Branch who responded to ethnic issues if and when they arose.\textsuperscript{129} Although the Department retained a limited role in

\textsuperscript{125} Discussion with Officials from the Department of Internal Affairs, 11.2.2000, and with Anne Beaglehole, ex-Senior Policy Analyst, Ethnic Affairs Service, 18.2.2000
\textsuperscript{126} Department of Internal Affairs. \textit{Annual Report, 1995-1996}, Wellington, DIA, 1996
\textsuperscript{127} Discussion with Anne Beaglehole, 18.2.2000
relation to ethnic affairs, the Ethnic Affairs Service had effectively ceased to operate as a service dedicated to representing the interests of non-Polynesian ethnic minorities in New Zealand.

Interestingly, this restructuring and downgrading of the Service occurred at the initiative of the Department of Internal Affairs, rather than by direction from Government. Exactly why the Department had decided to do this is difficult to ascertain, but the obvious answer simply seems to be that the Service was given a low priority within the Department and that no-one in Cabinet (including the Minister of Internal Affairs, New Zealand First member Jack Elder) cared about it enough to protect it. It must also be remembered that the presence of New Zealand First in Cabinet would undoubtedly have created an environment that was less than conducive, if not downright hostile, to political demands from non-Maori minorities. Six out of the fourteen New Zealand First MPs who made up the Government’s coalition partner were Maori, some of whom were explicitly opposed to any suggestion of ‘multiculturalism’ for exactly the reasons communicated to the Federation of Ethnic Councils at their inaugural conference. And a reduction in immigration had, after all, been a central plank of the party’s 1996 election campaign. Tau Henare, (who retained his portfolio of Minister of Maori Affairs after New Zealand First left the coalition in 1998) made explicit his feelings towards not only multiculturalism, but the rights and status of other ethnic minorities in New Zealand when, in June 1999, he attacked the Race Relations Conciliator for its attempt to develop a race relations strategy.  

What conclusions may be drawn from this story of the creation of the Ethnic Affairs Service to increase the participation and representation rights of non-Maori, non-Pacific ethnic minorities in New Zealand?

In authorising the establishment of the Service the National Government had moved some way towards further recognising how group identity might affect individual interests, and in so doing acted outside the market-liberal prescription that generally

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130 See page 232.
characterised their approach to public policy. It was, however, a half-hearted kind of recognition, and one influenced at least as much by pragmatic self-interest as by an acceptance that ethnic minorities had a legitimate claim to institutional representation. Cabinet’s direction that no new funding be made available for the establishment and continued operation of the Service but that it be paid for out existing Vote: Internal Affairs, is perhaps the strongest indication of the level of commitment the Cabinet had to the Service.

In light of this, it is unsurprising that by the time of the 1995 Review there was clearly some conflict between the type of ‘representation’ the ethnic communities (and the New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils in particular) wanted from the Ethnic Affairs Service and the role envisaged for it by Government.

Each of the three committees which reviewed the Ethnic Affairs Service between 1992 and 1995 undertook consultation with various ethnic organisations, as well as with government and non-government agencies involved with ethnic people. All three committees found very high rates of approval amongst these organisations for the work undertaken by the Service, and strong indication that the Ethnic Affairs Service was seen by its client base as a place within Government where their specific interests were being represented. Those consulted said that the Ethnic Affairs Service ‘provided a general entry point into Government and Government machinery for voluntary agencies and individuals’; it ‘put people in touch with one another; it had ‘made ethnic diversity more “visible” and promoted the use of linguistic and cultural skills.’ Others said that ‘just by being active, Ethnic Affairs was drawing attention to, and legitimating the contribution of, non-Polynesian, non-British ethnic cultures’, and ‘provided a focus for those cultures even if they do not overtly use its services’.

Several ideas about representation were apparent in these comments. The underlying justification for the Service, and one broadly accepted by both government and the

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131 Among these were the Refugee and Migrant Service, the Race Relations Office, the NZ Immigration Service and the Home Tutor Scheme.
ethnic communities, was that of 'descriptive' representation, or what Iris Marion Young labels the representation of 'perspective': that members of minority ethnic groups require special representation in the policy making process because their positioning within society gives them a particular perspective which is not otherwise represented. There was also the sense that the Ethnic Affairs Service provided the ethnic sector a sense of 'presence' or 'recognition' which Anne Phillips, for example, argues is crucial for the inclusion of minorities and the disadvantaged in the political system.\textsuperscript{134}

More controversial was the question of how the Ethnic Affairs Service should fulfil their representative role. Clearly the New Zealand Federation of Ethnic Councils would have liked the Service to have acted as its 'mouthpiece', directly communicating to Government the needs of the ethnic communities, as perceived by the Federation. Other groups saw the service as having an important role as simply providing an ethnic perspective within the policy making process. (The Refugee and Migrant Service said, for example, that it was important for them to know that someone in Government had the responsibility for general ethnic issues, so that they did not have to worry so much about those issues being picked up.\textsuperscript{135})

But according to the 1995 Review of the Service, the Ethnic Affairs Service had trouble distinguishing between the two roles of policy advice and of advocacy. The Review Committee reported that the NZ Immigration Service had accused the Service of not fully appreciating the difference between policy advice and 'capture', and the Review Committee itself suggested that the Service, in presenting the views of the ethnic communities, was acting outside the strategic interests of Government.\textsuperscript{136} This was, in effect, a reminder to the Ethnic Affairs Service that public servants exist to serve the government of the day, and are bound at all times to provide that government with neutral, full and frank advice. A public servant, according to this view, must always remember that his or her real master is the government.

\textsuperscript{136} State Sector Committee Cabinet Minute STA (95) M 9/1.
However, for a population or client-based agency such as the Ethnic Affairs Service, the distinction between advising the government on the interests of their client population, and advocacy on behalf of that population group (which neo-liberalism depicted as 'capture'), may be, on occasions, difficult to sustain. If, as a result of research in relation to that group, the public servant or servants conclude that the interests of the population group are not served by the general policy direction of government, they are in an invidious position. They are still bound to provide their Minister with full, free and frank advice, but the experience of the Ethnic Affairs Service was that to do this would leave them open to the accusation of 'capture'. It was this position that the Ethnic Affairs Service seemed to find itself in by 1995.

The promotion of public choice analysis by Treasury during the National administration, and the general acceptance of Treasury’s view by Government acted to weaken the Ethnic Affairs Service’s mandate to advocate on behalf of the ethnic community in the policy process. The conflict between a public choice and a social-liberal concept of the appropriate role of representation complicated and limited the representative role that the Ethnic Affairs Service was able to play. But other, more practical factors equally affected their effectiveness and their consequent ability to represent the interests of the ethnic sector, primarily under-resourcing. The underfunding of the Service meant that one (or, for a period two) staff members were attempting to fulfil the information needs of government and ethnic groups about a culturally, linguistically, nationally diverse and dynamic population sector who, by the 1996 census, represented almost 8 percent of the national population. While the Service did manage to initiate a remarkable number of policy proposals, staffing constraints meant that their ability to do so was limited. Policy advice was frequently reactive, rather than proactive, with the result that the Ethnic Affairs Service had little control over the point at which they gained entry to the policy process. This was particularly the case after the dis-establishment of the specialised ethnic policy role.

The risk arguments that the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs had used so effectively would not work for Ethnic Affairs, as it did not have the same statistics of
disadvantage to brandish. The absence of any governmental commitment to social justice arguments meant the Government's response to the social and economic needs of the 'ethnic' sector was characterised largely by indifference. Asian migrants were for a period an exception, as the Government's concern to integrate itself into the Asian-Pacific economic, and its desire to attract Asian immigrants and investment to New Zealand, made it see it as politic to demonstrate some concern for the welfare of Asians in New Zealand. Yet the Asian populations remained too small, and too 'independent' for anything more than cursory interest to be accorded their affairs under the period of National administration.

Being a small unit within a diverse agency also limited the capacity of the Service. As a small player it was simply swamped by the larger process within the Department. It had no staff at a managerial level, no Chief Executive or Minister of its own and no specialist Output Class. Nor was it a high priority for either the Minister or the CEO of Internal Affairs. It is difficult to know whether the Service would have had a better chance of survival had it been placed within a different government agency, such as immigration.

What does, however, seem clear is that the participation and representation of ethnic interests in government via the Ethnic Affairs Service was limited by the range of philosophical, structural and political factors discussed above, and that this was to the detriment of ethnic people's full exercise of citizenship in the New Zealand polity.

Conclusion

Self-government as an individual and as a member of political community is central to the concept of citizenship. The ability to participate in the processes of collective self-government is crucial to being a full citizen. This chapter has argued that during the 1990s the ability of non-Maori ethnic minorities in New Zealand to participate and be represented in the political processes of government was significantly enhanced by the
introduction of a proportional electoral system, the strengthening of the policy function of the Ministry of the Pacific Affairs, and the establishment of the Ethnic Affairs Service. The citizenship status of ethnic minority groups was therefore greatly improved during this period of neo-liberal Government, despite neo-liberalism’s general distrust of interest-group politics. That the MMP electoral system was introduced in the face of political opposition suggested that – unlike the Government – the voting public favoured a vision of the citizen as a political creature, rather than the economic being posited by neo-liberals. Moreover, it suggested that the political rights of citizenship were themselves what T.H. Marshall argued them to be: an instrument with which citizens could change the political conditions under which they lived together as citizens. This improvement in the political representation of ethnic minorities during the 1990s complemented the improvements in the legal protection of their civil rights, detailed in the previous chapter.

But full and equal citizenship requires more than access to civil and political rights. It requires individual agency – the ability to translate individual choices into meaningful action. Social-liberal citizenship theorists have argued that for individuals to be able to experience full and equal citizenship they must have access to ‘social rights’ – to an adequate income, to food, housing, education and health care. They have argued that only when an individual has access to sufficient material resources can they translate the freedoms protected by the civil rights of citizenship into the ability to pursue their own vision of the good life.

Each of the three Pacific Island MPs elected during the 1990s, and the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs expressed deep concern over the disparities that existed between Pacific peoples and other New Zealanders. Clearly the growing social and economic disadvantage suffered by Pacific Islands people limited the choices available to them, and limited their ability to be self-governing at an individual level. In other words, although the civil and political rights of ethnic minority groups like Pacific Islands people were improving over this period, those improvements were dramatically undermined by the lack of social rights available to New Zealanders during a period of
anti-welfare neo-liberalism.

It is to the question of the social rights of ethnic minorities that the next two chapters turn.
Chapter Seven

Socio-economic inequality, 'social rights', and citizenship

We need to be clear about what is meant by the term 'social citizenship'. It is the belief that, since all citizens are assumed to be fundamentally equal in status and dignity, none should be so depressed in economic or social condition as to mock this assumption. Therefore in return for the loyalty and virtuous civic conduct displayed by the citizen, the state has a responsibility to smooth out any gross inequalities by the guarantee of a basic standard of living in terms of income, shelter, food, health and education. Essential standards in the facets of life should be enjoyed as a right of citizenship, irrespective of wealth, bargaining power, sex, age or race. Furthermore, no stigma should attach to the communal source of provision.¹

The old civil rights and the new social and economic rights cannot be achieved at the same time but are in fact incompatible; the new rights could not be enforced by law without at the same time destroying that liberal order at which the old civil rights aim.²

Introduction

Social-liberals and neo-liberals have little difficulty in agreeing that the basic civil and political rights discussed in the previous two chapters are essential to human liberty and therefore to citizenship (although some may have difficulty accepting arguments in favour of 'descriptive representation' rights of the kind discussed in Chapter Six). It is when we come to the concept of 'social rights' that we meet the fundamental source of disagreement between two concepts of citizenship. For the neo-liberal, citizenship can only ever be a civil and a political status, but for the social-liberal it is also a social and economic status, and one which should not be left to the market to determine.³

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T.H. Marshall’s lecture on *Citizenship and Social Class* provided the classic formulation of the social liberal position. The historical accuracy of his argument that the social rights to be found in twentieth century welfare states were a third and inevitable stage in the development of modern citizenship has since been disputed, but his justification for the existence of social rights remains central to the social-liberal position. The essence of this position shares with other liberal positions the conviction that citizenship is a status of freedom, in which citizens are free to be self-determining at the individual level and as members of a political community. But for social-liberals, such self-determination relies not only the negative freedoms protected by civil and political rights, but also on the positive freedoms protected by ‘social rights’. Without adequate social and economic resources, they argue, individuals will not, in reality, be able to exercise the freedoms of citizenship. Some have gone further and argued that governments are justified in limiting the degree of social and economic inequality within a society on the grounds that extreme inequalities within a political community undermine the civil and political equality which is an essential condition of individual liberty: where gross inequality does occur, they argue, better-off citizens may use their much greater wealth and status to influence the law and politics to their advantage. ‘Social rights’ are thus justified on the grounds that they would, according to this view, go some way towards ensuring that such extremes of wealth and status do not occur.

National’s welfare changes, outlined in chapter two, were informed by a neo-liberal opposition to the concept of social rights, although they did not take the argument so far as to argue that primary and secondary schooling, for example, should not be a basic right of citizenship, or that there should be no assistance for the poor and needy. As already discussed, they concluded that social assistance should be greatly reduced, tightly targeted, and that it might be better delivered by non-state agents. Thus National set about reducing the amount of assistance available to New Zealanders and to reduce the extent to which any such assistance was provided universally.

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In this chapter the effect of National’s welfare policy changes on the socio-economic status of non-Maori ethnic minority people is assessed by looking at how minority groups fared across a range of social and economic indicators five years after National began putting into practice their vision of the welfare state. A range of key statistics are presented, primarily drawn from 1996 census data.

Behind the changes that the National Government introduced into each of the social policy sectors lay the assumption that any assistance the Government did provide should be more tightly targeted to those groups in the greatest need. Clearly Pacific Islands people fell into this category, and throughout the decade the Government began to target social assistance and services specifically to Pacific Islands populations, most commonly through the use of purchase-of-service contracting. On a few occasions special services were also targeted at other ethnic minorities perceived to have particular needs. Thus non-Maori ethnic minorities were affected by (at least) two sorts of Government social policy. On the one hand, ethnic minorities, like everyone else, were affected by the ‘generic’ policies such as employment law, user-pays in health and education, the introduction of competition into the health, education and other areas, the continued processes of privatisation, the introduction of market rents for state houses. On the other hand, as targeting became more prevalent as a means of delivering social services, and as Pacific Islands populations in particular became more disadvantaged and thus had more assistance ‘targeted’ towards them via purchase-of-service contracting, they became increasingly the recipients of welfare assistance purchased and delivered specifically for them.

While the two types of policies (generic and targeted) are integrally connected – both in intention and effect – I have here separated discussion of them into two chapters. This chapter simply presents the socio-economic position of non-Maori ethnic minorities during the mid-1990s, and makes the case that the generic policy changes implemented by National had an overall negative effect on the socio-economic status of some ethnic minority groups, Pacific Islands groups in particular. The next chapter (Chapter Eight) identifies the specific policies and services implemented and delivered in response to ethnic minority socio-economic disadvantage over the 1990s. That chapter asks whether these ‘targeted’ responses were effective in overcoming the
generally negative impact of the generic policies on minorities identified in this chapter.

I.

Pacific Islands people's socio-economic status during the 1990s

A number of problems present themselves when gathering and presenting statistics about the socio-economic status of an ethnic group. For a start, the main source of statistical information about New Zealanders comes from the national censuses held every five years. Census data on income, employment, housing and education provides comprehensive data with which the impact of Government policies in these areas may be assessed. But the most recent census for which data was available was held in 1996, which meant any comments about the effect of social policies on Pacific Islands people can only be made about those policies in place by 1996, unless there were other non-census studies carried out after that time.

One may also question the appropriateness and breadth of the information available from census and other data. As the Ministry of Pacific Islands put it in the introduction to their wide-ranging survey of the socio-economic status of Pacific peoples, data measurements tend to focus on only some aspects of 'social reality':

Defining 'social and economic status' is a complex issue that needs to account for a wide range of factors and the complicated relationships between them. For example, any discussion of social status would ideally include analysis of social cohesion, culture, language, and social institutions and structures. Unfortunately, there is a dearth of data and information available on Pacific peoples in many of these areas.

In addition, social status usually connotes the notions of mana or respect, community standing etc. Similarly, an analysis of the economic status of Pacific peoples would ideally include consideration of their spending and savings patterns, remittances to the Pacific, and community wealth that has accumulated in institutions such as churches and cultural groups.

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6 A census was held in March 2001, but results were not available at the time of writing.
These are not things that are easily measured, nor is information readily available on these matters.\(^7\)

Mindful of these provisos, some indicative data is presented below.

The picture that emerged from the 1996 census data was unequivocal: Pacific Islands people had the lowest incomes of all New Zealanders, and, as a direct result of that, they experienced poorer housing, poorer health and lower educational outcomes than most other New Zealanders.

**Income status of Pacific Islands people**

By 1996 Pacific Islands people's incomes were amongst the lowest in New Zealand.\(^8\)

The comparatively high rate of Pacific Island unemployment in New Zealand, the high number of Pacific sole parent families dependent upon income support, and the concentration of Pacific people in the lower-paid sectors of the economy all contributed to a situation where Pacific Islands people had lower incomes than the rest of the New Zealand population (See Table 1). As income is the main determinant of overall social and economic status, the low income status of Pacific peoples had flow-on effects on their health, educational, housing and other socio-economic indicators.

During the period 1983-1996 Pacific Islands people's income declined as a percentage of the national income, while that of Pakeha and Maori both increased a little. In 1989 Pacific peoples had earned 39 percent less than the national average, but by 1996 they were earning only half the national average and less than half the Pakeha average.\(^9\)


\(^8\) *Ibid*, p.7.

Pacific Islands people were not the only group to suffer a decline both in real income and a decline in the proportion of the national income they earned over the 1980s and 1990s. All those in the lower income brackets and most in the middle brackets also experienced a decrease in their real incomes over the 1990s. A 1998 study by economics Professors Podder and Chatterjee, using data from Statistics New Zealand’s Household Economic Survey, found that income inequality in New Zealand had increased sharply during the period from 1983 to 1996. During that period the share of income enjoyed by the bottom 80 percent of households fell by seven percent. The share of the next 10 percent stayed still, and the top 10 percent rose by 14 percent. The income share enjoyed by the top 5 percent increased by 25 percent. Economic growth between 1993 and 1996 marginally improved incomes, but for all but those in the top income bracket, this rise had ‘not been large enough to return

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10 *Ibid.* Statistics New Zealand found that ‘the income for households in the bottom quintile, whether measured by average income or median income, fell by about 5 percent in real terms from 1982 to 1996...The groups who are more concentrated in the bottom quintile include Maori...and children’, Statistics New Zealand, *New Zealand Now, Incomes*, 1998. Sylvia Dixon of the Labour Market Policy Group in the Department of Labour also found that earnings inequality grew during the period 1984-1997, not just between richer and poorer groups, but also ‘within groups of workers with similar observed levels of education, age and potential work experience’. Dixon maintains however that research to date was not able to accurately identify what caused the growth in earnings inequality. See Sylvia Dixon, ‘The Growth of Earnings Inequality, 1984-97: Trends and Sources of Change’, Paper presented at the Eighth Conference on Labour, Employment and Work, Victoria University of Wellington, 26-27 November, 1998.
them to the position they had in the early 1980s. While the benefit cuts were designed to increase assistance to the poorest members, which they did, the cuts overall were so large that beneficiaries as a whole became worse off. Significantly, the data showed that as income disparity grew, it had an increasingly ethnic character.

![Figure 7.1](Figure 7.1.png)

(Source: Ministry of Justice, *Pacific Peoples' Constitutional Report, 2000*)

In the 1990s New Zealand had no official standard for measuring poverty. The only research to use a poverty line was that done by the Wellington-based Poverty Management Project, who developed their own poverty line. Their research found that between 1984 and 1993 poverty in New Zealand increased in both severity and incidence:

In 1993, some 10.8 percent of households ... were below the poverty line, compared with only 4.3 per cent in 1984. With the exception of households with three or more adults, all household types had a significant increase in their incidence of poverty, especially sole parents, whose incidence jumped from 11.8 per cent to 46.2 percent as a result of the benefit cuts and reduced employment. The incidence is higher for households with dependent

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children, and increases with the number of children, reflecting the low level of assistance given to families with dependent children.\textsuperscript{14}

Between 1986 and 1996 the proportion of Pacific sole parent families with dependent children increased from 22 percent to 32 percent. Pacific sole parents were more likely than those from other ethnic groups to have a child under five, and to have a family of three or more children.\textsuperscript{15} Consequently, Pacific children were over-represented in low-income families, with 34 percent of Pacific children living in families with incomes in the lowest fifth of family income distribution in 1996, compared with 13 percent of European children.\textsuperscript{16}

In 1993, using the relative measure of poverty, only 8.5 per cent of Pakeha were poor, compared with 27.3 percent of Maori and 35.8 percent of Pacific Islanders. Pakeha still constituted 63 percent of the total poor, Maori 22 per cent and Pacific Islanders 11 per cent. The higher incidence of poverty for Maori and Pacific Islanders reflects their higher unemployment rates, lower work incomes and larger family sizes, where poverty reduction efficiency is lowest.\textsuperscript{17}

\textit{Employment status of Pacific Islands people}

Pacific Islands people were particularly vulnerable to structural changes in the New Zealand economy during the 1980s and 1990s which caused a shift in employment from the primary and secondary industries into the service sectors. The number of jobs in the manufacturing sector radically reduced between 1986 and 1991 with a drop of 25 percent in the total employment in secondary industries.\textsuperscript{18} Because Pacific Islands people’s employment was concentrated in this sector, levels of their participation in the labour force dropped dramatically over the period. Unemployment amongst the Pacific Islands population rose from 12 percent in 1986 to 28 percent in 1991.\textsuperscript{19} By the time of the 1996 census Pacific Islands people’s unemployment had

\textsuperscript{14} Idem.
\textsuperscript{15} Ministry of Social Policy, \textit{Post-Election Briefing Papers}, December 1999, p. 67
\textsuperscript{16} \textit{Ibid}, p.68.
\textsuperscript{19} \textit{Ibid}, p.58.
dropped to 17 percent, but the rate for Pacific Island youth (15-19) was much higher, at 33 percent. The national average at this time was 7.7 per cent.\textsuperscript{20}

Pacific Islands male’s employment (like that of Maori) was characterised by a concentration in blue collar and unskilled occupations such as trades workers, plant and machine operators, and assemblers (see Figure 5). From the 1980s however, there was a drop in the number of Pacific Islands people employed in the manufacturing sector, and a corresponding rise in the percentage of Pacific people employed in retail trade, wholesale trade, restaurants and hotels, with the majority of Pacific women working in the services sector by 1996.\textsuperscript{21}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure7.2.png}
\caption{Occupation (Major Group) by sex for the employed population of Pacific peoples resident in NZ aged 15 years and over, 1996, (\%)}
\end{figure}


Educational Status of Pacific Islands People

At the early childhood education level, the percentage of Pacific children as a proportion of all those enrolled in early childhood education (6.36 percent) remained low compared to their proportion of all children aged 0-4 years (almost 11 percent) between 1990 and 1995, although their participation rates steadily improved over this time.22 In 1991 their participation (26 percent) was almost half that of other children (49 percent). Between 1990 and 1995 Pacific Islands enrolments rose by 62 percent compared to a 35 percent rise overall in early childhood enrolments. Over 45 percent of all Pacific Islands children enrolled in early childhood education attended Pacific Islands language groups or Pacific Islands early childhood centres (these institutions provided at least 50 percent of their programme in a Pacific Islands language.23)

At the secondary school level, Pacific Islands students performed consistently lower than other students in all senior school examinations in 1997. Only a third of School Certificate papers sat by Pacific Islands students resulted in pass grades, just over half the proportion for other students (63 percent). Pacific Islands students were also less likely to sit senior examinations, although they remained at school through to the sixth form year in about the same numbers as other students.24 In 1997 Pacific school leavers gained qualifications at a lower rate (74 percent) than the national average (82 percent). (See Figure 6.)

Pacific Islands students were concentrated in the Auckland (69 percent) and Wellington (15 percent) regions, and also in a small number of schools within those areas. In 1995, 20 percent of Pacific Islands students were enrolled in less than one percent of schools and 50 percent were enrolled in less than 4 percent of schools. In three percent of schools, more than half the roll were students of Pacific Islands origin, whereas 44 percent of New Zealand schools had no Pacific Islands students.25

24 Ibid, p. 27.
The Ministry of Education argued that 'this concentration of Pacific Islands students in a small number of schools allows for easily targeting Pacific Islands students with programmes aimed at improving educational outcomes for this population'. However, Sue Watson et al argued in a 1997 paper that the removal of school zoning had had the effect of creating 'white and brown flight' from schools with high Pacific Islands and Maori numbers on the roll, as parents exercised their choice and sent their children to schools with higher Pakeha rolls. The concentration of Pacific Islands and Maori students into particular schools had, they argued, negative effects for those schools:

"...our research is beginning to show that schools which have been the hardest hit by the impact of marketisation are those which are working in creative, co-operative ways to address the needs of the Maori and Pacific Islands communities they serve. The tragedy is that these schools are the most poorly resourced. We know of one Decile 1 School which raised just $300 in private funding *in total* in the last financial year, in contrast to a Decile 10 school which charges the same amount in school fees *for every student*, and which raises thousands more in fundraising. The equity funding provided by the state to the Decile 1 school in no way matches this amount. Because of the relationship between ethnicity, socio-economic status

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26 *Idem.*
and school achievement, it is easy to see who will be judged the "better" school in the achievement stakes.27

In 1996, Pacific Islands school leavers went on to further education in smaller numbers (38 percent) than other students (51 percent). Those who did move from school into training often went to Training Opportunity Programmes rather than educational institutions which provide higher level qualifications. However, during the period 1991 to 1995 the proportion of Pacific Islands students enrolling in colleges of education, polytechnics or universities increased at a rate greater than those experienced by other students,28 and between 1990 and 1996 the number of Pacific graduates increased by over 200 percent.29 The percentage of total graduates that were Pacific Islands people gradually increased during the period 1994 to 1997, although they remained under-represented as a proportion of all graduates.30 These were very promising developments. Income inequalities between Pacific peoples and other groups continued, however, to compound the difficulty of their access to tertiary education, as well as the personal costs of undertaking education. In 1996 the Ministry of Education reported that:

...the ability of Pacific Islands students to fund their studies relies heavily on government assistance. [In the form of student allowances and student loan schemes.] The uptake of loans and allowances by students enrolled in formal tertiary education programmes is higher for Pacific Islands students than for other students, while the amount they receive are similar to students from other ethnic groups. As a result the overall level of government support for Pacific Islands students is higher than that for students from other ethnic groups, probably because of the lower income of Pacific Islands families in New Zealand.31

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28 Ministry of Education, Ko e Ako 'a e Kakai Pasifika, p.31-34.
31 Ministry of Education, Ko e Ako 'a e Kakai Pasifika, p. 32.
Health status of Pacific Islands people

A comprehensive review of the health status of Pacific Islands people was undertaken by the Public Health Commission between 1993 and 1994. The results were published in *The Health of Pacific Islands People in New Zealand* and showed:

...significant inequalities in the delivery of services and information for Pacific Islands people. These inequalities, combined with socio-economic disadvantage, mean that Pacific islands people generally have a lower health status that most other population groups in New Zealand.

In 1995 the Ministry of Health reported that:

- The hospitalisation rate for Pacific infants under one years of age was 39 per cent higher than the national rate in 1995, while that for children aged 1-4 years was 28 percent higher.
- The late foetal death rate for Pacific people's births was 48 percent higher than the national rate in 1995.
- Among Pacific 10-14 year olds, the hospitalisation rates for acute rheumatic fever, pneumonia and middle ear infection were well above the national rates.
- Pacific children continued to be admitted to hospital for pneumonia at four times the rate for all children and for acute rheumatic fever at five times the national rate.
- Pacific women continued to have the highest abortion rate.
- Pacific people continued to suffer the highest incidence of rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease, obesity and related dietary conditions.
- The incidence of cancer of the liver was higher among Pacific peoples than among the general population.
- The incidence of tuberculosis among Pacific people in 1996 (31 per 100 000) was more than 10 times higher than the rate for Europeans (3 per 100 000).

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• The life expectancy at birth for Pacific men was the second lowest in the country. (Maori men’s life expectancy was the lowest). In 1996 Pacific men could expect to live on average 4.8 years less than the national average.
• Pacific women had a life expectancy 3.8 years lower than the national female rate.  

The Public Health Association of New Zealand argued that the low socio-economic status of Pacific Islands people was most likely to explain their poor health status, with low income being perhaps the most significant influence on low health status. They also argued that ‘the health of a population is affected more by the distribution of wealth within that population than by the actual level of wealth,’ — an argument that flew in the face of the Government’s insistence that economic inequality was not itself a matter of concern so long as the economy as a whole continued to grow.

In 1998 The National Health Committee made an argument similar to that of the Public Health Association when it argued that ‘social, cultural and economic factors were the main determinants of health’. Health, in other words, was a product of income, education, employment, housing, as well as being related to cultural factors. Unemployment, they said, was related not only to income but also to mental health: the unemployed had worse physical and mental health than the employed. Pacific children were admitted to hospital at higher rates than other children, ‘often in a more severe state, because their families could not afford primary medical care, and because primary care services were often not responsive to Pacific people.’ Low levels of education, and poor housing had direct impacts on health also:

Most obviously poor housing can lead to, or worsen, physical and mental health problems. As well, those with poorer health, particularly poorer mental health, are likely to end up in the worst housing.

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Housing status of Pacific Islands people

Pacific Islands people continued to be concentrated in certain poorer urban areas, particularly in Auckland and Wellington. At the time of the 1991 census Pacific Islands people had a lower rate of home ownership (47 percent) than the general New Zealand population (72 percent). 51 percent of the Pacific of the Pacific Island population rented compared to 23 percent of the general population, and of those renting 55 percent rented from the Housing Corporation compared to a national rate of 21 per cent. By 1996, home ownership rates among Pacific people had dropped even further in comparison to the national average, and the percentage of the Pacific Islands population were renting had increased (see Figure 7). Pacific Islands people were therefore disproportionately affected by the introduction of market rentals in the government housing sector.

Waldegrave, Stephens and Frater’s 1996 Poverty Measurement Project found in 1996 that 18.5 percent of New Zealand households were below the poverty threshold, and that Pacific families were three time more likely to be in poverty than European families. They argued that the single largest cause of poverty was the cost of housing, with 64 percent of families living in Housing New Zealand-owned houses were below the poverty line. And, as the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs has argued excessively high housing costs limited individual’s and families’ ability to meet other basic needs: ‘The high proportion of outgoings on housing in low income household affects their ability to pay for other services that would allow them to participate fully in society, and improve other aspects of their quality of life.’

Pacific Island households tended to be much larger than was average for the general population. This was partly a result of the tendency for Pacific Islands people to have larger families, and to live with extended family members, but was also a result of their lower incomes, which meant they were likely to live in smaller and cheaper

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40 A discussion of ethnicity and home ownership issues may be found in Juston Anderson, 'Ethnic Background as an Explanatory Factor in Home Ownership Rates', Unpublished Paper prepared for the Ministry of Housing, April 1994.
41 R G Laking, Chief Executive, Ministry of Housing, Correspondence with the Minister of Housing, 2.3.1993, p. 1.
43 Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, Scoping Report on status of housing for Pacific peoples, Wellington, Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, July 1999, p. 34.
accommodation. Thus overcrowding and unsuitable home designs were housing problems particularly faced by Pacific Islands people.

Although New Zealand did not have a nationally accepted definition of overcrowding, Statistics New Zealand described crowding as a situation where ‘the number of people residing in a household exceeds the capability of the household to provide adequate shelter and services to its members.’ One analysis of the 1996 census data, using a Canadian measurement, estimated that 74.6 percent of those living in crowded homes were either Maori or Pacific Islands people. Approximately 24 percent of all Samoan people were thought to be living in overcrowded homes. Overcrowding was associated with other indicators of disadvantage such as poverty, poor health status, communication of infectious diseases and low educational attainment.

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Welfare Services

Pacific Islands people were disproportionately represented in the client base of the Children Young Persons Service, although there was insufficient numbers available to identify exact numbers.47

II.

The socio-economic status of non-Maori, non-Pacific ethnic minorities in New Zealand 1996

If diversity within the Pacific Islands group makes it hard to present meaningful statistics relating to them, that problem is magnified many times over in the presentation of statistics relating to the ethnic sector. This sector included individuals from every continent and most countries on the planet. Some groups were very small in comparison to others (47,571 identified themselves as Dutch in the 1996 census, in comparison to the 75 who identified as Kenyans and the 261 Afghans), making comparison between them difficult. Some groups were well established in New Zealand, others were relatively new to the country. Different ethnic groups have become established as the result of different migration schemes. Some, (the Dutch, for example), arrived predominantly through assisted passage schemes, others (particularly the new populations from Asia), came as economic and business migrants while yet others arrived primarily as refugees (especially those from Cambodia, Vietnam, the former Yugoslavia, and the Middle East). Length of residence in New Zealand, reasons for being in New Zealand, conditions in the countries from which migrants came, all affect the socio-economic status of migrants upon arrival. Bearing in mind the very diverse histories and circumstances of those who fall into the non-Maori, non-Pacific ethnic minority category, a range of statistics is presented below to give some indication of the socio-economic position of peoples in this grouping in 1996.48

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47 Margaret Bazeley, Forward to Lali, Strategy for Pacific Islands Employment and Service Delivery, Wellington, Department of Social Welfare, c.1995, p. 2
Income status of ethnic minorities

While there was considerable diversity between the income status of ethnic minority groups in New Zealand, on the whole they tended to be poorer than the rest of the New Zealand population. (See Figures 7.5-7.8). Most disadvantaged in terms of income were the Cambodian, Vietnamese, Southern Slav, African and Middle Eastern groups. Significantly, the members of the first three of these groups tended to have arrived in New Zealand as refugees. The income status of Middle Eastern people was surprising, given the high level of educational qualifications in this population. (See Figure 7.6).

(SOURCE: Department of Internal Affairs, Ethnic Diversity in New Zealand: A Statistical Profile, Research Unit, DIA, 1999, p.134.)
Figure 7.6
Median Individual Incomes for South East Asian Groups: Males and Females over 15 (1996)

(Source: Department of Internal Affairs, Ethnic Diversity in New Zealand: A Statistical Profile, Research Unit, DIA, 1999, p.136)

Figure 7.7
Median Individual Incomes for Asian Groups

(Source: Department of Internal Affairs, Ethnic Diversity in New Zealand: A Statistical Profile, Research Unit, DIA, 1999, p.138)
Employment status of ethnic minorities

Several factors affected the employment patterns of population groups: age structure, length of time in New Zealand, English language skills, and the number of students in the population. (Some populations, such as Japanese, had high numbers of students, and thus higher numbers of people not in the workforce.) These factors needed to be taken into account when analysing the employment status of these population groups.\footnote{For detailed analysis of ethnic minority population statistics, see Barbara Thompson, 1999.}

In 1996 European ethnic minority groups had patterns of employment status that generally resembled the New Zealand average, although those in the ‘South Slav’ group had unemployment rates that were twice the New Zealand ratio. As this group included those ethnic groups from the former Yugoslavia (Croatian, Serbian, Dalmation, Bosnian) many were likely to have come as refugees, and this may have accounted for their lower than average participation in the labour force. European groups were employed in occupation groups in broadly similar proportions to the national average. (See Figure 7.9.)
South East Asians (Filipino, Cambodian, Vietnamese and others) had varied patterns of employment. Cambodians and Vietnamese had much higher than average levels of unemployment, while Filipinos had slightly higher rates of unemployment than average, but more people in full time work than average. (See Figure 7.10.) Again, the fact that many Vietnamese and Cambodian people entered New Zealand as refugees rather than as economic migrants may well explain some of the differences between the groups. More Filipino males were employed as professionals (25 percent) than the national average (19 percent), but far fewer Cambodian males and females were employed as professionals (5 and 6 percent respectively). Vietnamese and Cambodians were both far more likely to work in blue collar and unskilled jobs than was the average nationally.

Chinese males and females were slightly more likely than the New Zealand average to be unemployed, and fewer were in full time and part time work, or not in the work force than the New Zealand average (42 percent for men and 53 percent for women, compared to 27 percent and 42 percent nationally). Indian males and females had patterns that more closely resembled the New Zealand average, although their level of unemployment was slightly higher than the New Zealand average. Sri Lankans had very high unemployment rates relative to the New Zealand average. Koreans had a very high percentage of people not in the workforce (see Figure 7.11). Those in the Asian group, especially males, were generally more likely to be employed in either managerial or professional/technical work than the national average. Sri Lankan males (56 percent) and females (39 percent) recorded the highest numbers working in professional or technical occupations compared to the national average of 19 percent for males and 25 percent for females.

Research by labour market analysts Liliana and Rainer Winklemann using the 1996 census data found that employment and income levels tended to vary between recent Asian migrants (who fared worse than the native population) and Asian migrants who were well established in New Zealand (arriving before 1986), whose labour market outcomes tended to be similar to those of immigrants from other regions of origin.
Research comparing the labour market outcomes of migrants from European ethnic and cultural backgrounds and those from Asian ethnic and cultural backgrounds, indicates that ethnic and linguistic background have played a significant role in rates of incorporation into the labour market.\(^{51}\)

Other Ethnic groups were all characterised by comparatively high levels of unemployment compared to the national average of 5 percent for both males and females. Employment statistics thus indicated that a degree of labour market disadvantage was experienced by all ethnic minority groups except non-Slavic Europeans. Of particular note was the very high levels of unemployment experienced by some migrant groups despite their comparatively high levels of skills and qualification. (See Figures 7.13-1.16). As noted above however, some of the differential rates of incorporation into the workforce may be explained by the recent arrival of some of those in the ‘ethnic’ category.

**Health status of ethnic minorities**

No aggregated data was available on the health statistics of non-Maori, non-Pacific Islands people in New Zealand.

**Education status of ethnic minorities**

Considerable variation characterised the educational status of other non-Maori ethnic minorities in New Zealand, although on the whole those in this category tended to be more highly educated than was average. European ethnic groups had more people with tertiary qualifications than the national average, with the exception of the Greek population, who had fewer than average. More than average had vocational qualifications, particularly Dutch, German, Poles and ‘Other Europeans’ (See Figure 7.13).

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South East Asian groups varied in their levels of education. The Filipino ethnic group were more than four times as likely as New Zealanders as a whole to have a university qualifications, and Sri Lankans were also far more likely to have tertiary qualifications than the national average. Korean, Chinese, Indian and Other Asian groups similarly had a higher percentage of people with tertiary qualifications than the national average, although fewer than average had vocational qualifications. Cambodian and Vietnamese on the other hand had fewer people than average with tertiary qualifications (see Figure 7.14, 7.15).

Other Ethnic groups also tended to be highly educated in relation to the New Zealand population. Tertiary qualifications were held by 33 percent of Middle Eastern men, and 28 percent of women; 22 percent of African men, and 13 percent of African women; 18 percent of Latin American men, and 17 percent of Latin American women. The national averages were 9 percent for men and 7 percent for women (See Figure 7.16).

(Source: Department of Internal Affairs, *Ethnic Diversity In New Zealand: A Statistical Profile*, Research Unit, DIA, 1999, p.63.)
Figure 7.10
South East Asian Groups: Patterns of Employment (1996)

(Source: Department of Internal Affairs, *Ethnic Diversity In New Zealand: A Statistical Profile*, Research Unit, DIA, 1999, p.67)

Figure 7.11

(Source: Department of Internal Affairs, *Ethnic Diversity In New Zealand: A Statistical Profile*, Research Unit, DIA, 1999, p.71)
Figure 7.12
Other Ethnic Groups: Patterns of Employment (1996)

(Source: Department of Internal Affairs, Ethnic Diversity In New Zealand: A Statistical Profile, Research Unit, DIA, 1999, p.81)

Figure 7.13
Level of Highest Qualification of European Ethnic Minority Groups (1996)

(Source: Department of Internal Affairs, Ethnic Diversity In New Zealand: A Statistical Profile, Research Unit, DIA, 1999, p.117)
(Source: Department of Internal Affairs, *Ethnic Diversity In New Zealand: A Statistical Profile*, Research Unit, DIA, 1999, p.119)

(Source: Department of Internal Affairs, *Ethnic Diversity In New Zealand: A Statistical Profile*, Research Unit, DIA, 1999, p.121)
The housing status of ethnic minorities

1996 the numbers of people per household varied widely among ethnic groups. Europeans had on average a similar number of people to the New Zealand average per household. South East Asian, Asian and Other ethnic groups tended to live in households with a much larger number of people per household than average.

Middle Eastern, African, Other Asian, Sri Lanka, Latin American and South Slav people had higher than average proportions living in rental accommodation. Italian (35 percent), Chinese (34 percent), Dutch (31 percent), and Greek (30 percent) had much higher than average (24 percent) rates of home ownership without a mortgage.

The main point to be taken from this statistical picture of the non-Pacific, non-Maori ethnic minority sector was perhaps simply that a great diversity existed among those who fell into this category. Some groups had a socio-economic status comparable or above that of the national average, but others demonstrated considerable disadvantage vis-à-vis the rest of the national population. The pattern overall for non-European ethnic groups was for them to enjoy a lower than average income level. However,
with the exception of those populations primarily made up of refugees, most non-Maori, non-Pacific ethnic minority groups did not experience the multiple and entrenched disadvantage that characterised the Pacific population. All migrant groups, for example, had higher than average educational and vocational qualifications, with the exception of Cambodians, Vietnamese and Greeks. Unlike Pacific peoples, most ethnic groups were not concentrated in manual or low-skilled occupations, again with the exception of refugee populations such as Cambodians and Vietnamese. Non-European populations did however tend (with the exception of Indians) to experience higher rates of unemployment and non-labour force participation than the national average.

III.

Links between socio-economic status and citizenship status

The statistical data presented above clearly shows that Pacific Islands people suffered a very high level of social and economic disadvantage in comparison to other New Zealanders, and that this disadvantage had in many respects grown worse during the period in which National was in power. Many of the other ethnic minorities were also disadvantaged in relation to the rest of the population, albeit to a lesser degree than Pacific peoples. A high proportion of those in the lowest income brackets were living in poverty, and experienced a combination of poor health, bad housing, lower educational and employment outcomes as a result.

Evidently the level of social assistance available to those on low incomes during this period was simply insufficient to prevent an increase in, and entrenchment of, social and economic inequality in New Zealand, nor an increase in the numbers of those living in poverty. The question that concerns us in this section is whether the disadvantage suffered by ethnic minorities undermined their status as equal citizens?

A neo-liberal response to this question would, presumably, be ‘no’. Non-Maori ethnic minority citizens and residents in New Zealand, like other citizens and residents, were equally entitled to the civil and political rights of citizenship, and therefore had an
equal citizenship status. Furthermore, a neo-liberal argument might go, minorities, like other New Zealanders had access to a range of social benefits and services provided by the New Zealand Government in the 1990s. These included free public pre-school, primary and secondary education; partially subsidised tertiary education; targeted income assistance for the unemployed, single parents, the sick, disabled and elderly; welfare assistance for children and families; and targeted subsidies for primary and secondary health care, as well as some universal health entitlements such as maternity services. Thus ethnic minorities, like other New Zealanders, were invested with negative rights and freedoms on which citizenship rests, and, in addition, they had access to a range of social welfare benefits and services.

In this section I reject the neo-liberal position, and argue instead that the disadvantaged position of Pacific Island people in particular undermined their status as equal citizens in at least two significant respects: it reduced their agency and it potentially reduced their political power.

The first respect concerns the relationship between autonomy and socio-economic status, and rests on the claim that multiple and entrenched disadvantage depletes the individual agency necessary if individuals are to enjoy the negative rights of freedom. Of the various arguments in favour of social rights this is one of the strongest. As Raymond Plant contends, the distinction drawn by neo-liberals between negative and positive liberties is unsustainable:

Why do we want to be free from coercion? Presumably we find liberty in the sense of being free from coercion valuable because of the range of things that we are able to do within the space secured by mutual no-coercion. If this is so then freedom and ability are not categorically different since what makes freedom valuable to us is what we are able to do with it.

Individuals, in other words, require sufficient material resources if they are to be free to act autonomously. Without such resources, they will be unable to make and act upon the individual choices which constitute moral autonomy. Naturally this position

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is open to the charge that it is very difficult to quantify the level of resources necessary to ensure individual autonomy. However, (and without attempting to define upper and lower limits which define this ‘level’) it is possible to argue that certain levels of disadvantage do compromise individual agency. When individuals, families, and whole sub-populations experience multiple sources of disadvantage – where, for example, unemployment is linked to low income, and low income is in turn linked to poor housing, poor health, low educational achievement, family breakdown, and where each of these factors contribute again to unemployment – such disadvantage can become, as the Ministry of Social Policy put it in 1999, ‘entrenched and inter-generational’. It can become very difficult for individuals to remove themselves from the position of disadvantage because of its multiple causes. And, where the disadvantage is passed inter-generationally, individuals born into families and communities experiencing multiple, entrenched disadvantage have little control over their own socio-economic status. In such cases there seems little reason to assume that the social and economic outcomes determined by the market are just.

Looking at the position of Pacific Islands people during the 1990s it seems clear that many lacked the material resources to make truly self-interested decisions. Because a disproportionate number of Pacific Islands people were reliant upon government income assistance after their levels of unemployment increased dramatically in the late 1980s, the National Government’s decisions to decrease income assistance to low income earners and beneficiaries, to allow market rentals, to operate a low inflationary macroeconomic strategy, to promote a ‘flexible’ wage market all impacted particularly hard on Pacific populations. The insufficient economic resources available to many Pacific people would have depleted their agency as individuals, and thus undermined their status as equal citizens, able to enjoy the negative freedoms of citizenship.

The Ministry of Social Policy noted in their Post-election Briefing Papers 1999 that the level of disadvantage experienced by Pacific Islands people was such that some

54 Ministry of Social Policy, Post-Election Briefing Papers, December 1999.
55 As Hayek argued. His contention was that because markets functioned through a continual process of decision-making by consumers, and its outcomes are not therefore intentional. As outcomes are not intentional, they cannot be considered ‘unjust’.
Pacific families were 'at risk of being excluded from participating socially and economically in society for a long time'. Such families were at risk, in other words, of falling into a category sometimes described as an 'underclass' of those who 'cannot even get their feet on the first rung of the ladder', and who are effectively 'denied access to our civic community'. The fact that some families and individuals were at risk of falling into such a category (some, no doubt, already had), suggests that at least one of the basic conditions of citizenship – the ability of all to participate as members of a political community – was not fulfilled during the 1990s.

Most of the other non-Maori ethnic minorities did not experience the same multiple disadvantages as Pacific Islands people, and there was thus some reason to be optimistic that the comparative disadvantage they did experience would diminish over time. The same may not be true however for those populations who became established in New Zealand as a result of refugee flows. They too demonstrated multiple disadvantage, similar to that experienced by Pacific peoples and would have therefore experienced a diminished citizenship status.

A second significant way in which the growing inequality between Pacific people and other New Zealanders (except Maori) depletes their citizenship relates to the relationship between social and economic status, and legal and political power. During the fifteen years between 1980 and 1994, most of which saw New Zealand governed by neo-liberal governments, income inequality in New Zealand grew more rapidly than in any other OECD country. Ethnic minority groups, especially Maori and Pacific Islands people were among those groups concentrated at the poorer end of the economic spectrum. Inequality thus had a very marked ethnic quality to it. A danger of economic and social inequality is that those who have more social and economic resources at their disposal will use those resources to influence the law and politics to better suit their interests. There is a relationship between socio-economic status and political and legal power. There are thus strong reasons to believe that growing socio-economic inequality undermines the civil and legal equality on which

57 Ibid, p.16.
citizenship rests. If that is the case then the social and economic disadvantage experienced by many Pacific Islands people, refugees and other ethnic minorities during the 1990s did indeed undermine their citizenship status.

Another effect of both income and ethnic inequality is the decrease in social cohesion that the Ministry of Social Policy identified as a potential problem in its 1999 Post-election Briefing Papers. As argued in the first chapter of this thesis, self-governing political communities need to be able to think of themselves as such, and extreme inequalities within societies put that sense of community under strain. Protecting citizenship requires states and communities to protect the political community which itself provides the conditions of citizenship. The growing level of economic inequality as a whole, and the increasingly ethnic nature of poverty in New Zealand in the 1990s suggest that New Zealand during this period was moving further away from the normative ideal of equal citizenship set out in Chapter One of this thesis.

Conclusion

When the National Government entered government in late 1990 one of their goals was to transform New Zealand’s welfare state from one based on a social citizenship model to one based more on a residualist model of welfare and citizenship. In doing so, it argued, it would in fact enhance the citizenship of all citizens. In particular, the application of market principles to many more spheres of social and economic life would maximise individual freedom, and thus enhance the liberty that is so central to citizenship. In this chapter it has been argued that for some ethnic minority groups (Pacific Islands people and refugees) the effects of the transition away from a social-liberal model of citizenship had an opposite effect. It increased their social and economic disadvantage in relation to the national population, and trapped many of them in situations of entrenched and cyclic dependence. The social rights to which they were entitled – along with all other New Zealanders – were simply not generous enough to prevent the development and entrenchment of widespread disadvantage amongst their communities.
But, faced with the comprehensive disadvantage apparent in Pacific Island communities the National Government opted to target assistance to such communities, rather than to provide more generous assistance to all low-income New Zealanders. Such targeting commonly took the form of contracting out provision of social services for Pacific clients to Pacific Island service providers. Was providing Pacific Islands people with ‘culturally appropriate’ targeted social services enough to counteract the disadvantage they faced as a result of their higher-than-average rates of unemployment, their concentration in low-paid occupations, and the lower-than-adequate levels of income assistance for all low-income New Zealanders? It is to this question that the next chapter turns.
Chapter Eight

Social services and the 'culture' of contracting

Introduction

Both the 1991 and the 1996 censuses showed clearly that Maori, Pacific Islands people, and some other ethnic minorities experienced significant social and economic disadvantage in comparison with the New Zealand population as a whole.\(^1\) For Pacific Islands people, this comparative disadvantage had increased during the first five years of National’s period in government, strongly suggesting that the economic and welfare reforms introduced by National had had a singularly negative effect on Pacific Islands people’s socio-economic status.

Yet during the 1990s more attempts were made within government to document and analyse the specific health, education and welfare needs of Pacific peoples (and, to a lesser extent, other ethnic minorities) than had ever occurred before. More policies designed specifically to respond to their needs were developed than ever before, and these policies were more accepting and accommodating of the cultural differences that existed amongst cultural minorities than had ever been the case. In fact, in the health, education and social welfare portfolios there was something of a ‘multicultural’ revolution in state thinking about the delivery of services to ethnic minorities, particularly Pacific Islanders. The idea that health, educational and other welfare services should be delivered in ‘culturally appropriate’ ways came to be widespread in these portfolios, as did the conviction that the most appropriate mechanism for delivering such services was via a purchase-of-service contract with non-state, preferably ‘ethnic’ providers.

In this chapter the policies and practices developed to meet the specific needs of non-Maori ethnic minorities at the national level are examined in five ‘welfare’ sectors:

\(^1\) See figures 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3.
health, education, social welfare, employment and housing. Given the time period covered (1990-1999) and the ad-hoc nature of the development of policies in each portfolio, a comprehensive list of such policies would take too much room, (and be, perhaps, too tedious) to include here. Instead the chapter will sketch the broad policy direction of policy in each area, focusing on the growing tendency to contract out service provision to non-state providers, and, second, the conviction within most government agencies that such providers should, where possible, deliver the services in ways which were ‘culturally appropriate’ to the group receiving the services. The chapter begins with a brief description of the evolution of this last idea, then traces its appearance in various welfare policies. It concludes with an assessment of the effectiveness of purchase-of-service contracting as a way of reducing ethnic disadvantage, and a discussion of the implications for minorities of the conviction that those who delivered social services should be familiar with, and preferably a member of, the culture to which their ‘clients’ belong. Services directed specifically at Pacific Islands people will be discussed separately to those directed at members of other ethnic minorities.

I.

The purchase-of-service contracting model and ‘cultural’ social services

Despite the evidence of growing ethnic inequality in the 1990s National and its coalition partners remained committed to their vision of a minimalist welfare state throughout this period. They refused to accept the argument presented by their opponents that policies such as charging market rentals for state housing and lowering income assistance to beneficiaries were themselves largely responsible for the increasing disadvantage experienced by some ethnic minorities. Instead, they used a combination of neo-liberal and what I shall call here ‘culturalist’ analyses (explained below) to understand and develop policy responses to ethnic socio-economic

2 The social welfare portfolio included the New Zealand Children and Young Persons Service, (concerned with cases of child abuse and neglect, youth justice issues, and adoption), the Community Funding Agency (responsible for purchasing social services delivery from non-profit and other organisations), and the Social Policy Agency (responsible for providing policy advice).
disadvantage. Non-Maori ethnic minorities were not the Government’s main focus when developing these responses: Maori, and the politics of ‘biculturalism’, continued to be the major influence on their thinking. Policies relating to the welfare of Pacific peoples and other minorities were thus largely shaped by the Government’s thinking about how best to deliver social services and programmes to Maori.

The idea that social services aimed at Maori would best be delivered by Maori may be traced to three different, if partially complementary, understandings of the relationship between Maori and the state. First, there were those who, often using a nationalist argument, claimed that Maori should control the welfare resources to which they had a right as partners to the Treaty of Waitangi. Maori, in other words, should have at least some control of the health, education, and welfare resources available to them, and such control would ensure a greater level of Maori self-determination. Such arguments were apparent in the discussions on Maori and social policy contained within the Royal Commission on Social Policy’s April Report, and in the Ka Awatea report released by the Minister of Maori Affairs, Winston Peters, in 1991.

A second and closely related argument was that cultural differences between Maori and other New Zealanders meant that the way in which Maori suffered social and economic deprivation had causes and manifestations that only those well versed in the history and culture of Maori could really understand. Effective solutions to Maori deprivation needed to be ‘culturally appropriate’ and might only be developed and implemented by those who had such an understanding. (This view I call ‘culturalist’). It was a view evident in Ka Awatea, as well as in the report of the Ministerial Advisory Committee on a Maori Perspective for the Department of Social Welfare, Puao-Te-Ata-Tu (Day Break). The idea was given most force in the Children, Young Persons and the Families Act 1989. This Act required social workers to have

appropriate regard to their client’s ethnic, cultural and community beliefs, perspectives, and aspirations', and made provisions for social services to Maori and other ethnic groups to be provided under contract by non-state agencies. Social services for Maori could be delivered by newly authorised ‘Iwi Authorities’, while ‘Cultural Authorities’ – incorporated bodies established by one or more cultural group – could gain deliver services to non-Maori ethnic groups. Although the Department of Social Welfare received considerable criticism throughout the decade for failing to properly implement the vision contained in the Children, Young Persons and the Families Act, the belief that social services destined for ethnic or cultural groups were best delivered by members of those ethnic or cultural groups became well established both within the Department of Social Welfare and other government agencies.

The third set of arguments were those of neo-liberalism – and particularly those of public choice and agency theory, managerialism, and transaction cost analysis. These advocated a separation of the functions of government policy development, funding of services, and service delivery, and the extensive use of contracting. By putting out to tender contracts for the delivery of social services, agency theory taught that governments could expect to stimulate competition amongst a range of public and private providers, and thus generate efficiencies. They could also break the state’s monopoly as a service provider. State agencies had been criticised in the past, especially by Maori, for delivering standardised, uniform services, characterised by a monocultural professionalism. With the purchase-of-service model, diverse providers could be contracted to deliver to diverse ‘clients’. This would provide more choice to the consumers or clients of social services and might also prove to be a far more effective way of meeting overall ‘outcomes’. Funding agencies could identify sub-populations within their regions and purchase services to meet the specific needs of those sub-populations. According to agency theory, this would provide a more precise tool for targeting disadvantaged populations than a system of national, standardised service delivery.

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So the move to separate out the functions of policy advice, funding of services and service provisions fitted rather well with the nationalist and culturalist ambitions of Maori. Both the Government and Maori hoped that contracting-out service provision would give Maori groups the chance to develop and deliver welfare services to members of their own communities, in ways which were culturally sensitive and appropriate. Here was a model of service delivery which neatly met the Government’s need for efficiency, accountability, and effectiveness while at the same time allowing them to satisfy – at least partially – Maori demands for a greater degree of control over the way in which social services were delivered to their people. It also went some way to meeting a criticism often levied by the left (primarily before the welfare state had been so threatened by the neo-liberal critique) that the welfare state had bred large, underdemocratic, monocultural, bureaucratic, professionally-dominated institutions that were both unaccountable and unresponsive to the welfare needs of a culturally diverse population. 9

The model was, however, quickly subject to criticism from Maori, who began to see the process as a cynical plot on the part of government to turn iwi into ‘dumping grounds for programmes that were introduced to redress the consequences of the economic changes’. 10 Nor did Maori see it as transferring any effective control over resources from the Crown to Maori. Rather, as Denese Henare argued ‘there was a real suspicion that these changes were not primarily aimed at empowering Maori but masked a hidden agenda to deliver these services on the cheap’. 11

Despite criticisms such as these, once arguments in favour of the purchase of ‘cultural social services’ had been developed and applied in relation to Maori, they were inevitably applied to the social and economic needs of Pacific Islands people, and then, tentatively and minimally, to other minorities (although without the ‘nationalist’ aspect to the justification). Pacific Islands people themselves were lobbying for greater government attention to be paid to their social and economic needs and so, by

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the mid-1990s, several of the key social welfare agencies (health, employment, education and social welfare) were coming around to the view that contracting out the provision of social services for Pacific Islands clients to Pacific Island providers was the most efficient and effective way to deal with Pacific peoples' disadvantage. Pacific providers were seen by funding agencies as more likely to understand the culture of the Pacific people receiving their services, and therefore more likely to deliver services which would be culturally appropriate and relevant. Culturally appropriate and relevant services were seen as best able to effectively address the social and economic problems of Pacific Islands people. Furthermore, contracting out the provision of Pacific social services to private or non-profit Pacific providers promised to be considerably cheaper than full state provision.

By seeing culturally appropriate services as the best way of dealing with Pacific Islands people's disadvantage, the Government focused on the way in which services were delivered, rather than on the quantity of assistance available. In taking this stance it was explicitly rejecting the idea that national educational, health, housing and welfare outcomes could be improved by increasing the amount of income assistance available to the worst-off sections of society.

II.

*Government policies relating specifically to the social and economic needs of Pacific peoples*

The three welfare areas in which the specific concerns of Pacific Islands and other ethnic minorities were given most consideration were those where there was a lot of 'face-to-face' contact between the providers and the users of the service: health, education and welfare. Reflecting the Government's emphasis on a 'flexible' labour market, a much more limited number of initiatives were taken in the employment sector, while virtually none were taken in the housing sector.
Social Welfare

The agency which was perhaps most enamoured with the 'culturalist' argument was the Department of Social Welfare. It made a concerted effort to respond to the specific needs of Pacific peoples in three respects: as an employer of Pacific staff; as the primary purchaser of social services through the Community Funding Agency; and in its role as a key welfare service provider.

After a decade or so of fairly intense scrutiny of departmental practice in relation to Maori, the Department of Social Welfare was by the 1990s rather sensitized to cultural issues. In 1988 the Ministerial Advisory Committee on a Maori perspective for the Department of Social Welfare had presented its report *Puaeo-Te-Ata-Tu (Day Break)*. This report had made harsh criticisms of the way in which the Department treated Maori, claiming it was racist, insensitive and arrogant in its dealings with them. The authors encouraged government to attack 'institutional' racism, share power with Maori, allocate resources equitably throughout society, and to 'incorporate the values, cultures and beliefs of the Maori people in all policies developed for the future of New Zealand'. While the Department made no attempt to push the argument that national resources should be allocated more equitably through society during the period of National's administration, it did take seriously the claims of institutional racism and of the need for cultural sensitivity. A bicultural strategy, *Te Punga*, was released in 1994 based on the conclusions of *Puaeo-Te-Ata-Tu*.

Following the release of *Te Punga*, Pacific people within the Department requested that the Department follow up the bicultural strategy with a Pacific Islands strategy. Conscious that Pacific people were their second largest client group and that they were the largest government employer of Pacific Islands people, the Department responded with a strategic document entitled *Lali Nafa*, which employed many of the same arguments that had been put forward in *Te Punga*. Released in 1995, *Lali* argued that the Department of Social Welfare should 'take account of the needs and aspirations of Pacific Islands people's when developing policy'; it should deliver

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welfare services in ways which were ‘sensitive to the cultural preferences of Pacific Islands peoples’; and that Pacific Island employees should feel that they could ‘be themselves at work rather than “honorary palagi”’.\textsuperscript{14}

In order to improve its performance as a major employer of Pacific Islands staff, managers within the Department were urged to increase the level of cultural awareness about the Pacific Islands within the staff and to foster a greater involvement of Pacific Islands people in the policy development process.\textsuperscript{15} In response to comments made by Pacific Islands people at various \textit{fono} (meetings for discussion) conducted around the country in early 1995, the Department also outlined strategies to make the Department’s service delivery more ‘customer friendly’ to Pacific Islands people. Language was commonly identified as a barrier experienced by Pacific Islands people wanting to access welfare services. The Department undertook to provide their ‘customers/clients’ with fluent Pacific Islands language speakers wherever possible, and to develop communications strategies which used Pacific Islands languages and Pacific Islands media. Staff were to be allowed to wear traditional dress and to decorate their offices with Pacific art, while Income Support was ‘to consider the practicality of the income support customer being offered an element of choice about who will serve them’.\textsuperscript{16}

In its role as a purchaser of social services for Pacific people the Department declared that it was committed to purchase services that met the needs of Pacific Islands people. \textit{Lali}, the Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1989, and the various programmes under the ‘Strengthening Families’ approach all bound the Department to provide services in ways that met the cultural needs of Pacific Islands people. To this end the Children, Young Persons and their Families Service had by 1996 established a Cultural Social Services section, responsible for the ‘development of service standards for Cultural Social Services appropriate for Pacific Islands aiga’

\textsuperscript{14} Department of Social Welfare, \textit{Lali Nafa, Strategy for Pacific Islands Employment and Service Delivery}, Wellington, Undated, p. 3.
\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Lali Nafa}, pp.10-11.
(families). The service standards were to be used when the Service purchased Pacific social services provision from Pacific providers.\textsuperscript{17}

Developing a viable base of Pacific provider groups soon became a priority for the Department, which by 1998 was involved in assisting numerous Pacific provider groups to meet the standards required for them to providers of Pacific cultural social services.\textsuperscript{18} A number of Pacific providers were successful in tendering for provision of ‘Family Start’ and the ‘Social Workers in Schools’ programmes. In West Auckland, for example, Pacifika Health formed a joint venture with the Waipareira Trust to provide such programmes, and similar joint ventures were operating in Cannons Creek and Porirua East.\textsuperscript{19}

\textit{Health}

In 1993 the roles of health policy advice, funding, and service provision were separated and population-based funding was introduced. Regional Health Authorities became responsible for purchasing health care services in their region from public, private or community-based providers, while responsibility for policy advice remained primarily with the Ministry of Health.\textsuperscript{20} The Government hoped that the health reforms would mean that Regional Health Authorities would be able to purchase health services specifically tailored to meet the health needs of sub-populations, like Pacific Islands people.

This hope was gradually realised following the reforms, as the Regional Health Authorities began purchasing health services specifically targeted at the sub-populations within their regions. And, as they did so, they also promoted the idea that an understanding of the culture of patients or ‘clients’ was centrally important to the effective delivery of health services. For example, three years after its establishment

\textsuperscript{17} Although draft service standards were developed, due to funding shortages these standards had yet to be implemented by the end of the decade.

\textsuperscript{18} Margaret Bazley, Speech to Pacific Vision Conference, Aotea Centre, Auckland, 27 July, 1999.

\textsuperscript{19} Bazley, Speech to Pacific Vision Conference, July, 1999.

\textsuperscript{20} Policy advice was also provided by the Public Health Commission (before its dis-establishment in 1995), and, (afterwards) by the National Health Committee and provided to the Minister in charge of Crown Health Enterprises by the Crown Company Monitoring Unit (CCMAU).
in 1993 the Northern Regional Health Authority – which had the largest Pacific Islands population in the country – echoed the arguments made in relation to Maori health: health services should be delivered in culturally appropriate ways by members of the communities on the receiving end of the services, and those communities needed to be involved in the development of health programmes. The Northern Health Authority said it was working to foster Pacific Islands health care providers, and to educate mainstream providers of health services about the cultural and health requirements of Pacific peoples. Other Regional Health Authorities were similarly developing strategies and purchasing services designed to meet the needs of Pacific Island communities in their region.

Initiatives were not limited to the Regional Health Authorities. After lobbying by Pacific health workers in the Regional Health Authorities a managerial position responsible for Pacific People’s Health was established within the Ministry in 1995, charged with developing a strategic plan for improving Pacific people’s health nationally. Then, in 1996 a National Advisory Group was established to develop a national strategy for dealing with the issues concerning Pacific people’s health. The result was the 1997 document *Making a Pacific Difference: Strategic Initiatives for the Health of Pacific People in New Zealand*. This laid out the key health concerns facing Pacific peoples, strategies for improving delivery of health services, and a quality monitoring model for reviewing Pacific health services. It too identified cultural appropriateness of services as being ‘critical’ to the successful delivery of health care to Pacific people, and argued that this would require consideration of differences in language and communication methods, family structure and church factors.

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21 Northern Regional Health Authority, *Pacific People’s Health. Strategic Plan to 2010*, Northern RHA, Undated, p.5.
22 In 1996 Midland Health, for example, was purchasing the services of a Pacific Islands health coordinator in Tokorua and Pacific Island cervical screening educators, and funding a Pacific Islands drug and alcohol support group and Southern Regional Health was regularly consulting with Pacific Island communities.
23 Personal Interview with Debbie Sorrenson, Chief Advisor, Pacific Health, Ministry of Health, 21.8.98.
Education

The first concerted attempt to develop a strategic, nation-wide approach to improving the educational outcomes of Pacific peoples came from the Ministry of Education in 1996 when it released Ko e Ako ‘a e Kakai Pasifika, a ‘plan to promote Pacific Islands people’s success in New Zealand education’. The plan stressed the importance of responding to the specific needs of Pacific Islands students in ways that were culturally relevant to the students, and the need to involve Pacific Islands communities in the development, provision and evaluation of educational programmes. From this time on, the pre-school, primary and secondary education sectors focused more specifically on the way in which education was being delivered to Pacific Islands students.

In the pre-school education sector some of the three million dollars government had committed in 1997 to boost funding in the early childhood education sector went towards the cost of setting up more Pacific Islands Early Childhood Centres. Inspired by the kohanga reo (pre-school Maori language nests) movement, Pacific Island language nests run by Pacific Islands staff in Pacific Island languages, had been springing up around the country. Their presence had been credited with helping to boost the enrolment level of Pacific Island pre-schoolers in early education by 62 percent between 1991 and 1995. Hoping to foster further increases in enrolments the Ministry of Education had prioritised the development of more Pacific Islands Early Childhood Centres by 1996. It had a number of purchase agreement with providers to assist Pacific Islands Early Childhood Centres work towards getting licensed and gaining charter status, in order that they could begin to operate as chartered Centres. The Ministry also purchased home-based early childhood and parent support programmes from a Pacific provider, Anau Ako Pasifika. The Early Childhood Development Unit, responsible for the management of funds for the Pacific Islands Language Nests and the ‘Parents as First Teachers’ programme, had purchase agreements with Pacific providers to work with Pacific Islands parents.25

At the primary and secondary education level a number of programmes were being implemented by the mid-1990s, including a collaborative learning programme which was being piloted at Porirua College. (In this programme tertiary students acted as facilitators and role models within the classroom, and a Pacific Islands School-Parent-Community liaison was established to improve links between the schools, Pacific Islands parents and the Pacific Islands communities.) Targeted funding was also available for schools that drew from communities at lower socio-economic levels, and those Pacific Islands students with English as a Second language were eligible for English language assistance at school.

At the tertiary level the National Government continued throughout the 1990s to fund the ‘Polynesian Preference’ schemes, introduced in the 1970s. These Equal Educational Opportunity programmes reserved a number of places for Pacific Islands and Maori students in academic courses such as medical school and teachers’ training colleges. Students had to be appropriately qualified to enter the courses, but were not subject to the same highly competitive selection processes that were applied to other applicants. There were also a number of scholarships for Pacific Islands students to attend tertiary institutions, including those offered by the Ministries of Education, Pacific Island Affairs and Foreign Affairs and Trade, Statistics New Zealand, Treasury, Audit New Zealand, and the Northern Health Funding Authority.26

Additionally, the Ministry funded various community education programmes for Pacific Islands people throughout the decade. The Pacific Islands Education Resource Centre in Christchurch, for example, received funding throughout the 1990s to offer a variety of courses to Pacific Islands people,27 as did the Wellington Multicultural Educational Resource Centre and the Multicultural Centre for Learning and Support Services. The Government also purchased information and advisory services from the Education and Training Support Agency, which, in turn, contracted delivery of these outputs to third parties.

27 These included cross-cultural workshops, social and community work courses, business management courses, introduction to early childhood education, media studies, English as a Second Language, sports administration, positive parenting and study skills.
Employment

During the 1990s the Government took two main approaches to improving the employment status of Pacific peoples. On the one hand, the Tangata Pasifika unit ran a number of training programmes designed to assist unemployed Pacific peoples back into work. (Before 1992 these programmes were run by the Ministry of Maori Development, and then between 1992 and 1997 by the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs.) One such programme, 'Training for Pre-determined Employment', involved assisting long-term unemployed into jobs already identified and reserved for those who completed the training by the service provider. These jobs tended to be factory and other low-skilled occupations, and did little to assist Pacific Islands people move out of the semi-skilled sector of the labour market in which they had traditionally been concentrated.

After the restructuring of the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs into a policy Ministry, responsibility for targeted employment programmes for Pacific people was transferred to the New Zealand Employment Service, part of the Department of Labour. The New Zealand Employment Service continued to run the 'Training for Pre-determined Employment' programme, along with another programme targeted specifically at Pacific Islands unemployed men: 'Tame Tane O Le Pasifika'. This programme aimed to help men over the age of 35 develop employment skills. Both these programmes were contracted out by the New Zealand Employment Service to Pacific Island service providers by 1997.

By 1997 the Community Employment Group of the Department of Labour was also running a programme to assist the development of employment-generating projects within the community. Once projects were ready, providers could apply for contracts to provide employment within the community. Pacific Island initiatives were encouraged, and by 1998 14 per cent of the contracts awarded by the Community Funding Group went to Pacific Island community groups.28

28 An example of a Pacific Islands employment scheme that gained a contract to provide employment was the 'Tiare Taina' project, which aimed to 'help Cook Islands people develop skills and move towards further training and employment'. The project centred on the production of tivaevae (embroidered quilts), and allowed older Cook Islands women to pass on their quilting skills to younger people. As well as selling the quilts, Tiare Taina assisted with the education, health development and after-school care needs of those involved in the project. Community Employment Group, Pacific Islands People and Employment, Department of Labour, undated, but approx. 1997.
Government also funded the Training Opportunities Programme (TOPs) aimed at all New Zealanders disadvantaged in the labour market. In June 1996 11 percent of TOPs trainees were Pacific Islands people. TOPs courses included a Pacific Islands Training Opportunities Programme which focused on ‘upgrading the quality of existing Pacific Islands training providers’. The Government also purchased career guidance services and information and industry training services. But no specific initiatives were being run for Pacific Island youth, despite them having the highest national unemployment rate of 33 percent in 1996. There were also no specific programmes running for Pacific Islands women.

At the policy level there was even less focus on the needs of Pacific Islands people. After mainstreaming in 1997 the Employment Service had an Advisory Officer whose responsibility it was to administer and monitor the two training programmes detailed above, and to consult with the Pacific Islands community. The position originated out of a proposal made in the document Vaka Ao (Employment Focus), which recommended that there be a position in the Department of Labour dealing specifically with employment issues for Pacific Islanders. The position disappeared in September 1998, after which there was no Pacific Island position within the New Zealand Employment Service, despite several submissions by Pacific Islands people stressing the need for such a position.

The second main approach used by the Government to deal with Pacific Island employment issues consisted of the Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) programmes which the National and Coalition Governments were bound to provide for Pacific Islands people within the Public Service by the State Sector Act of 1988.

Restructuring of the Public Service during the 1980s had reduced its size by two thirds. Nonetheless, the Public Service remained a major employer, employing 30,637 people in 1998. Under the State Sector Act 1988, Pacific Islands people were identified as a ‘target’ group within the state sector (along with women, Maori and

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30 Interviews with New Zealand Employment Service officials, 23.8.98.
other ethnic minority groups, and the disabled), to whom EEO programmes were to be extended. Chief Executives of government departments were required under the Act to provide EEO programmes within their agencies, and to recognise ‘the aims and aspirations, and the cultural differences of ethnic or minority groups’ (section 56).

To this end the State Service Commission released Pacific Islands Participation. Strategies for Government Departments in 1993. There it stressed the ‘need to increase Pacific Islands participation throughout all levels of the Public Service.’32 Chief Executives were encouraged to implement a range of strategies designed to enhance the numbers and progress of Pacific Islands people within the Public Service including: the creation of positions or units within the organisation for special responsibility for Pacific Islands issues; the establishment of national Pacific Islands community advisory groups able to advise on issues of relevance to Pacific Islands staff or clients; and the education of all staff in aspects of Pacific Islands culture.33 The need for such strategies was emphasised in 1994 when the State Services Commission released the results of an EEO survey they had conducted showing that Pacific Islands staff were the most disadvantaged of all staff in the EEO categories.34

Pacific Islands Participation was followed up in June 1995 with the first ever Public Service-wide meeting of Pacific public servants. The Conference Proceedings, Growing a Difference, examined numerous strategies Pacific Islands public servants could employ to improve their participation and performance within the Public Service. Some other Departments and Ministries introduced their own programmes to assist in the employment, retention and promotion of Pacific Islands staff.

It was difficult to tell whether either the EEO legislation, or Pacific Islands Participation and the 1995 Conference made much difference to the employment of Pacific Islands people in the Public Service. Figures released in 1998 showed that over a six year period from June 1992 to June 1998 there had been very little change in the numbers of EEO groups in the Public Service. Those increases that did occur

33 Idem.
were minimal: the percentage of Maori employed increased (from 11 percent to 13.1 percent), while employment of Pacific Islands people increased by less than one percent (up to 5 percent from 4.1 percent). Pacific Islands people (particularly Pacific women)35 had lower salaries than any of the other EEO groups.

**Housing**

Housing was perhaps the welfare sector in which Pacific people’s needs were given the least attention, probably because since the housing reforms in 1991, the Government no longer considered itself a provider of subsidised housing to low income people. What it did provide was an Accommodation Supplement to assist with the cost of publicly- or privately-owned housing. There were, therefore, no services to be contracted out, only financial assistance to be given.

But Pacific people’s housing needs were not unfamiliar to the Government when National enacted its housing reforms. Pacific Islands people’s housing status had in fact been a concern of government since the 1950s, when a policy of ‘pepperpotting’ had attempted to scatter Maori and Pacific Islands state house tenants throughout Pakeha-dominated suburbs in order to facilitate assimilation. By the 1960s, however, it was clear that Pacific Islands families were tending to concentrate in particular suburbs, undermining both the assimilationist goal and the idea that state-led housing policy could eradicate entrenched areas of poor housing.36 Pepper-potting was gradually abandoned in the 1970s, as assimilationist thinking was replaced with a growing realisation and concern about the problems of racial disadvantage and discrimination.

In 1986 a study conducted by the Race Relations Office on racism and rental accommodation had found that Pacific Islands people experienced a considerable degree of discrimination when trying to rent accommodation.37 After this time Government came to consider the fact that some groups suffered racial discrimination

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in the rental accommodation market as a good reason to provide housing assistance to such groups. Other reports released in the 1980s indicated that Pacific Islands people also made more use of emergency housing services in Auckland than any other group. And in 1988 the National Housing Commission published a report into housing conditions in New Zealand which noted that Pacific Island people made up 32 percent of those with serious housing needs. It also noted that Pacific Islands people encountered racist attitudes and practices amongst private sector housing and lending institutes, a factor that they considered would have contributed in part to the higher than average level of reliance upon state-provided rental properties, and lower rates of home ownership amongst Pacific Islands people. The National Housing Commission further commented that:

...for cultural reasons...the Pacific Island people have problems achieving satisfactory housing. The desire of extended families to live together is commonly thwarted by the high cost of buying or renting large houses, while the design of existing houses often does not meet cultural needs... the large and extended family sizes of Pacific Island Polynesians requires houses with more bedrooms, larger living rooms and service areas designed to cope with greater numbers of people.

The problems of those with serious housing needs prompted the Labour Government to direct the Housing Corporation to concentrate more resources on this group of people, after which the Housing Corporation attempted to be more culturally sensitive when dealing with the housing needs of Pacific Islands people, running interpreting courses for employees dealing with Pacific people, and translating information booklets into a variety of languages.

Yet despite the awareness of Pacific Islands housing issues that had been around for forty-odd years, the types of cultural and social issues noted by the National Housing Commission were more or less ignored by the National and Coalition Governments, and little consideration was given to the effects that introducing the market rents policy would have on the income and related status of Pacific people. The only real effort to meet Pacific people's housing needs related to the public communication of

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38 Ferguson, p. 264.
41 Idem.
housing policy. The Ministry of Housing specifically targeted Pacific Islands populations as part of its public education campaigns, recognising that Pacific Islands people were a major client base. Talk-back programmes were held on Samoan Capital Radio, and advertisements were placed in publications such as the National Ethnic Communities Directory and Now in New Zealand. Tenancy service pamphlets were available in Cook Islands Maori, Samoan, Tongan to communicate with the Tenancy Service’s diverse client base. The Ministry of Housing also consulted with Pacific Islands community groups on an ad-hoc basis, and received the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs newsletters.42

III.

Government policies relating specifically to the social and economic needs of non-Pacific ethnic minority peoples

The most striking feature of the Government’s response to the specific welfare needs of non-Pacific, non-Maori ethnic minorities – where there was one – was its ad-hoc and inconsistent application. The statistics available from the 1991 and 1996 censuses clearly suggested that the areas of greatest welfare need for ethnic groups in New Zealand were refugee resettlement and ongoing assistance, and settlement assistance for new migrants, and anti-discrimination measures for non-European ethnic groups. But, as the following brief summary of the main responses demonstrates, these particular areas of need were largely ignored by the National and Coalition Governments of the 1990s. Again, it must be said that what follows is by no means a comprehensive survey of services available to ethnic minority people. There were a range of regional and district initiatives, often delivered by city councils. No attempt is made here to detail each of these regional initiatives. Instead, the focus is on the broad thrust of government policy and service delivery at the central government level as they related to ethnic peoples’ welfare needs. Services provided to refugees are presented separately to those of non-refugees.

42 Interview with Ministry of Housing official, 28.8.98.
Welfare

The main initiatives undertaken by the Department of Social Welfare in relation to non-Maori, non-Pacific minorities related to its role as an employer. In 1996 the Department held workshops in Wellington and Auckland to consult with ethnic minority staff as to how the Department could best meet its obligations under the State Sector Act to be a "good employer". The result was Gatherings, a strategy for staff and clients from ethnic groups, released in 1997.

At the consultative meetings staff identified a number of issues and concerns as being specific to ethnic staff, including the need for 'greater cultural sensitivity on the part of management, colleagues and clients'. Discrimination, institutional racism, exploitation, recruitment and selection procedures and the need to be able to maintain religious and cultural observances were also raised as concerns by staff members. In response, the Department outlined a range of policy statements for incorporation into the guidelines and codes governing the operation of Departmental business, each of which was designed 'to ensure that our advice to Government, and our service delivery planning, addresses the reality of an increasingly multicultural New Zealand by taking proper account of access and equity issues'.

Among the strategies outlined in Gatherings was the by now well-established principle that an awareness of cultural differences, and the values, practices and histories underlying those cultural differences be acknowledged and respected both in the employment of ethnic minority staff, and in the delivery of services to ethnic minority clients.

Health

In 1993 some Regional Health Authorities were purchasing the provision of health services directly targeted at non-Maori, non-Pacific ethnic minorities. Mid Central Health, for example was contracting with providers from ethnic minorities to deliver

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45 For a discussion of how an understanding of culture is important for social workers working with ethnic minority families see Yvetter Ahmad, Seema Woolaston and Shanti Patel, 'Child safety in Indian families', in Social Work Now. The Practice Journal of Child, Youth and Family, Department of Child, Youth and Family Services, May 2000, No. 15, pp.13-20.
cervical screening and educational services, particularly for Asian women, and Northland Health was examining the special needs of Vietnamese people within their region. In 1996 Midland Regional Health Authority reported that it had conducted a review of ethnic minority groups’ needs in the Midland region and developed a service requirement definition for family reunification migrants, political refugees and illegal migrants. However, regional initiatives notwithstanding, there was no policy focus on those within the ‘ethnic’ group at the Ministry level, and consequently no strategic approach outlined by central government for catering to non-Maori, non-Pacific ethnic minority populations’ needs. Moreover, no comprehensive analyses on the health status of this group on which policy decisions could be based were available.

**Education**

English language tuition for speakers of other languages was an area of particular educational need in this category. At the compulsory school level the Ministry of Education provided resources to assist with the teaching of English in schools, supplemented by funds gained through the Settlement Services Fee paid by new migrants.

For adults with English language needs there was no entitlement to state-funded English tuition, even during the period between 1995-1998 when those without adequate English language skills were required to pay a $20,000 ‘language bond’. Consequently adult English as a second language learners had to rely on either the private sector or the voluntary sector when attempting to access English language tuition. Judy Atlinkya, National Co-ordinator of the ESOL Home Tutor Scheme found in 1995 that:

> Class fees vary greatly across the country and from provider to provider. High demand and lengthy waiting lists have encouraged providers to raise course costs and make money. [Moreover] the quality of ESOL provision varies greatly and the adult learner has no way of knowing what is being purchased. Higher fees do not necessarily mean better quality. There is no benchmark in New Zealand as to the standard of training required for teaching ESOL to adults, or to standards of programmes being offered. The adult ESOL learner is lost in an

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46 Correspondence between Kate McMillan and the various Regional Health Authorities, 1996.
education environment of confusion, cost and questionable quality. This has led to a great deal of exploitation of and dissatisfaction from NZ's non-English speaking background community.47

**Employment**

During the 1990s there were no national programmes targeted specifically at the employment needs of those in the ‘ethnic’ categories. They were, however, able to participate in mainstream employment assistance services. The inability of migrants to gain work in occupations for which they are qualified was, however, recognised as a concern by government, and was the subject of research commissioned by the Immigration Service.48

Equal Employment Opportunities programmes within the Public Service identified ethnic groups as a target group.

**Housing**

No centrally-co-ordinated initiatives relating to the housing needs of ethnic minority people were operating throughout the decade, although there may have been some regional initiatives around the country, and agencies with responsibility for housing assistance were involved with the Strengthening Families initiatives.

**Resettlement Assistance for Refugees**

Refugees entered New Zealand in one of three ways. Most came as one of the 750 UN approved refugee quota that New Zealand accepts annually. The others arrived either

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as asylum seekers\(^49\) or via the ‘family reunification’ category of the Immigration Act 1991. Only those refugees who enter New Zealand via the refugee quota were eligible for targeted refugee resettlement assistance described below.

Upon arrival in New Zealand UN High Commissioner for Refugees mandated (quota) refugees in the 1990s spent six weeks at the Mangere Reception Centre, during which time they underwent health checks, an orientation course to familiarise themselves with New Zealand’s infrastructure and culture, and some English language tuition if they needed it. Educational programmes were provided by the School of Refugee Education (part of the Auckland Institute of Technology), at the pre-school, primary, secondary and adult-learner levels.\(^50\) Full medical screening was made available, funded out of Vote: Health, with limited treatment and referral facilities available.\(^51\) During their stay at the centre the refugees received a weekly allowance from the New Zealand Immigration Service (funded through Work and Income New Zealand).

The New Zealand Immigration Service, which operated the Mangere Centre, worked with the non-profit sector to support refugees once they left the centre and settled into the community. The Service purchased services from the non-government sector, in particular the Refugee and Migrant Service, to ‘locate and maintain sponsors.’\(^52\) The sponsors, who had in the past been mainly church groups but were decreasingly so over the 1990s, played a central role in the resettling of refugees. They assisted the refugees to find housing, to furnish their houses, and become familiarised with the New Zealand lifestyle. No special provision at the central or local government level for housing refugees meant they competed in the housing market with all other New Zealanders. With the introduction of market rentals in state houses there was evidence that refugees found it very difficult to find appropriate and affordable housing.\(^53\)

\(^49\) As a signatory to the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees New Zealand was required to allow asylum seekers to apply for asylum through the refugee determination process.
\(^50\) Auckland Institute of Technology, School of Refugee Education. An Overview, Mangere, March 1996.
\(^52\) Ibid, p.5.
Upon settlement in the community, quota refugees were entitled to a non-recoverable ‘re-establishment grant’, which was set at $1,200 in 1999. This grant (available to a variety of people re-establishing themselves in the community including women escaping violent relationships, ex-prison inmates and released mental institution patients as well as refugees) was intended to cover all the costs of setting up a new home including the purchase of all furniture and appliances, clothing, utility connection costs, the costs of attending and getting to English classes, and the translation of work-related documents. As a report from Non-Governmental Organisation sector argued in 2000, this was clearly an inadequate sum. Quota refugees were also entitled to an emergency Unemployment Benefit on leaving the Mangere Centre, and, along with all other low-income permanent residents, to receive the Accommodation Supplement, and a special needs grant. Asylum seekers were not eligible for such benefits until such time their case had been heard by the Refugee Appeals Authority and they had been granted refugee status.

Since 1994 in Auckland, and 1997 in Wellington, Regional Health Authorities in each region had contracts with non-governmental organisations to provide mental health services for refugees, many of whom were suffering trauma as a result of experiences in their home country. A number of specific community education programmes were also purchased through Vote: Health. The Children, Young Persons and their Families Agency purchased a variety of refugee services including a national contract with the Refugee and Migrant Service to provide ‘support, advice and advocacy for refugees’, and contracts with community-based organisations to provide a variety of supportive services.

Skills New Zealand purchased English Language, vocational and life skills training programmes for refugees in recognition of their disadvantage in the workplace. The Department of Internal Affairs provided indirect support to refugees through assistance to the refugee councils, information services via the Ethnic Affairs Service’s newsletter. In addition Internal Affairs administered the Lottery Grants Board money, some of which was been used to fund refugee-related programmes.

54 Ibid, p.20.
55 Idem.
56 Marie Sullivan, 1999.
Refugees received a short (six week) period of English tuition during their stay at the Mangere reception centre, but like many other adult non-English speakers, they were often reliant upon the voluntary assistance of a home tutor once they left the reception centre (although community liaison service to assist refugees gain access to education was also funded out of Vote: Education.) Schools with refugee ESOL children received additional funding of $500 per refugee child in that child’s first year of eligibility, on top of the supplementary funding already allocated by the Ministry of Education to schools with non English speaking background children.\textsuperscript{57}

The inadequacy of government provision for refugees was a constant theme of reports and studies conducted throughout the 1990s. Many reports compared New Zealand’s post-arrival treatment of refugees unfavourably with that of Australia, where a coordinated, integrated approach to refugee resettlement was provided.\textsuperscript{58} Government’s reliance upon the voluntary sector, in particular the Refugee and Migrant Service and the sponsors and volunteers they trained, was seen as excessive, given the inadequate amount of funding provided. Refugees generally arrived in New Zealand with nothing, and remained over-represented among the lowest income groups in New Zealand.

This survey of the Government’s responses to Pacific Island and other ethnic minority disadvantage highlights two particular points about governmental policy during this time. First, it indicates how few services were available for new migrants and refugees in New Zealand. The fact that there was no agency with overall responsibility for co-ordinating services for new settlers, and that the Ethnic Affairs Service had, by the later 1990s, ceased to operate as a discrete entity, no doubt contributed to the lack of an overall strategy designed to promote the welfare interests

\textsuperscript{57} Idem.
\textsuperscript{58} See, for example the Annual Reports of the Refugee and Migrant Service throughout the period, in particular June 1998, where a comparison of Australia and New Zealand’s refugee provisions is given. See also: Refugee and Migrant Service, Refugees: The New Zealand Experience. Reflections and Recommendations from the RMS, Auckland, December 1993; and The Non-Governmental Organisation Sector, Refugee Resettlement Policy in New Zealand. An Integrated Approach, A Report for the 1999 Incoming Coalition Government from the NGO sector, January 2000, p.2.
of non-Pacific, non-Maori ethnic minorities. The greater priority given to Pacific social services stemmed in part from their greater degree of disadvantage, their longer political history in New Zealand, and the renewed strength of the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs after the release of the Pacific population projections in 1997.

Secondly, it demonstrates how central the idea of ‘culture’ had become in the delivery of social services in the 1990s, and how purchase-of-service-contracting had become the primary mechanism through which culturally-based social services to Pacific Islands people were delivered during that period. What effect did this emphasis on culture as being central to understanding and ameliorating ethnic disadvantage have on the citizenship status of Pacific Islands people? And was the purchase-of-service contracting model really likely to deliver the benefits it promised for disadvantaged ethnic minorities? It is to these two questions that the next section turns. Because Pacific social service delivery was so much more advanced than that of other minorities, the focus in the section is mainly on Pacific people.

IV.

The purchase-of-service contracting model and ‘cultural’ social services

Part of the justification for the extensive contracting out of social service provision over the 1990s was precisely that it facilitated the delivery of cultural social services for ethnic minority groups. Separation of the roles of service funding and service provision was employed to break the Government’s monopoly over service provision and present opportunities for a diverse range of providers – including ethnic providers – to gain contracts. Policy analysts within the various social policy agencies thus expected that Pacific Islands people – along with Maori – would be some of the major beneficiaries of the contracting system. In this section the benefits and drawbacks of the purchase-of-service contracting model in general are examined, before the opportunities and risks the model presented specifically to Pacific Islands people (and other ethnic minorities) are identified. The discussion then moves to a discussion of the implications for minority people of the acceptance by government agencies of the
idea that government policies designed to redress ethnic disadvantage should focus on the cultural appropriateness of service delivery.

i. *Purchase-of-service contracting: advantages and disadvantages for Government, providers and 'clients'*

Certainly for the Government the advantages of the purchase-of-service contracting system promised to be extensive. First, it would not only facilitate targeting, both in the sense of directing assistance to those most in need, and in the sense of directing assistance and services to specific ethnic sub-populations. It also seemed likely to be cheaper than full state provision. The strict accountability requirements placed on provider organisations by the contract relationship would increase administrative efficiency within those organisations and thus force them to deliver services more cheaply. The tight specification of outputs to be achieved under contract would give greater accountability and transparency for the spending of public funds.⁵⁹ Those providers not delivering on specified outputs could have their contracts terminated quickly. And, where voluntary labour was involved in the delivery of services, (as was possible if a voluntary organisation was contracted to provide services) there were wage savings to be made.

But alongside these potential benefits for government, which appeared considerable, there were also a number of disadvantages identified by those organisations contracted to provide services under the model. Foremost amongst these was the issue of inadequate funding, identified by most provider groups as the main problem associated with the model. The Government consistently under-funded or only partially funded the costs borne by voluntary organisations providing social services under contract. Funding was not usually supplied, for example, to support either the core infrastructure of voluntary organisations,⁶⁰ or the retraining, upskilling, and

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⁶⁰ Diana Suggate, An Overview of the Voluntary Sector, Wellington, Department of Internal Affairs, July 1995.
retention of staff.61 (Indeed, the requirement that staff become more professional in order to deliver government-determined outputs and satisfactorily meet government accountability requirements occurred at a time when user-pays in education had substantially increased the cost of retraining.) The time and resources involved in bidding for a contract and negotiating its terms were often not recovered, even if the organisation was ultimately successful in its bid.62

The issue of inadequate funding was central to the experience of contracting practice in the 1990s. Ernst & Young found in 1996 that after four years of experience of purchase-of-service contracting with the Community Funding Agency, many voluntary organisations had been put under financial strain by the process of tendering for contracts and providing services. The consultants reported that the growth in service provision by the non-profit sector had ‘...been extracted at a price for [that] sector.... 81.8 per cent of providers report an increase in the time spent applying for funding; 52.9 per cent of providers report that their financial reserves have decreased; and 31.9 per cent of providers report a decreased capacity to replace assets’.63

By the late 1990s there was sufficient evidence available in New Zealand and overseas to support the thesis that there was a fundamental conflict between the cost-cutting objectives of a government implementing a purchase-of-service contracting model, and its goal of improving social outcomes. As a cost-cutting measure purchase-of-service-contracting often simply represented a transfer of fiscal risk from government to the provider organisations. Economic and public sector restructuring, and persistent low economic growth in the 1990s, had already created an increased demand for the services provided by community agencies. This had put a strain on these agencies as they struggled to meet demand at the very time that resources within the sector were decreasing. Moreover, the volunteers upon whom many community

62 Suggate gives the example of a group who spent $20,000 on five attempts to negotiate a contract with a government agency. Suggate, 1995, p. 77.
63 Ernst & Young, Study on the Viability of the Not-For-Profit Sector in New Zealand, Wellington, New Zealand Community Funding Agency, 1996.
organisations relied — even those with paid staff — were often themselves struggling to cope with a reduction in their financial circumstances.

There were other problems with the contracting model as it operated in the mid-to-late 1990s, which applied to ethnic and non-ethnic providers alike. The voluntary sector claimed that they had lost a degree of autonomy when public funding changed from discretionary grants to purchase-of-service contracts over the decade. (Many community groups had previously received annual grants from government to cover some of their operational costs in recognition of the contribution they made to the community.) The very tightly defined output requirements of funding received under a purchase-of-service contract often did not relate directly to the overall goal of the voluntary organisation, and the voluntary organisations sometimes had limited opportunities for participation in the determination of those outputs. The purchase-of-service contracting model of funding often left voluntary groups with little time or energy, and few resources, to engage in political, developmental or preventative activities, even when these were the activities for which their organisation was primarily established. (In her 1995 study of New Zealand’s voluntary sector, Diana Suggate — a policy analyst within the Community Development Division of the Department of Internal Affairs — provided the example of Pacific Islands community groups whose priority was to provide food to low income families, but government would not contract them, or any other group, to do this.) Contracting, voluntary groups argued, thus seemed to be to transforming the voluntary sector into ‘little fingers’ of government, meeting and delivering government-specified needs and services.

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For many critics of the contracting model, the deliberate attempt to create a market of service providers by requiring voluntary groups to compete with each other for service contracts was simply inappropriate in the voluntary sector, and entirely contrary to the co-operative ethos usually embraced by community groups. It pitted large, well-established organisations against smaller, less well-developed ones, and entailed the imposition of a business model of operation onto organisations previously characterised by high levels of altruism and co-operation. Some authors identified volunteer disillusionment with the voluntary sector as a potential result of this ‘professionalisation’. 68

Some commentators argued that this combination of risk factors for community service-providers threatened the very viability of the voluntary sector. By placing community groups under excessive strain, government ran the risk, as Nowland-Foreman put it, of ‘killing the goose that lays the golden egg’.69

While contracting was considered by Government as likely to improve accountability, questions of responsibility for the clients served by non-state providers under contract to government were more murky. Given the attenuated relationship between central government and clients who received social services via contract, just where to lay the blame if social services were delivered badly, insufficiently, or unevenly was not so clear.

Finally, an excessive emphasis on measuring and delivering ‘outputs’ deflected focus away from the ‘outcomes’ that should have been the ultimate aim of social service delivery. The Waitangi Tribunal’s report, for example, on Te Whanau o Waipareira (an urban Maori organisation which gained a number of contracts to provide Maori and Pacific Island social services in the 1990s) quoted the Northern Regional Manager of the Community Funding Agency as saying ‘the agency has not been required to report on outcomes, it is only required to report on outputs, and our outputs at the moment are how many programmes we bought, how many counselling

hours...and they are measured in our contract monitoring process...It doesn’t take us to the next step which says, how did that impact on the outcome for family life or in terms of the government’s outcomes... Mechanisms for measuring outcomes needed to be included in the contracting process, and voluntary agencies needed to be adequately informed about the outcomes government hopes will result from the outputs they contract for.

ii. Purchase-of service contracting and ethnic minorities

Amongst Pacific Island policy analysts in Wellington during the mid-to late 1990s there was some solid support for the practice of contracting out social service provision. It afforded Pacific Islands communities the opportunity to deliver and receive culturally appropriate social services. Interviews conducted between 1996 and 1998 with Pacific Islands policy analysts in the Ministries of Health, Pacific Island Affairs and Education, the Community Funding Agency within the Department of Social Welfare, the New Zealand Employment Service and the Community Employment Group in the Department of Labour found that there was considerable enthusiasm for the opportunities the contracting model offered each Island group to provide services to its own community: Samoans, Tongans, Niueans, Cook Islanders, and other groups, could deliver services using their languages and the cultural knowledge and experience that existed within their communities to deliver services to their own communities. For the clients or users of these services the contracting model promised a greater choice of services and providers, including those which were more sensitive to their linguistic, spiritual, cultural, or ethnic identities than the same services delivered by state agencies.

The contracting model was also seen by Pacific Islands policy analysts as creating opportunities for existing community skills and expertise, often unrecognised by state agencies in their delivery of services, to be used in the deliver of services. The strict

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70 Quoted in Von Tunzelman, p. 21.

71 Discussions between Kate McMillan and Pacific Islands policy advisors in 1998.
accountability requirements usually written into contracts also had the potential to increase levels of professionalism and efficiency within Pacific Island organisations and staff.\textsuperscript{72}

But all of the disadvantages for provider groups inherent in the model impacted at least as much, if not more on Pacific providers as on mainstream provider groups. The issue of inadequate funding, for example, affected the fledgling Pacific Island provider groups established during this time particularly badly, as Pacific Islands communities were already struggling with greater levels of social disadvantage and high levels of social need. According to Adrienne Von Tunzelman, who did a survey of funding for voluntary groups contracted to provide social services in 1998, Pacific Islands organisations often faced difficulties in the contract bidding process as their voluntary groups were often new and at a developmental stage only, placing them at a disadvantage in relation to larger, more established groups.\textsuperscript{73} They also experienced difficulties in obtaining information about the contracting process in Pacific Islands languages. Nor, Von Tunzelman argued, did the 'best practice' model which was used in developing contracting arrangements fit well with Pacific Islands people's cultural practice and experience.\textsuperscript{74} When those provider organisations were groups already carrying high levels of disadvantage, as Pacific Islands communities were, the transfer of risk from government to community providers put these communities under even greater strain.

Another difficulty with the purchase-of-service contract model as it applied to Pacific people — and one not acknowledged sufficiently by the Government — was the role that the church played in Pacific Islands communities in New Zealand. Much of the work referred to as 'voluntary work' within Pacific Island communities centred around the church, which might, for example, simultaneously run weaving groups for women, be providing sporting facilities and activities as well as health education and counselling services. But because church organisations did not themselves generally gain discretionary funding from either Lottery Grants Board or the Community

\textsuperscript{72} See Leigh, 1994, and Suggate, 1995; Diana Dallas, The Use of Discretionary Funding by Government to Fund Innovation and Initiative from the Community. A Literature Review, Policy Research Unit, Department of Internal Affairs, August, 1997; Von Tunzelman, 1998.

\textsuperscript{73} Suggate, p. 53.

\textsuperscript{74} Von Tunzelman.
Organisations Grants Scheme for general running costs, church members often devoted considerable energy to fund-raising for the church. Suggate found that Pacific Island volunteers, some of whom are already likely to be under stress from benefit cuts, faced 'burn-out from competing demands of church, home and community activity'.

Inter-generational change presented a further challenge, as a younger generation of New Zealand-born Pacific peoples moved into adulthood during the 1990s. As Jemima Tiatia argued, young New Zealand-born Pacific Islands people did not maintain their parents' level of involvement in the church, and were frequently caught between the cultural mores of their parents, and those of mainstream New Zealand society. Government needed to recognise that in purchasing services for Pacific populations they would have to recognise not only the ethnic diversity within the Pacific Islands population, but also generational diversity.

For the Pacific clients of social services delivered by Pacific providers the advantages of the contracting model needed to be placed alongside risks of reduced privacy protections, a potentially less professional service delivery, the reduced opportunity to act as a 'citizen' as opposed to a 'client', and the danger of that they would be treated within a Pacific Islands cultural framework even when that was not the framework within which they would choose to act.

So, although the contracting model did offer enhanced opportunities for culturally appropriate social service delivery, these opportunities needed to be measured against the potential costs of the model.

By the end of the decade there was a growing awareness within government of the need for the purchase-of-service-contracting process to be improved. Contracting arrangements between the state and the ethnic voluntary sector needed to acknowledge the economic vulnerability of the voluntary sector and the dangers of

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75 Suggate, p. 55.
loading community groups with expensive bidding, negotiation and compliance costs under purchase-of-service-contracting. This was especially true where voluntary groups were located in already disadvantaged and economically stressed communities. Leigh recommended that contracts build contract management overheads into the amount of contract funding allocated under purchase-of-service-contracting, and that preference be given to longer-term (three year) contracts in cases of demonstrated long-standing need, in order to increase the security of the provider organisation.  

When the various welfare agencies began to purchase service provision from Pacific Island providers in the 1990s, both they and the Pacific Island communities felt there were genuine advantages for Pacific people in their doing so. And in this they were right. Pacific Islands people, like other citizens, deserved to receive social services that were respectful of, and sensitive to, their cultures and languages. After all, Pakeha had long taken for granted that welfare services such as health and education would be provided in English and by people who – at least broadly – understood their cultural norms. So the opportunity contracting presented for social services to be provided by those who were fluent in Pacific Island languages and cultures was a positive one, and one that promised to increase Pacific Islands people’s access to equal social rights. But, and here was the rub, the provision of social services in Pacific Island languages, by culturally-fluent Pacific Island providers, was never going to compensate for the social and economic hardships caused by the wider social and economic policies pursued by National. Or, to put it another way, the Government was attempting to apply culturally-based solutions to what were essentially class-based problems of poverty, overcrowding and unemployment, and the low educational achievement and poor health statistics commonly associated with them. This emphasis on ‘culture’ rather than old-fashioned class was thus a not entirely positive development for Pacific communities during a period in which their economic position was declining in comparison to that of other New Zealanders.


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Taking 'culture' seriously

The thesis that 'culture' was both a significant factor in disadvantage, and central to its amelioration, held both advantages and risks for the Pacific communities on the receiving end of 'cultural' social services. The advantages have already been identified. The risks, however, were a product of the neo-liberal context within which 'cultural' social services were developed. Deployment of purchase-of-service contracting, for example, in New Zealand formed part of a comprehensive, ongoing attempt by neo-liberal governments to redefine the relationship between the state and its citizens. In the late 1990s this project came to be characterised by an attempt to redistribute responsibility for social and economic outcomes amongst central and local government, the 'community', families, and individuals. The economic rationalism inherent in this endeavour was complicated by contemporary assertions that the voluntary sector held the key to a reinvigorated civil society. In this view, voluntary organisations were seen as providing 'sites and processes for effective governance and welfare provision which [would] foster active citizenship, extend democracy and strengthen civil society'.

The major risk associated with the use of purchase-of-service contracting, and the emphasis on cultural social service delivery specifically targeted at cultural and ethnic minorities, was that as responsibility for delivering outputs was increasingly laid on ethnic communities, responsibility for outcomes would also be laid on them. As already seen, Pacific Islands populations entered the 1990s with very poor social and economic outcomes, and many of those outcomes declined as the decade progressed.

The rhetoric of personal and community 'responsibility' served well the National Government's attempt to lessen the fiscal 'risks' to which it was exposed. In the social policy arena 'risk' was a familiar concept: sociologists and psychologists had long

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78 Leigh, p.129.
80 Kenny, p. 41.
employed the term ‘at risk’ to describe individuals, families or communities considered to be in danger of poor outcomes for various reasons, and risk continued to be used in this sense in the social policy arena.\footnote{See, for example the Ministry of Social Policy’s \textit{Post Election Briefing}, 1999.} It also began to be used, however, to refer to the risk that disadvantaged communities presented not just to themselves, but to government and to the rest of society. In particular, Pacific Islands communities, with their disproportionately high levels of unemployment, poor health, housing, education and criminal offending, were seen as presenting fiscal risks to government because of their high levels of reliance on income support, health risks to the wider population because of their higher than average rates of infectious diseases (for example tuberculosis), and more general risks to social cohesion within the national population.\footnote{Alistair Woodward, Ichiro Kawachi, \textit{Why should we reduce health inequalities?} The National Health Committee, Background Paper 2, 1998; also Ministry of Social Policy’s \textit{Post Election Brief}, 1999.} In arguing that individuals and ‘communities’ should take more responsibility for their social and economic outcomes, the National Government was explicitly engaged in the project of shedding risks by encouraging individuals and communities to shoulder more responsibility for self-governance than they had under a social-liberal model of citizenship.

But implicit in government’s insistence that individuals take more responsibility for their own social and economic outcomes was the assumption that those who had poor outcomes had somehow failed to take such responsibility. The suggestion that socio-economic disadvantage was at least as much a personal failing as it was a product of structural factors beyond individuals’ control was problematic given that disadvantage was concentrated in specific minority ethnic groups. A logical conclusion of the ‘dependency’ argument was that the culture of groups which experience disproportionately high rates of social and economic disadvantage and welfare dependency must be to blame for creating individuals who are in some way less motivated, more lazy, or in some other way less ‘responsible’, than those who belonged to other, less-disadvantaged cultural groups.\footnote{Such an argument was presented by the black American scholar, Thomas Sowell, in his 1994 book, \textit{Race and Culture A World View}, in which he argued the success of particular racial and cultural groups across countries, and the lack of success of other groups, was largely explicable by the ‘cultural capital’ they held as a group. Sowell, Thomas, \textit{Race and Culture A World View}, USA, Basic Books, 1994. Sowell was brought to New Zealand by the New Zealand Business Round Table in 1996.} Indeed, this was the position
of Douglas Myers, a past chairman of the extreme neo-liberal New Zealand Business Roundtable:

One obstacle to the pursuit of equality is the assumption that poverty is invariably the result of social factors such as oppression of one sort or another. In the modern rhetoric of guilt and victimhood, old-fashioned class divisions have largely given way to new divisions based on culture. Yet some minority groups have done well educationally and economically, in spite of oppression: Indians in East Africa, Jews and Chinese in many parts of the world. All too often material poverty is the result of personal decisions and a poverty of culture.\(^4\)

Such an argument, (which was, of course, never articulated by the National Government) did not sit comfortably with a liberal commitment to the principles of cultural equality and non-discriminination.

So how did the National government reconcile its analysis of the welfare ‘dependency’ problem with its putative support for non-discrimination, given the clear ethnicisation of the ‘dependency’ problem? For both Maori and Government the argument that Maori had suffered a collective injustice and harm during the process of British colonisation went some way to reconciling these positions. Government, through the Waitangi Tribunal process, accepted some responsibility for the current Maori position through its admission of past wrong-doing. Maori therefore were not fully to ‘blame’ for their parlous social and economic status. Crucially, the process of Treaty settlements also progressively transferred resources back to Maori, thereby providing some resources with which Maori could attempt to ‘take greater responsibility’ for their own outcomes. Building up Maori assets through the Waitangi Tribunal’s form of ‘reparative justice’, formed one part of the strategy to improve Maori social and economic outcomes. Facilitating Maori control over social service provision through the purchase-of-service contracting model was a second part of the strategy.

For Pacific Islands people, however, the argument that their social and economic situation was a consequence of British colonisation did not easily apply to their circumstances. Nor did they have any claim to reparative justice. What they were left

with was the Government’s rhetoric about how those reliant on assistance from the state—which included a disproportionate number of Pacific Islands people—had a problem of ‘dependency’ which had its roots in a form of individual moral decline. Thus, without a strong class-based analysis with which to challenge this neo-conservative and moralistic understanding of the complex reasons for disadvantage, methods of social service delivery based on a ‘culturalist’ analysis threw more responsibility for poor social outcomes back on to Pacific cultures and Pacific individuals themselves.

**Conclusion**

Between 1990 and 1997 the New Zealand Government did more than any previous government to clearly quantify the health, income, education and employment status of non-Maori ethnic groups. Discovering that Pacific Islands people were concentrated amongst New Zealand’s poorest people, the Government developed a two-pronged approach to improving Pacific people’s social and economic outcomes (and continuing to operate existing EEO programmes). The first approach involved developing national strategic plans for improving outcomes in each portfolio, while the second involved purchasing social services for Pacific peoples from Pacific providers. Both approaches took seriously the idea that Pacific people had particular social welfare needs, and that meeting their needs would be best effected if social services were delivered by people who understood and appreciated Pacific cultures. Yet the fact remains that during the 1990s when the National Government was implementing these policies and strategies, Pacific Islands people remained severely disadvantaged in comparison to the rest of the New Zealand population, and on some indicators, grew more disadvantaged.

When the Ministry of Social Policy released its briefing papers to the incoming Labour/Alliance coalition government in December 1999, they expressed grave concern about the existence of ‘entrenched, multiple disadvantage’ in New Zealand:

...households experiencing persistent and multiple disadvantage...typically have some combination of low incomes, poor health and/or frequent changes in housing, intra-family problems, poor health and low school attainment...A number of them are long-term benefit-
dependent. These families are vulnerable to becoming entrenched in this position of multiple disadvantage, and there is a risk of intergenerational transmission.\textsuperscript{85}

Pacific families (along with Maori families), the Agency noted, were ‘highly over-represented’ amongst those households at risk of entrenched multiple disadvantage. Clearly the provision of culturally appropriate social services had either failed to work, had been applied poorly, or had been given insufficient time to fully address the disparities between Pacific Islanders and other New Zealanders. Or perhaps the purchase-of-‘cultural’-social-service contracting model had simply been applied in a hostile political and economic environment, within which the desired outcomes just could not be achieved. Certainly this was the perspective of some social commentators, who explicitly advocated the return to more generous levels of income and welfare assistance for low-income people. The National Advisory Group on Pacific people’s health, for example, had argued in 1997 that health issues could not be considered in isolation. Any improvements in health status would occur not just as a result of improvements in the health sector, they said, but also by those in the employment, income assistance, housing and education sectors.\textsuperscript{86}

Similarly, the National Health Committee argued in 1998 that the key to understanding poor health outcomes nationally lay in recognising the inter-relationship between income, employment, education, housing and health: low income, high unemployment, low educational status and poor housing were all detrimental to health status. In their assessment, many of the poor health outcomes experienced by those in the lowest income groups were directly attributable to unfair and avoidable inequalities within society, most of which were the direct result of social and economic policies.

Economic inequalities, which are the main driver of health inequalities, are the outcome of deliberate social decisions such as tax policy, regulation of business and labour, welfare benefits and health care funding. Greater equity in health is achievable through provision of better opportunities for good health, including investment in human capital, redistributive maintenance, family support, housing, and secure access to health care.\textsuperscript{87}

\textsuperscript{85} Ministry of Social Policy, Post-Election Briefing Papers, December 1999, p.26
\textsuperscript{86} Idem.
\textsuperscript{87} National Advisory Committee on Health and Disability, Why should we reduce health inequalities? Reasons for acting on the social cultural and economic factors that cause ill-health, National Health Committee, March, 1998, p. 1.
But the Ministry of Social Policy did not employ the language of citizenship so much as that of risk management in its *Briefing to the Incoming Government* in 1999. Writing of Pacific people’s disadvantage they argued it was a problem not just for the disadvantaged, but for the country as a whole:

...the most important issue facing the Government is the continuing exclusion of segments of society from full social and economic participation. Without attention, this could lead to the long-term disengagement of part of our society and threaten social cohesion. It is also a source of fiscal vulnerability and could jeopardise economic growth.  

‘Risk management’ in fact seemed to provide a defence of social rights more likely to gain political support than the concept of ‘social citizenship’, so closely associated with discredited Keynesian economics. It also came to the rescue of those looking for an effective way to critique the minimalist welfare state. By the end of the 1990s risk analysis had become the primary tool used by social-liberal welfare analysts to present the case for a return to a more universal welfare provision model. For Ian Culpitt risk management analysis could be used to ‘lever the common sense dominance of neo-liberalism’, while Alistair Woodward and Ichiro Kawachi used it to argue that health outcomes would be improved only by increases in the overall level of economic equality in society. Risk management also became the primary argument available to Pacific people arguing for increased state support during a period of neo-liberal governance.

But risk management, like earlier forms of poverty relief designed to ‘ward off an insurrectionary response of the downgraded to their position’, is not based on the egalitarian ideals of social citizenship, nor does it emphasise the autonomy and dignity that ideally characterise the status of citizenship. At best, it is an analysis that attempts to minimise the socially and economically disruptive aspects of inequality. A social policy based largely on risk analysis will not, in other words, promote the citizenship status of ethnic minorities in the same way that a social-citizenship model

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88 *Idem.*
would, even if some of the targeted services available to the worst-off members of society are provided by members of their own cultural or ethnic communities.
Conclusion

Up until about the 1960s European New Zealanders commonly believed that theirs was a land in which the values of egalitarianism and ‘racial’ equality held sway, and that ‘race’ relations were, generally, harmonious and mutually acceptable. There was a cosy assumption that Maori and European New Zealanders had forged a common political bond, particularly through the shared experience of fighting two World Wars – and were now distinct members of a political community known as ‘New Zealand’. While New Zealanders of British descent often retained very strong cultural and emotional allegiances with ‘mother’ England, there was also the sense that in New Zealand they had managed to rid themselves of the excesses of the British class system, and create in the South Pacific a country where all men could get ‘a fair go’, without the bane of ‘hereditary castes’.¹

Economic inequality and the social classes that spring from it were never extinguished in New Zealand, but their eradication remained, as Sinclair puts it ‘one of the chief stimuli of political change’.² During the post-war years of relative prosperity, full employment and social stability, it must have seemed as though New Zealand had got close to achieving the classless community of equal citizens to which many New Zealanders had aspired. The largely universal and generous social rights provided by the welfare state gained legitimacy from social-liberalism’s equalitarianism, which claimed that ‘Jack – whether Maori or Pakeha – was as good as his master’.

But, as in Aristotle’s ancient republics, the universalism of New Zealand’s equal citizenship came at a price: Maori political and cultural identity was suppressed through state-sanctioned policies of ‘racial’ assimilation, and the national political community was kept as homogenous as possible through racially exclusive immigration policies. Predictably enough, some of the most significant challenges to the ideal of equal citizenship arose when Maori more forcefully insisted that neither the assimilationist, nor the integrationist, nor even the ‘multicultural’ model of race relations adequately responded to their political demands. When they began to argue

² Idem.
that the ‘equal’ rights of citizenship in New Zealand fell well short of providing the political status and cultural identity that they wanted for themselves their claims presented a significant challenge to the complacency with which many Pakeha had viewed race relations before the 1970s.

A second challenge came in the late 1980s and early 1990s when New Zealand ended its official preference for immigrants from ‘traditional source’ countries and facilitated the flow into New Zealand of an unprecedented number of migrants from non-European countries. The sudden presence in New Zealand of many thousands of new ethnic minority migrants, particularly from North and East Asia, seemed to present many New Zealanders with something of an affront to their concept of who could, and should, be counted as a ‘New Zealander’.

Increasing ethnic diversity, and awareness of its political implications, put to the test the concept of full and equal citizenship in New Zealand during the 1990s. Were all citizens treated equally by New Zealand governments, regardless of their racial or ethnic identity at this time? Did all citizens enjoy equal access to the rights of citizenship? Was the New Zealand political community itself sufficiently tolerant of ethnic, cultural or racial diversity to ensure that the rights of minorities were protected? And, lastly, was it sufficiently intolerant of those social and economic inequalities that threatened equal citizenship and political community? In other words, did the National and Coalition Governments of this period manage to pull off the balancing act between respect for equality on the one hand, and respect for difference on the other? It is this balance which is so crucial to citizenship in diverse polities. Whether the Governments of this time managed this balancing act in relation to non-Maori ethnic minorities in New Zealand has been the main question of this thesis.

What I found in this study was that in many respects the quality of citizenship experienced by non-Maori ethnic minorities throughout this period improved. The way in which the identity of citizens was officially recorded more accurately reflected those citizens’ experience of their own identity, and great care was taken to ensure that the categories of group identity were purged of their racist underpinnings. Governments of the 1990s were the first in New Zealand’s history to operate a non-
racist immigration policy, and in so doing, to ask other New Zealanders to reconsider the idea that theirs was a political community whose unity rested on racial exclusivity. The civil rights of all citizens continued to be strengthened by legal developments over the 1990s, most particularly through the anti-discrimination provisions contained within the new Human Rights Act 1993. In politics, parliament became more culturally diverse after the introduction of the new Mixed Member Proportional voting system in 1993, and the institutional representation of Pacific Islands people and other non-Maori ethnic minorities was greatly improved through the reorganisation of the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, and the establishment of the Ethnic Affairs Service within the Department of Internal Affairs, respectively. And, lastly, in the delivery of social services to ethnic minorities the Governments of this time treated people as if their cultures were important and deserving of respect, more than had ever been the case before.

In much of this National and its coalition partners were engaged in the typically modern liberal process of eliminating overt ‘racial’ or ‘ethnic’ discrimination from the way in which the state dealt with its citizens. In the collection of ethnic statistics they could see that a classification system built on the idea of hierarchically ordered ‘races’ offended any liberal claim to equality between ‘ethnic’ groups. In immigration they took seriously (at least for a period) their own claim that in the selection of migrants ethnic identity should be effectively irrelevant, and that what was really important was that new migrants fitted well into the market society National hoped to create. As a neo-liberal party, National was anxious to protect the civil liberties of all citizens (although some of the more morally conservative members of National’s caucus were undoubtedly uncomfortable with the anti-discrimination measures contained in the new Human Rights Act as they applied to sexual orientation). National as a party had been almost unanimously opposed to the introduction of MMP, but once it became clear that its introduction was a political certainty, they were very quick to point out the improvements the system would have for the representation of ethnic minorities, and to enlist Asian and Pacific Islands candidates. Nor was National immune to the political advantages that might be associated with providing the new Asian migrants some representation in the policy making process.
Each of these developments moved New Zealand closer to a citizenship model that combined a respect for ethnic difference with a respect for the equal rights of citizenship. Given that both Labour and National were both broadly liberal parties, with a broadly similar respect for the civil and political rights of citizenship, it is likely that both of these things would have occurred under either a Labour or a National Government. The domestic and international environment was such that the development of a language and politics of ‘ethnicity’ was similarly likely to have happened under a government dominated by either party.

But alongside the positive developments that occurred during National’s administration, my research revealed that a number of barriers to full and equal citizenship for non-Maori ethnic minorities in New Zealand still remained. These barriers were generally the product of National’s neo-liberalism in one of three ways: their determination that ethnicity be solely a ‘private realm’ affair, and therefore no business of the Government’s; their generally laissez-faire attitude to social and economic inequality, and; their ideological opposition to the idea of generous and universal ‘social rights’.

In the chapter on immigration I argued that these three aspects of National’s neo-liberalism led it to give too little consideration to the social and economic impacts of a new and large migration flow from the countries of North and East Asia. National’s conviction that migration was primarily an economic affair meant that there were inadequate preparations for the demands that large numbers of non-English speaking school children placed on Auckland schools. The National Government’s attitude towards the new migrants in general was that Government’s interest in and responsibility for the new migrants ended at the point at which the migrants received their residency permits. For this reason new migrants to New Zealand received little or no settlement assistance, unlike their counterparts in other migrant-receiving countries. Nor did the Government seem prepared for the xenophobia that gripped some sectors of the New Zealand population when Asian migrants began to outnumber British ones. In fact, the introduction of the English Language Bond in 1995 was perceived by many Asian people in New Zealand and abroad as evidence that the Government itself still suffered vestiges of the colonial anti-Asian sentiment apparent at the turn of the nineteenth century. Another indication that the Government
seemed to have given little thought to the potential social effects of the 1991 immigration policy was that despite the entirely predictable outbreaks of racism after the (also predictable) increase in migration from Asia, the main office responsible for dealing with issues of racial discrimination, the Office of the Race Relations Conciliator, complained throughout the 1990s of severe funding shortages.

In Chapter Four I discussed the likely effects of the collection of detailed ethnic statistics during a period when the government no longer advanced social and economic equality as a primary political good. I made the point that statistics are both a reflection of existing prejudices and perceptions, and play a crucial role in confirming such prejudices and perceptions, as well as creating new ones. Given the National Government’s rhetoric of individual and community responsibility, and its reluctance to accept structural explanations for disadvantage, I argued that the continued collection and dissemination of ethnic statistics – which assumed people belonged to differentiable identity groups with some basis in genetic and social reality – had the potential to significantly contribute to the stigmatisation of disadvantaged ‘ethnically’-understood groups. The potential for such stigmatisation was augmented by the National and Coalition Governments’ use of ethnic statistics to target disadvantaged ethnic groups with risk management strategies designed to reduce the threats such groups posed to social cohesion, public health and to the national economy. The production and dissemination of statistics about ethnic inequality, combined with their use as a tool of risk management undoubtedly worked to partially diminish the status of disadvantaged minorities as full and equal citizens. Moreover, the ineffectiveness of the targeted welfare provisions – as indicated by the declining comparative socio-economic status of Pacific Islands people and discussed in Chapter Eight – compounded the existing impression that some minority groups were much less successful citizens of a market society than others.

The fifth chapter identified a number of ways in which non-Maori ethnic minorities access to the civil rights of citizenship might be considered inadequate. Most significant among these inadequacies was the limited protection of the right to an interpreter or translator. Although some legislation protected this right, in many other areas of law and public life it was not protected. After the 1991 Immigration Act, and the arrival of many non-English speaking migrants, the National Government should
have given this area of the law greater consideration. Also very significant was the lack of legal protection against linguistic discrimination. This was an area in which New Zealand's law had been subject to criticism at an international forum, but which received little attention from the National Government. Further, the continued under-funding of the Race Relations Conciliator, and the abandonment of the Consistency 2000 project both undermined the support that existing anti-discrimination law could provide to immigrant minorities.

In Chapter Six I examined the very positive effects that the introduction of the Mixed Member Proportional voting system had on minority participation and representation. I also identified the establishment of the Ethnic Affairs Service within the Department of Internal Affairs as a significant way in which the participation and representation of non-Maori, non-Pacific ethnic minorities within the policy-making process was enhanced. Unfortunately however, the Ethnic Affairs Service struggled with poor funding and inadequate staffing levels for the first few years of its existence, before finally losing its role as a unit dedicated to ethnic policy advice after a Departmental restructuring. In this case the Ethnic Affairs Service was a victim of Cabinet's indifference, and, more invidiously hostility, to the political interests of non-Maori ethnic minorities. Cabinet by this time (1998) contained members of the Mauri Pacific Party, who as members of the New Zealand First Party, had been openly opposed to immigration and hostile to the idea of 'multiculturalism'. Furthermore, neo-liberalism's suspicion of 'vested interests' meant that a service like the Ethnic Affairs Service, which was dedicated to a particular client group, was always under suspicion of giving policy advice 'biased' towards the interests of its client group. In this way, neo-liberalism – and specifically public choice theory – acted to undermine the enhanced ethnic participation and representation the Service had promised. The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs might have fallen victim to a similar fate, had not the social and economic statistics of Pacific Islands people been startling enough to finally frighten the National and Coalition Governments into prioritising the work of the Ministry.

The startling nature of Pacific Island statistics was examined in the seventh chapter. Those statistics showed that Pacific Islands people had, on many measures, become progressively more disadvantaged in relation to the rest of the national population.
throughout the 1990s as National applied its neo-liberal reforms to the welfare portfolios. It was National's opposition to the idea of universal and generous social rights that thus most influenced the way in which some members of ethnic minorities experienced the quality of citizenship in the 1990s. National and Labour had parted company in the way that each viewed the importance and legitimacy of social rights and a reduction in the income assistance available to low income New Zealanders from 1990 onwards, and particularly the introduction of market rentals for state housing, had the effect of lowering the living standards of many low income New Zealanders. For those ethnic minorities who became more impoverished and disadvantaged in relation to the rest of the New Zealand population during this period, it is questionable as to whether their improved access to the civil and political rights of citizenship outweighed the set-backs they experienced as the social rights of citizenship diminished. The experiences of those whom the Social Policy Agency identified as being at risk of 'at risk of being excluded from participating socially and economically in society for a long time' were, despite being granted the formal rights of citizenship, in practical and social terms unable to participate as equal members of the political community of which they were a citizen. Such ethnically-based inequality was not simply a threat to the citizenship status of individual citizens but was also a threat to the political community as a whole, and to the ideal of equal democratic citizenship on which governmental legitimacy was based.

The National and National-New Zealand First Coalition Governments' primary response to ethnically-related social and economic disadvantage was to purchase social services designed specifically for and targeted at disadvantaged ethnic communities. As the decade progressed, these services were frequently contracted out to service providers who were themselves members of the ethnic communities at whom the services were targeted. While undoubtedly there were a number of very real advantages for the ethnic communities who began to receive health, educational and other welfare services that were more responsive to their particular needs and preferences, I argued in Chapter Eight that these advantages were undermined by the overall policy context in which cultural social services developed.

Under-funding of the non-state groups contracted to provide services made it more difficult for the purchase-of-service contracting model to work as well as it could, as
did the emphasis on 'outputs' rather than 'outcomes'. Given these difficulties with the contracting model, and given also the neo-liberal emphasis on the desirability of communities and individuals taking more responsibility for their own social and economic outcomes, the decision to progressively contract ethnic social services out to ethnic service delivery agents held considerable risks for those ethnic groups already experiencing significant comparative disadvantage. The services they received might have been more culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate, but should the 'outputs' and 'outcomes' those services were designed to deliver not be delivered on account of under-funding, the ethnic groups themselves not only risked becoming even more disadvantaged, they were likely to shoulder more of the blame for that disadvantage. This was in part because the emphasis on the importance on understanding 'culture' when seeking solutions to ethnic socio-economic disadvantage acted to deflect attention away from those economic and political conditions that also contributed to such disadvantage. Yet it was the generic – that is, the non-culturally specific – social policies which had the most potential to impact on the social and economic status of disadvantaged ethnic minorities. For example, Stephens, Frater and Waldergraves' research\(^3\) found the charging of market rentals for public housing was the single largest contributor to the growth in poverty in New Zealand during the 1990s. And poverty itself was the cause of, or major contributor to, poor health, educational, employment and other social outcomes.

Taken as a whole, the barriers to full and equal citizenship faced by non-Maori ethnic minorities were significant but certainly not insurmountable. Indeed, some of the barriers could have been minimised or removed altogether without great expense. The problems of racism and xenophobia experienced by new migrants were fairly predictable and the Government could have done more to prepare both the host population and the various social services that were put under strain as a result of the increase in migrants. Additional funding could, for example, have been directed towards the schools in which the children of new migrants were concentrating by the mid-1990s, and towards the Office of the Race Relations Conciliator in order that a co-ordinated strategy to counter the racism directed towards the new migrants be

developed. Similarly, the remaining legal barriers to full and equal citizenship required the Government to prioritise consideration of those legal issues that affected immigrant minorities.

The more serious barriers to the full and equal citizenship of immigrant minorities derived, however, from National’s unwillingness to seriously tackle the issue of growing social and economic inequality in New Zealand. One of the major conclusions of this thesis is that the social and economic disadvantage experienced by Pacific Islands people and some other non-Maori ethnic minorities represented the most significant threat to their status as equal citizens during the 1990s, and that this disadvantage was primarily a result of National’s adherence to the political ideals and policies associated with neo-liberalism. National did prove itself willing to address some of the issues (such as educational underachievement, poor health, and underemployment) associated with growing levels of inequality, but not the inequality itself.

Yet the growing economic disparity between rich and poor, which had an increasingly ethnic dimension to it, was itself a major cause of the other forms of social and political inequality between and among ethnic groups in New Zealand. Such inequality provided the context in which policies such as the Standard Classification of Ethnicity and its emphasis on ‘ethnic’ identity; the greater targeting of welfare assistance to disadvantaged communities; and the provision of ‘cultural’ social services, were implemented by the National and National-New Zealand First Coalition Governments of the 1990s. Growing ethnic inequality thus tilted the development and outcome of these policies in a direction which was likely to worsen and entrench both ethnic disadvantage and stigmatisation. Furthermore, the growing levels of economic and social inequality themselves were identified (by, for example, the Ministry of Social Policy) as posing a threat to the social cohesion of the political community on which individual rights were reliant.

Neo-liberalism is immediately implicated in much of this. Where a commitment to its ideals convinced the Governments of that time to reduce social assistance, and to target it more carefully to particular groups, it seems that neo-liberalism had a
decisively negative influence on the ability of non-Maori ethnic minorities to be full and equal members of the New Zealand political community during the 1990s.

But neo-liberalism was not the only ideological influence on the Governments of that period in their dealings with non-Maori ethnic minorities. Also highly influential were the various Maori political and legal demands whose emphasis on group identity could be contrasted with the individualism of neo-liberalism. Maori political arguments undoubtedly affected the way in which National perceived and reacted to the legal, political and social needs and aspirations of non-Maori ethnic minorities. Those effects were numerous, complex and neither wholly positive nor negative for non-Maori ethnic groups.

On the positive side, Maori critiques of the welfare state did a great deal to expose the violence that monocultural state welfare institutions – such as schools, hospitals, child welfare agencies – could do to an ethnic minority ethnic group. As Chapter Eight showed, most of the major government welfare departments were, by the end of the 1990s considerably more aware of the importance and significance of cultural membership than they had been twenty or thirty years earlier, and such an awareness assisted non-Maori ethnic minorities to receive social services that respected their cultural backgrounds. Maori also did much to raise general awareness of the effects of racism on the lives of those who belonged to minority ethnic groups, an awareness which would have given added impetus to the development of strong anti-discrimination laws in New Zealand.

On the less positive side – as far as non-Maori ethnic minorities were concerned – were the effects of some of the more nationalist arguments pursued by Maori. Many Maori continued to insist throughout the 1990s that Maori people formed distinct identity groups (as tribes or iwi), each of which had unique resource and (limited) autonomy rights under the Treaty of Waitangi. Such arguments – to the extent that they were accepted by the National and Coalition Governments of the 1990s – encouraged those Governments to think about Maori as people whose interests and aspirations were significantly shaped by their membership of a specific ethnic group. While this was not a way of thinking that the Government generally extended to members of non-Maori ethnic groups, it did come to influence social policy,
particularly, as we have seen, in the development of social service delivery mechanisms. In the contracting out of social service provision to ethnic providers, for example, the neo-liberal goals of the Government meshed with the autonomy goals of Maori. It is doubtful whether the policy of getting iwi groups to provide social services would achieve the autonomy and development goals of Maori when the funding environment was characterised by competitive tendering for service provision and under-funding. But it was, at least, a policy developed in direct response to Maori demands for greater control over the social services they received – demands which arose in the context of an increasingly nationalist and anti-colonialist Maori discourse, and during a period when the Crown was engaged both in the task of understanding the legal rights and obligations placed on the Crown and Maori by the Treaty of Waitangi, and of compensating tribal groups for land and other assets taken illegally from them since the time of colonisation. Such compensation payments promised to provide a material basis on which Maori could develop a greater degree of individual and collective autonomy.

This was the context and background in which the policy of contracting out the provision of Pacific social services to Pacific providers (and, to a much lesser extent other ethnic providers) developed. Yet the material, cultural and national aspirations of Pacific groups in New Zealand were quite different to those of Maori. They did not share the nationalist aspirations of some Maori groups; they were not guaranteed any particular rights by the Treaty of Waitangi; they were not in line for any compensatory payments from government, and did not, therefore, look forward to a time when they would have a secure resource base. They simply wanted and needed social services that were able to meet the growing social and economic needs of their communities. Undoubtedly the ‘culturalist’ arguments of Maori helped Pacific Islands people to get services which were more culturally and linguistically sensitive, but such arguments also undermined the claim they could make as equal citizens in New Zealand, and of the claim that they could make as members of a common political community. This is not so much a criticism of either the nationalist or the culturalist arguments of Maori, as it is of the attempt to apply the governing mechanisms associated with those arguments within a neo-liberal policy context to immigrant ethnic minorities in New Zealand. It was, in other words, the combination
of neo-liberal and ‘culturalist’ reasoning within the contracting-out model that made it particularly risky for minorities, rather than the culturalist ones themselves.

Maori nationalist arguments also acted to reduce the political claims of non-Maori minorities. In Chapter One I argued that one of the citizenship rights to which immigrant minorities can legitimately lay claim is that they be included in the symbolic representations of political community. In New Zealand since at least the mid-1980s, the ideology, policies, and (to a lesser extent) practices of ‘biculturalism’ have been the most potent symbolic representation of who belongs to and represents the New Zealand political community. Despite protestations that the non-Maori partner in the bicultural relationship includes all non-Maori (*tau iwi*), not just European New Zealanders (Pakeha), it remained a common assumption that because the two ‘partners’ to the Treaty in 1840 were Maori and the British Crown, Maori and Pakeha remain the two, binary ethnic constituents of New Zealand nationhood. As the quote from Philip Khouri in Chapter Six illustrated, members of non-Maori ethnic minorities continued to feel that the discourse and practices of biculturalism acted to exclude them both symbolically and practically from the political community. And, an insistence by many Maori that governments and the public *only* talk about bi-culturalism made it more difficult for other minority ethnic groups to pursue their own, legitimate demands for political inclusion, and for the civil and political rights that would facilitate their access to full and equal citizenship.

Yet legal and political opinion in New Zealand seems to be solidifying behind the assertion that the Treaty of Waitangi – central to bicultural discourse – is the founding constitutional document of New Zealand, providing the basis both for legitimate rule, and for the continued resource and (limited) autonomy rights of Maori. Given the centrality of the Treaty to New Zealand’s constitution, and the failure of Treaty-based discourse to date to allow non-Maori minorities to feel that they are fully accepted as citizens of New Zealand, it is clear that future governments need to do much more to develop a public language of inclusion that encompasses non-Maori ethnic minorities. This will need to be framed either within a Treaty-based understanding of political

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4 See page 299.
community, or it will need to clearly differentiate between the relevance of the Treaty for state-Maori relations, and the wider questions of political community and membership. It will also need to ensure that there are opportunities for non-Maori ethnic minorities to express their political view-points and make political demands, without those demands immediately being read as standing in opposition to Maori political interests. Without such opportunities, and without a public language of ethnic inclusiveness – perhaps based on a civic understanding of national community – the ethnic emphasis of much Maori discourse threatens to add ethnic forms of exclusion to the social and economic exclusion that neo-liberalism has visited upon members of non-Maori ethnic minority groups in New Zealand.

Having said that, it needs to be emphasised that the most significant barriers to equal citizenship for non-Maori minorities lay, and continue to lie, with neo-liberalism’s tendency to create, perpetuate, and deepen economic inequality. It is this inequality which most urgently needs to be addressed. There is no reason why the equal citizenship claims of non-Maori ethnic minorities cannot be pursued at the same time as the Treaty-based Maori ones, as long as governments are conscious of the need to symbolically include all citizens within the public conception and portrayal of nationhood. Governments must also ensure that the economic inequalities between citizens do not become so great as to make a mockery of the claim that New Zealand is a democratic political community in which all citizens have equal civil, political and social rights.

How might this be done? A traditional social-democratic answer might simply be that reducing social and economic disparities across a national society requires an interventionist state willing to finance high levels of social expenditure through high taxation and deficit spending. But there now seems little enthusiasm for the Keynesian prescription in liberal democracies, and it appears highly unlikely that there will be a return to the economic and social policies which underpinned the post-war welfare states of Europe, America and Australasia. Social democratic parties in the United States, Great Britain, Germany and New Zealand have all been engaged in the search for a ‘third way’ able to define the role of the left in a globalised, post-industrial, post-
traditional world. As practised by British Prime Minister Tony Blair, United States' President Bill Clinton, and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, 'third way' politics embraced the mechanisms of the free market and positively encourage the movement of international capital, finance, trade and labour. A desire to ensure their economies remained competitive created pressure within those countries for the establishment and maintenance of favourable conditions for international investment, including low corporate taxes and reduced social spending. Thus 'third way' social democratic parties of the 1990s and beyond have maintained many of the neo-liberal economic and social policies of their more right-wing counterparts.

Despite their acceptance of global capitalism and their rejection of statist economic solutions, many reconstituted, 'third way', social democrats claim to remain committed to the idea of full and equal citizenship within liberal political communities. How is such full and equal citizenship to be achieved if, as this thesis has argued, neo-liberalism will not deliver it, yet neither the economic nor the institutional and ideological instruments of the Keynesian welfare state are to pertain in culturally diverse, post-industrial, states attempting to compete in the global economy?

Many of social, economic, political and cultural conditions prevalent when Marshall laid out his vision for a social liberal model of citizenship are no longer evident, yet it remains true that citizenship requires that citizens have access to a range of civil, political and social rights in order that they can be 'self-governing' at the individual level. It also remains true, however, that each of the rights of citizenship is ultimately reliant on the political community which, through its collectively-generated laws, institutions and policies, protects and funds those rights. This relationship of mutual reliance between political community and individual citizenship is something which

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governments must not lose sight of. Governments need to ensure that the social rights of citizenship are sufficiently generous to ensure that individuals and groups within the political community are able to participate in the economic, social and political life of the polity. This may, in a culturally diverse, post-Keynesian world, require some of the social service delivery mechanisms, such as contracting out, already employed by New Zealand Governments throughout the 1990s to be utilised. But if these mechanisms are really to facilitate an inclusive and stable political community the level of income assistance available to the least well-off in society will need to be sufficient to prevent them from falling into situations of multiple and entrenched disadvantage. Employment, health and educational assistance programmes may, in other words, be usefully be targeted at specific sections of the population, but those populations need first to have access to levels of income which allow them to take advantage of such programmes.

To argue this is to endorse Marshall’s basic argument: that citizens, if they are to fully enjoy the status of citizenship, need access to a range of civil, political and social rights, and to approve of his attempt to marry the liberal emphasis on individual freedom and agency with the republican emphasis on active citizenship and on political community.

Part of the appeal of Marshall’s account of the historical development of citizenship surely lay in his assertion that the civil, political and social rights of modern citizenship existed in a dynamic, and sometimes oppositional relationship with each other, and with modern capitalism, and that one product of this dynamism had been the ‘urge towards a fuller measure of equality, an enrichment of the stuff of which status is made and an increase in the number of those on whom the status is bestowed.’ In New Zealand during the 1990s it was certainly the case that the civil, political, social, and even cultural rights of citizens were frequently presented as being in conflict with each other, and with the goals of economic growth. The product of this neo-liberal vision of the relationship between the rights of citizenship was a model of citizenship in which social rights were worn away through benefit cuts, tighter forms of targeting, through abatement policies, and through the extensive use
of private and community-based providers to deliver targeted welfare services. Arenas in which public-decision making held sway were reduced as the processes of privatisation and corporatisation continued to put much economic decision-making beyond public control.

The processes of welfare reform, privatisation and corporatisation represented a victory for the neo-liberal prioritisation of the civil rights of citizenship over political and social rights. They were not, however, simply dropped onto a passive and accepting public and absorbed without complaint. Perhaps the greatest indication of the dynamic relationship between the various rights of citizenship was the expression of public distaste for the policies and politics of previous governments contained in the vote for MMP in 1993. MMP’s potential to give citizens more representation for their vote was an example of how citizens, armed with the political rights of citizenship, could use those rights to further enrich their citizenship status, and to reach towards a fuller degree of equality between voters. And, having used the political rights of citizenship to gain better political representation, thus enhancing those political rights, many voters sought to use their enhanced political power to press for better protection of their social rights. In 1996 a majority of voters chose to vote for parties which promised also to increase the social rights of citizenship. ⁷

This choice was not, of course, translated into the selection of a government in 1996, when the New Zealand First Party, widely believed to be oriented more to the left than the right, chose unexpectedly to enter into coalition with National. Having learned their lesson however, in 1999, the majority of voters steered away from New Zealand First, and its progeny Mauri Pacific, and voted for the parties of the committed left. At the ballot box New Zealanders made it clear that they felt the balance between the civil, political, social and cultural elements of citizenship had


⁸ At the 1996 election National gained 33.84% of the party vote (which determined how many seats each party was entitled to), Labour gained 28.19%, New Zealand First, 13.34%, the Alliance 10.10%, ACT 6.10%, the Christian Coalition 4.33% and United New Zealand 0.88%. Thus, together the Alliance and Labour gained 38.29% of the total vote, while National and Act gained 39.94%. This left the deciding vote with New Zealand First, who had lead many voters before the election to believe that they would form a coalition with Labour. If New Zealand First votes were combined with those of Labour and the Alliance the total vote for major left-leaning parties stood at 51.63% . Electoral Commission, The New Zealand Electoral Compendium, Wellington, Electoral Commission, 1997.
moved too far in favour of civil and property rights. That they were able to exercise the political rights of citizenship to change that balance somewhat should be seen as proof that the political rights of New Zealanders were enhanced by the introduction of MMP and that these political rights made them better able to exercise self-government at the collective level.

MMP, of course, held its own dangers. While many proponents of MMP favoured the proportional electoral system because of its potential to wrest power away from a small, elite number of politicians, MMP itself had the potential to allow small parties to exert power out of all proportion to their electoral support. In what is known as the 'tail wagging the dog' syndrome, small centrist parties can occupy the middle ground between two major parties and use their leverage to pursue minority sectoral interests. On several occasions this is precisely what New Zealand First, and later, the Mauri Pacific party did during the first MMP parliament. Some of the most worrying ways in which they did this were when Maori interests were pursued at the expense of those of other ethnic minorities, even when there were no real conflicts of interest between the two. The first example was found in New Zealand First's anti-immigration stance, which stirred up so much anti-Asian sentiment in 1996. Admittedly this stance was much more apparent before the election than after it, but it nonetheless set the tone of the new Coalition Government in 1996, and the general willingness to target other ethnic groups was evident again in the second example, when, in 1999, Tau Henare, as Minister of Maori Affairs, argued that the Race Relations Conciliator's Office should be closed down because it was not focusing solely on Maori issues.

This particular aspect of MMP - its potential to invest disproportionate power in minority parties - underlines the importance of the responsibilities associated with political rights. MMP provides minority parties, and thus ethnic minorities, with greatly enhanced opportunities to gain representation in the New Zealand parliament. With this opportunity comes the obligation to use any political power gained in a responsible manner. In Chapter One of this thesis I argued that 'political representation rights place upon minorities the obligation to participate in the act of political debate in the same spirit of tolerance and open-mindedness that they require
from other groups involved in the political process." Arguably, in the two instances cited above, New Zealand First and Tau Henare failed to fulfil that obligation.

Nonetheless, the nationalist and exclusionary rhetoric of the New Zealand First Party notwithstanding, the introduction of the Mixed Member Proportional electoral system represented a very significant expansion of the political rights of citizenship for all New Zealanders. As such its introduction gives some cause for New Zealand citizens to feel optimistic about the prospects for the quality of citizenship in New Zealand to improve. Current campaigns to reduce the number of MPs in the MMP parliament from 120 to 99,\(^9\) should therefore be strenuously resisted.

If, however, the trend towards ethnic and other forms of inequality continues to grow, it seems increasingly unlikely that New Zealand will be able to offer its non-Maori ethnic minority citizens the promise of a full and equal status as a member of the New Zealand political community.

\(^9\) At the 1999 election a Citizens' Initiated Referendum on whether or not the number of MPs should be reduced from 120 to 99 was held, after a campaign led by a Wellington woman, Margaret Robertson. For some background on the referendum, and on its implications see Richard Shaw, ‘What’s that you say Mrs Robertson? The future for parliamentary representation in New Zealand’, in *Legislative Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 1, Spring 1999, pp. 62-79.
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