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## **International Migration in New Zealand: Context, Components and Policy Issues**

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# **International Migration in New Zealand: Context, Components and Policy Issues**

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## PREFACE

In June 2000 the Population Association of New Zealand (PANZ) and the Australian Population Association (APA) held a joint meeting in Wellington where population trends and issues at the beginning of the new millennium were reviewed. The Migration Research Group presented an overview of New Zealand's international migration system, highlighting the distinctive history of immigration to this country, and situating the major components of the contemporary system in this historical context. Prospects for further development in the system are reviewed in the final section of the paper.

Earlier versions of the paper were presented at the Third National Metropolis Conference in Vancouver in January 1999, and an end-users meeting in April 2000 organised by the FRST-funded *New Demographic Directions Programme* (University of Waikato) and *New Settlers Programme* (Massey University).

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R.D. Bedford  
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## A Distinctive Heritage

Two hundred years ago, around the turn of the nineteenth century, the settlement of New Zealand by Europeans was slowly gaining momentum. In large measure this was due to the movement of some former British convicts and their descendants across the Tasman to take advantage of opportunities to exploit natural resources, (especially seals and whales as well as timber, and later agricultural produce) to feed the growing colony in New South Wales. In 2000 the New Zealand media is devoting considerable attention to a movement in the opposite direction -- the migration of New Zealanders with skills to Australia. Emigration of New Zealanders, rather than immigration of new settlers is the most topical migration issue at the beginning of the new millennium, and net migration losses rather than net gains are featured in the media's analyses of migration statistics.

It is not surprising that there is considerable confusion amongst members of the public about the nature and direction of population change. The last decade has seen short-lived surges in numbers of births (the 'baby blip' of the early 1990), the highest net migration gains for over 100 years (the 'Asian invasion' of the mid-1990s), some of the highest net migration losses of New Zealanders on record (the 'brain drain' of the late 1990s), and belated recognition that much of what is called 'permanent and long-term migration' is not, in fact, leading to immigrant settlement. 'Temporary' migration is attracting much more attention in both the research community as well as amongst policy makers.

In order to understand the immigration policies of any country it is essential to have some appreciation of the history of migration and settlement in that country. The current debate about the nature and direction of future policy initiatives to discourage emigration from and encourage immigration into New Zealand is embedded in a distinctive history which incorporates several phases of settlement and domination. Over the past 1,000 years these southern Pacific islands have been:

- 1) an outlier of Polynesia, settled initially by Pacific Island peoples who, from the late eighteenth century, became known as Maori and who comprise the indigenous population (*tangata whenua*) of Aotearoa (the Maori name for New Zealand);
- 2) a British colony settled from the early nineteenth century mainly by people from the United Kingdom and Ireland often via Australia;
- 3) one of several 'New World' destinations for Chinese working on the gold fields in the 1860s and 1870s – a migration which was to result in the

establishment of a small but distinctive ethnic minority despite the imposition of highly discriminatory legislation regulating flows of peoples from Asia into the European colonial outliers on the Pacific rim for over a century;

4) an important destination for a 'new' Polynesian labour migration in the second half of the twentieth century which has resulted in Auckland, New Zealand's only 'metropolis' (1 million inhabitants in 1996), becoming the largest Polynesian city in the world;

5) and, most recently, a destination for middle class Chinese and Koreans migrants from northeast Asia coming to New Zealand in response to a significant shift in emphasis and focus of immigration policy after 1986.

### Settlement history and contemporary research

All aspects of this settlement history have relevance for policy issues and research initiatives in contemporary New Zealand. Maori, as *tangata whenua*, have a distinctive place in the history and development of contemporary New Zealand society. At the core of social cohesion in this society is the issue of Maori/non-Maori relationships – the issue of biculturalism as a base for effective multicultural development (Pearson, 1991). Underpinning the debate about biculturalism is a renaissance in Maori culture and economy, a renaissance which has been fuelled by the increasing official as well as public recognition given to the Treaty of Waitangi as the founding document for Aotearoa/New Zealand (Kawharu, 1989a; Vasil, 1988).

The preamble to this Treaty, signed between representatives of many of the major Maori tribes (*iwi*) and representatives of Queen Victoria in 1840, is currently the subject of careful consideration by some Maori leaders who wish to get the country's 'human resources', as well as the resources of its lands, rivers and surrounding oceans subjected to scrutiny by both Treaty partners – Maori and the New Zealand government (as representatives of the British Crown) (Walker, 1995). Immigration policy is currently the prerogative of the Executive; there is no requirement for consultation with Maori or any other group in the determination of policy.

New Zealand's European descent population, with its enduring links to Australia and the United Kingdom from the beginning of the nineteenth century, has evolved a strong multi-local presence with sizeable 'off-shore' populations, especially in Sydney and London. Links between the population in New Zealand and its expatriate enclaves are fostered by an established tradition of migration for 'overseas experience' which sees thousands of young New Zealanders leaving for periods of 12 months or more every year (Lidgard, 1993). The long-standing trans-Tasman connection especially is now seen to be at the heart of New Zealand's economic and social security; the equivalent of a

tenth of New Zealand's population lives in Australia, and travel between the two countries is cheaper and more frequent for some New Zealanders, than travel within New Zealand (Gamble, 1998: A1).

The Chinese descent population, with its origins in 19<sup>th</sup> century colonial trade networks and gold rushes, is part of a long-established global diaspora within which New Zealand was and remains an insignificant player in terms of numbers of Chinese immigrants (Seagrave, 1996; McKinnon, 1996). However, the economic and social connections which are being fostered by contemporary Asian migration between New Zealand and the Asia-Pacific rim are at the heart of the government's current pro-immigration policy (Trlin, 1992 and 1997; Trlin, Henderson and Pernice, 1997). Since the mid-1980s successive New Zealand governments have looked to countries on the Asia-Pacific rim, especially Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia and, more recently, Korea as sources of migrants with business skills and investment capital (Ho and Farmer, 1994; Ho, Bedford and Goodwin, 1999; Lidgard, Bedford and Goodwin, 1998b; Trlin and Kang, 1992). The recent immigration policy initiatives, which are largely designed to rejuvenate flows of entrepreneurs and investment capital from Asia, have been accompanied by active soliciting of migrants in Hong Kong especially (South China Morning Post, 1998: 4; Ho and Bedford, 1998).

Finally, the 'new' Polynesian migration, which has established Auckland firmly as the *de facto* capital city for several Pacific Island peoples (Cook Islanders, Niueans, Tokelauans, Samoans, Tongans) is also best conceptualised in terms of flows within multi-local societies rather than emigration from island countries to a metropolitan country on the Pacific rim (Hau'ofa, 1994; Macpherson, 1997; Ward, 1997). The resource transfers (material as well as human) between the Pacific island countries and the countries on the rim are best understood in terms of transfers within multi-local communities, rather than transfers between countries differentiated on the basis of being migrant sources or migrant destinations (Connell, 1997; Bedford, 2000).

In essence, contemporary New Zealand is best conceptualised as a 'meta-society' (Macpherson, 1997). This society comprises, on the one hand, a unique home base in Aotearoa for Maori, as well as a home for the majority of European, Polynesian and Asian ethnic groups that have claims on New Zealand citizenship or residence. On the other hand, there are the widely dispersed 'expatriate' populations of New Zealanders (Maori as well as non-Maori) in Australia, the Pacific Islands, the Asia-Pacific rim, the United Kingdom and many other mainly English speaking countries. This multi-local reality has considerable significance for a number of contemporary immigration issues, especially as these relate to access by New Zealand citizens to overseas destinations as well as to social security benefits while living overseas. New

Zealand's very generous visa-waiver provisions are an integral part of a wider set of policy initiatives designed to secure ready access for New Zealanders to overseas destinations (Bedford and Lidgard, 1997). In addition, the granting of pension rights to Pacific Islanders who have lived in New Zealand a long time and who choose to 'retire' to their island 'homes' is evidence of belated official recognition of the meta-society structures within which contemporary immigration policy must be framed.

### An underlying theme

In the following sections of the paper a number of these dimensions to Aotearoa/New Zealand's distinctive heritage as both a 'traditional land of immigration' as well as a 'country of emigration' are explored with particular reference to contemporary policy issues and research initiatives. An underlying theme of the argument running through the various sections is the need for an approach which takes account of all types of movement into and out of the country when researching immigration, both as a process and as a policy domain. This is something which was emphasised to both policy makers and researchers at New Zealand's first national Population Conference in November 1997 – a conference which endeavoured to establish what might be some of the core components of an immigration policy which will contribute to the development of a more coherent and cohesive New Zealand society in the twenty-first century (Pool and Bedford, 1997; Bedford and Ho, 1997).

### **A Treaty Issue**

At the time of the last Census of Population and Dwellings in March 1996, 523,370 people, the equivalent of 14.5 percent of the resident population, classified themselves as 'Maori' in response to the question on ethnicity. This includes people who also identified with other ethnic groups as well as Maori. The Maori population in New Zealand comprises a much more significant share of the total than is the case with descendants of indigenous populations in Australia, Canada or the United States. By the year 2030 it is estimated that Maori could comprise 30 percent of New Zealand's population, even with continued immigration.

Immigration was clearly the issue which underlay the Treaty of Waitangi signed in 1840. Indeed, the preamble to the Treaty states that Her Majesty Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom:

... has deemed it necessary, in consequence of the great number of Her Majesty's subjects who have already settled in New Zealand, and the rapid expansion of Emigration from both Europe and Australia which is still in progress, to constitute and appoint a functionary properly

organised to treat with the Aborigines of New Zealand for the recognition of her Majesty's sovereign authority over the whole or any part of those islands (Facsimiles of the Treaty of Waitangi, cited in Walker, 1995: 284-285).

It is therefore hardly surprising that immigration has never been far from the consciousness of Maori as they grappled with successive invasions of people from Australia, Europe, Asia and the Pacific Islands seeking access to their lands, fisheries, forests and rivers. The processes for transferring resources from Maori to Pakeha (the name given to the European settlers and their descendants) under the terms of the Treaty of Waitangi have been well documented; they are processes which are at the heart of what has become known as the 'Treaty industry' in the 1980s and 1990s (see, for example, the various essays in Kawharu, 1989a). At the end of the twentieth century efforts to compensate Maori for the injustices they experienced under British colonial rule and later the government of the Dominion of New Zealand are at the forefront of extensive public debate and complex legal processes. In 1975 the Waitangi Tribunal was established to hear claims for compensation, initially relating to land disputes in the 1970s, but from the early 1980s to disputes dating back to 1840 (Sorrenson, 1989).

#### Immigration and a Maori renaissance

Immigration was one of the catalysts for a renaissance of Maori culture and political pressure in the 1970s which was to generate debate about development in a bicultural society in New Zealand. Between the beginning of the Second World War and the early 1970s Maori were transformed from an essentially rural-based people to an urban population. At the time of the census in 1971, 70 percent of Maori were living in urban places compared with less than 20 percent in 1940 (Pool, 1991; Bedford and Heenan, 1987). At the same time that Maori were being incorporated into New Zealand's urban workforces and residential areas, thousands of immigrants from the United Kingdom and northern Europe (especially the Netherlands) were being sponsored to settle in New Zealand (Farmer, 1979; Gould, 1982). In addition, Polynesians from New Zealand's Pacific colonies were being recruited to work in low-skilled rural and urban occupations, often in direct competition with Maori (Gibson, 1983; Bedford and Gibson, 1987).

In the early 1970s New Zealand experienced its highest levels of annual net migration for 100 years (Pool and Bedford, 1997). Pressure for access to the remaining small pockets of urban land which were still in Maori ownership or under the control of the Crown was very strong. Maori protest became vociferous, especially over the decision by the Crown to develop a housing estate on one of the few remaining consolidated blocks of undeveloped Ngati Whatua land still in the hands of the Crown. The Ngati Whatua are the *iwi*

(tribe) which had once occupied much of the land on which central Auckland is now located (Kawharu, 1989b). The Maori occupation of Bastion Point in 1977, and the subsequent removal of protesters by the police and army, shattered for ever the carefully crafted image of post-colonial New Zealand as a society with excellent race relations (Awatere, 1984; Mohanram, 1995).

By the mid-1970s, the assimilationist ideology which had underpinned official rhetoric about relationships between Maori and Pakeha for over a century was clearly dead. As Sorrenson (1989: 159) noted in an essay on the role of the Waitangi Tribunal in the radical reinterpretation of New Zealand history: "Because of the determined efforts of the Maori people to resist assimilation and preserve their identity, the Treaty has become the basis ... for the coexistence of two peoples within one nation". The land disputes and marches of the 1970s paved the way for the development of biculturalism and the notion of a 'partnership' between Maori and the Crown as the official ideology for Maori-Pakeha relationships in the late twentieth century.

#### Immigration policy reviews

In 1986 a long-awaited review of immigration policy was tabled in Parliament by the Labour Government (Burke, 1986; Bedford, Farmer and Trlin, 1987; Trlin, 1992). This review officially ended the traditional source country preference system which had underlain immigration policy since the 1840s -- the deliberate favouring of countries such as the United Kingdom, and Ireland as sources of migrants and the careful regulation of entry from countries in Asia in particular. New Zealand's immigration policy was belatedly brought into line with the less discriminatory policies of Canada, the United States and Australia, the other 'traditional' lands of immigration (Lidgard, Bedford, and Goodwin, 1998a). Through the late 1980s strong official encouragement was given to immigration of entrepreneurs and investors -- people who would be in a position to take advantage of the more competitive commercial environment which was emerging in a country where the State was rapidly withdrawing from direct involvement in productive activity.

The restructuring of the New Zealand economy from 1984 had a profound impact on all sectors of society and the economy (Kelsey, 1995; Le Heron and Pawson, 1996). Maori were more severely disadvantaged through loss of jobs as a result of the selling or commercialisation of many State-owned enterprises (such as the railways, and the Public Works Department), the removal of production subsidies in the primary and secondary sectors, and the dropping of tariff protection for many manufacturing industries. In addition to the substantial increase in Maori unemployment there was also a concern amongst Maori that many of the assets which were being disposed of by the Crown should be returned to *tangata whenua* rather than being sold to private enterprise.

Acknowledgment of Treaty obligations was explicitly written into a number of the key pieces of legislation enacted as part of the restructuring process (such as the State-Owned Enterprises Act of 1986) in order to protect Maori interests. This was to be especially important in the case of sale of cutting rights for forests on Crown land as well as for the allocation of commercial fishing quota. Maori leaders were concerned to ensure that assets acquired from them by the Crown under the terms of the Treaty of Waitangi did not pass through sale into the hands of overseas interests, including immigrant entrepreneurs (Kelsey, 1995).

In 1991 further amendments to immigration policy and the Immigration Act were made to allow for the introduction of a 'points system' similar to those used in Canada and Australia (Trlin, 1997). Ranginui Walker (1995: 285), a prominent Maori academic and strong advocate of recognition of the sovereign rights of Maori as *tangata whenua* in Aotearoa/New Zealand, summed up his recollections of the consultation process regarding these policy changes in the following words:

In March 1991 the Government Working Party on Immigration reported to Mr Birch, the Minister of Immigration. The report recommended the adoption of a points system for the selection of immigrants with skills and money for business investment in New Zealand. The Minister called meetings with a limited selection of 13 Maori leaders in Auckland and 14 in Wellington to consider the report. They were mainly leaders of voluntary organisations. Few of them represented tribal groups. Although many speakers spoke against the immigration proposals, they were ignored. When the Minister was questioned in Parliament during the debate on the Immigration Amendment Bill, he cited all those in attendance at the Maori meetings as being 'broadly positive' towards his immigration scheme. This glossing over of Maori opposition is consistent with the procedure of elites generating policy from above and imposing it on the people below. The report was a *fait accompli*, and the Minister's restricted discourse with Maori leaders after the fact, gave an illusion of democratic consultation. The select committee hearings on the Bill were also a charade. Of the 75 submissions made to the committee, 73 opposed the Bill. The two submissions in favour were made by immigration consultants, the people who earned substantial fees from processing immigration papers for clients wanting to get into New Zealand.

Walker's opposition to the immigration policy changes in 1991, which remain the basis for policy in 2000, was not just directed at the consultation process,

although the lack of an established procedure for involving Maori in deliberations about immigration policy and the development of New Zealand's human resources clearly concerns him. Unlike Canada, where there is an institutionalised process for consultation over immigration policy, the situation in New Zealand remains one where Ministers can consult whom they choose (and in the case of the October 1998 policy initiatives it was Chinese business people in Auckland who were the main target for consultation). Walker's deeper concern was with the rhetoric of 'multiculturalism' which underlay the policy review of 1986 and the adoption of the points system in 1991. Walker (1995: 286) notes that the 1986 review "asserted that New Zealand is a country of immigrants, including the Maori, thus denying their right to prior discovery and millennial occupation of the land. Defining Maori as immigrants negates their first-nation status as people of the land by lumping them in with European immigrants who took over the country, and postwar immigrants from the Pacific rim."

The Immigration Policy Review went on to state that the aim of the new policy initiatives was to "enrich the multicultural fabric of New Zealand society through the selection of new settlers principally on the strength of their personal contribution to the future well-being of New Zealand" (Burke, 1986: 10). Walker (1995: 292) considered this multicultural ideology to be a direct negation of the Maori assertion of the primacy of biculturalism, thus giving the government another way of neutralising Maori claims for justice, especially as the new migrants would have no commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi. He concluded:

For these reasons, the ideology of multiculturalism as a rationale for immigration must be rejected. Although its primary rationale is economic, the government's immigration policy must be seen for what it is, a covert strategy to suppress the counter-hegemonic struggle of the Maori by swamping them with outsiders who are not obliged to them by the treaty (Walker, 1995: 292).

We have cited Walker at some length in this section on immigration as a Treaty issue (and there is a lot more substance to his critique of the 1991 policy changes than is outlined above) because it is important at the outset of any discussion of policy issues and research initiatives in New Zealand to acknowledge that Maori perspectives on all aspects of the country's development are at the centre of most public debates in the 1990s. Maori are increasingly dissatisfied with the deepening social polarisation between their people and others in New Zealand and overseas (Campbell, 1998; Te Puni Kokiri, 1998).



Recent debates in Parliament about poverty in New Zealand, and the urgent need to 'close the gaps' between Maori and non-Maori, are symptomatic of the sense of crisis within Maoridom and the deep-seated anger at persistent inequalities. At the national Population Conference in November 1997 there was little interest amongst Maori delegates in the debates about immigration targets and economic growth. Of much greater concern was the question about how Maori unemployment might be reduced, Maori education and health standards improved, and how the new investment opportunities afforded by recent Treaty claim settlements might be utilised effectively to benefit future generations of Maori.

### Multicultural and bicultural ideologies

Unlike Canada and Australia, New Zealand does not have a government department or a Ministry which has an explicit policy focus on multiculturalism. As Pearson (1991: 209) points out, with specific reference to Australia and New Zealand:

In Australia, multiculturalism was basically about provision for ethnic minorities with immigrant ancestry, with the reparative claims of Aborigines very uneasily addressed within or alongside these issues. ... In New Zealand, the reverse was true. Because of the historical background outlined above, and the relatively differing balance of power between numerically dissimilar minority groups, it was Maori/Pakeha relations, with the Treaty acting as the pivotal focus, that dominated state policy making and public discourse. The politics of aboriginality effectively marginalised the claims of immigrant ethnic minorities ... although this did not inhibit some vocal critics of Maori claims from using multiculturalism as a shield to deflect bicultural demands.

Treaty claims in New Zealand, as in Canada, will continue to mediate debate about social and economic development, including significant developments in immigration policy. There has been little research into Maori perspectives on immigration; Walker's (1995) study of the 1991 policy debate is a rare example. As Pearson (1991: 209) points out, the Waitangi Tribunal has provided both a new spiritual and ideological focus for Maori politics, as well as a quasi-legal forum for claims for reparation on a very broad scale from the cultural through to the material. He goes on to note that it is hardly surprising that "the thorny question of sovereign powers in polyethnic settler societies" has become very prominent in New Zealand (Pearson, 1991:209).

Raj Vasil (1988: 29, and in his contributions to the public debate about a constitution for New Zealand) advocates "a dramatic gesture by the government on behalf of the Pakeha, signifying constitutional recognition of the Maori as

*tangata whenua* and as constituting a distinct ethnic entity". He sees such recognition being along the lines of the amendment to the Canadian Constitution in 1987 which recognised the distinct society of Quebec as a 'fundamental characteristic' of Canada. Vasil (1988: 30) argued that in the New Zealand case such a 'fundamental characteristic' could include recognition of the essentially bi-racial, bicultural and bilingual character of Aotearoa/New Zealand and of Maori as constituting the *tangata whenua* with a distinct ethnic identity.

Debates about identity, citizenship and sovereignty in New Zealand are not restricted to relationships between Maori and Pakeha, and the place of the Treaty of Waitangi in the country's post-colonial development (see Durie (1998) for an excellent analysis of the politics of Maori self-determination). In the view of some commentators there are other alternatives worthy of exploration, including more formal association with Australia. It is to the long-standing trans-Tasman links, which have played such a prominent role in both the settlement of New Zealand, as well as an exodus of New Zealanders (including Maori) overseas since the 1970s, that the discussion now turns.

### **The trans-Tasman connection**

Migration between New Zealand and Australia rarely features in discussions about immigration policy per se, despite the fact that the movements of people across the Tasman Sea account for around half of the total arrivals and departures in New Zealand every year. The reason for the lack of explicit policy relating to migration between the two countries is the existence of a long-standing agreement that allows citizens of either country to settle in the other without any requirements for a visa. In the case of Australia, New Zealand citizens are the only people (aside from Australians) who have this privilege. In New Zealand's case there are some other groups who have automatic rights of residence: because of former colonial ties Cook Islanders, Niueans and Tokelauans are all New Zealand citizens by definition. Most adult Samoans would also have been in this category if a Privy Council decision over a New Zealand citizenship challenge by a Samoan 'overstayer' in 1982 had been enforced (Macdonald, 1986). By mutual agreement the Samoan and New Zealand Governments agreed to find a compromise solution that allowed many Samoan overstayers to continue residing in New Zealand legally, but did not give automatic citizenship rights to thousands of others.

While the trans-Tasman movements of New Zealand and Australian citizens are not subject to controls by the points systems in either country, there has been considerable comment in the Australian media recently about the magnitude of the New Zealand flow into Australia (over 25 percent of Australia's total

migrant intake in the years to June 1999 and 2000). The major concern does not seem to be the large numbers of New Zealanders per se coming into Australia (current levels of trans-Tasman net migration are no greater than those of the late 1970s or the late 1980s), but rather the entry of New Zealanders born in the Pacific Islands or in Asian countries who, some commentators claim, are re-emigrating to Australia in increasing numbers after gaining New Zealand citizenship. According to Lagan (1998: 6) the proportion of overseas born in the migrant intake from New Zealand in 1998 was 24 percent – up from 10 percent in 1991. The share of overseas born in the flow to Australia is currently higher than the share of overseas born in the total New Zealand population (17.5 percent).

### Back door entry?

Lagan (1998: 6), citing the research carried out by Birrell and Rapson in 1998, makes the following observations on the present situation:

Under migration arrangements with Australia, New Zealanders are free to live and work in Australia and new migrants to New Zealand can gain New Zealand citizenship – allowing them to reside in Australia. ... “For many New Zealanders, under-employment or struggling to find employment at home, the Australian labour market is an alternative worth exploring” said the [Birrell and Rapson] report.

New Zealand’s response to losing so many of its people to other nations has been to increase immigration but, says the report, the ‘ironic effect’ of this policy is that even higher numbers of New Zealand residents are migrating to Australia. This is because new migrants to New Zealand – the majority are Asian and Polynesian – have a ‘higher propensity’ to leave the country and are less likely to return there.

“This tendency shows in the increasing importance of re-emigration to Australia of third country nationals who have taken out New Zealand citizenship during the 1990s”, says the report. “After three years residence in New Zealand, immigrants are entitled to apply for New Zealand citizenship and therefore are free to emigrate to Australia”.

The report said that whether Australia liked it or not, any changes that New Zealand made to its immigration policy had an impact on the size and make-up of flows across the Tasman to Australia.

There is no doubt that migration from New Zealand to Australia is currently increasing – there has been a regular cyclical pattern to the net losses across the Tasman since the early 1970s (Carmichael, 1993; Bedford, Njeba and Goodwin, 1998). Whether the net gains to Australia have a disproportionate number of people born in Asian or Pacific countries is impossible to tell from New Zealand's international migration statistics. The birthplace question was dropped from arrival and departure cards in 1987 thanks to a singularly short-sighted bureaucratic decision by the Ministry of Transport's committee responsible for facilitation of passenger entry and exit (Bedford, 1987a). It has recently been returned to the arrival and departure cards and birthplace data will again be available for analysis from early 2001.

It would not be surprising if there was an increase in the share of overseas born in the net loss from New Zealand to Australia between 1991 and 2000, given the high levels of immigration into New Zealand during that period. Between 1 April 1991 and 31 March 1998 there was a net gain of just under a quarter of a million people (246,550) to New Zealand's population through all forms of international migration. Of this total 119,900 were citizens of Asian countries and 27,700 were citizens of Pacific countries. Certainly the Asian flow was very significant by historical standards, but the net gain from Pacific countries during these years was comparatively low – lower in fact than the net gain to New Zealand of Australian citizens (38,800). Indeed, an exploratory analysis of the New Zealand census data for 1996 and the arrival/departure data for the five years 1991-1996 suggests that New Zealand may actually have gained Pacific Islanders from third countries (like Australia!) (Ho and Bedford, 1998).

Whatever the precise birthplace composition of the trans-Tasman flows between New Zealand and Australia in the 1990s, it has been clear for some time now that far more New Zealanders are choosing to move across the Tasman to live in Australia than is moving in the opposite direction (these flows are examined in detail in Carmichael, 1993). By 1996 the New Zealand-born population in Australia was almost 300,000 (291,400) compared with an Australia-born population of only 54,700 in New Zealand. Clearly many of the 38,800 Australian citizens who comprised the net migration gain to New Zealand between 1991 and 1996 were not Australia-born (the New Zealand census does not record populations by citizenship, just birthplace and ethnicity). This is hardly surprising given the fact that Australia has one of the highest percentages of overseas born in its resident population of any country in the world.

### Enduring ties

A heavy bias in Australia's favour in trans-Tasman net migration has not always been the case. Indeed, between 1858 and 1965 New Zealand had an overall net gain of 123,900 people from Australia as a result of trans-Tasman population movement. There were particularly heavy net gains in the early

1860s (45,000), the first five years of the twentieth century (35,000) and the early 1960s (20,000) (Borrie, 1987). Australia was a particularly important source of migrants during the nineteenth century when New Zealand was effectively linked into an Australasian colonial administrative system (Belich, 1996; Borrie, 1987 and 1988). It was not until 1901 that Australia became an independent Federation of States (with an open option for New Zealand to join the Federation), while New Zealand became a Dominion in the British Empire in 1907.

The two countries have retained very strong trading, sporting and cultural links through the twentieth century (see, for example, Sinclair (1987) and Holmes (1996), for useful reviews of the trans-Tasman relationship). These links have been strengthened by an inter-governmental economic agreement (Closer Economic Relations or CER) which is progressively removing barriers to the free movement of goods, capital and services between the two countries. The Trans-Tasman Travel Arrangement, which allows for the unimpeded movement of citizens of Australia and New Zealand into the other country, is seen to be a critical component of the overall closer relationships fostered under CER. Indeed, New Zealanders tend to regard the major cities of Australia, especially Sydney, as the top tier of their urban hierarchy, and movement across the Tasman tends to be viewed as a form of 'internal' rather than international migration (Pool, 1980; Poot, 1995, 1998).

In the light of the strong historical and contemporary economic and social connections between the two countries, it is hardly surprising that some New Zealanders see mileage in a more formal political association with Australia. A keen contemporary exponent of this is Gordon McLauchlan (1998a, 1998b), prominent commentator in New Zealand's largest circulation daily newspaper, the *New Zealand Herald*. In March 1998 he observed:

When the Commonwealth of Oz [a New Zealand slang abbreviation for Australia] was patched together in 1901, provision was made for New Zealand to join; but by that time New Zealanders had a misplaced sense of higher gentility and that nervous xenophobia that afflicts island peoples. And, anyway, Richard Seddon [New Zealand's Prime Minister at the turn of the century] saw himself as an empire builder in the South Pacific.

But think about it. Our society lacks diversity and size in the modern world. We have an economy smaller than many corporations in the United States and Europe, smaller even than many American investment funds – about the same size, probably, as the Coca-Cola franchise in Biloxi.

We have an economy whose balance of payments can be destabilised by a distortion in the Auckland housing market, an economy not much more diversified than many multinationals. With capital in huge volumes moving unimpeded around the globe, how vulnerable will our prosperity be, how much at the mercy of corporate whim? Would it not make sense to federate with Australia to give us the protection size would provide?

Probably no two countries have more similar cultures, both derived from the same [colonial] roots. We speak not only the same language but near enough the same dialect of that language. We play the same games and all of New Zealand is a lot closer, geographically, to Canberra than Perth is. ...

If the British, the French and Germans can carry all the baggage of their bloody histories into a community, why can't two of the most similar cultures in the world get together? It doesn't have to happen overnight but if we had leadership truly concerned about the future of this tiny nation, exploratory talks would begin now just as the CER negotiations began many years ago. They would aim at a sensible union. I suppose the one problem is: could the Australians be bothered?

Nine months after 'floating' his ideas, McLauchlan (1998b) felt compelled to make an even stronger plea for serious debate on the issue of economic and ultimately political union with Australia. He stressed the urgency of this debate: if the Australian people choose to become a Republic in 2000, as is highly likely, the provision for New Zealand to join the present Federal system would disappear. The failure of the referendum on republicanism has given New Zealanders favouring union with Australia some more time to press their case. The notion of a common currency is being considered quite seriously in some quarters in New Zealand -- much closer economic and social linkages are likely in the future.

### Immigration policy issues

Trans-Tasman migration, while unregulated by specific government immigration policies, has, in fact, a major influence on the operationalising of New Zealand's current immigration policy. For a number of reasons, which cannot be detailed here, the Minister of Immigration decided in December 1997 that a medium term goal for New Zealand's immigration intake should be an average annual overall net migration gain of 10,000 people (this is after allowing for emigration of New Zealanders) (see Bedford and Ho (1998) for a discussion of this 'target'). The intake of new settlers is thus pegged, in part, to the outflow of New Zealanders – something which cannot be regulated by an

immigration policy per se. As the major destination of New Zealanders is Australia, it is hardly surprising that some Australian commentators have become concerned over the way numbers of new settlers in New Zealand are being determined in part by the volume of emigration of New Zealanders to Australia (Jupp, 1998; New Zealand Herald, 1998a). Clearly New Zealand's immigration policies are not independent of the trans-Tasman connection – something which Birrell and Rapson (1998) have gone to some lengths to demonstrate.

In the early 1990s the New Zealand and Australian governments explored the possibility of establishing a common border for customs and immigration purposes (Bedford and Lidgard, 1997). The talks eventually stalled on a basic difference in approach to the issue of short-term entry by visitors to the two countries. In New Zealand the great majority of short-term arrivals (around 80 percent each year) enter without any visa – they come in under bilateral visa-waiver agreements. In the case of Australia, there are no visa-waiver agreements as such, although recently an electronic visa issuing service at travel agents in selected countries overseas has greatly reduced the inconvenience of having to apply to a designated consulate or office for a visa to visit Australia. The Australian government wanted New Zealand to abandon its visa-waiver agreements, especially those with countries in Asia, before entering into any common border arrangements. New Zealand refused to do this; many of the visa-waiver agreements have the status of treaties and cannot just be terminated by an immigration authority. Aspects of immigration policy had a significant bearing on the outcome of these trans-Tasman negotiations. There is no common customs and immigration border yet.

Australia's concern about New Zealand's more liberal entry provisions under the visa-waiver system is related to its concern over the recent liberalisation of aspects of our points system (see Bedford and Ho (1998) for some details of these changes). The major issue of contention is the extent to which immigration from countries which Australia is endeavouring to contain (such as island states in the Pacific, and countries on the Asia-Pacific rim) will in fact continue to grow because of access to Australia via New Zealand. It was the movement of Polynesians from New Zealand to Australia that first raised this concern in Australia. There has long been a significant difference in the colonial and post-colonial histories of these two countries in the Pacific.

### **A Pacific Country?**

From the beginning of the nineteenth century people from island countries in the south Pacific were moving in and out of New Zealand and Australia on ships involved in a burgeoning commodity trade, initially across the Tasman

and with societies in the Pacific and on the Asia-Pacific rim; later more directly with the United Kingdom and countries in Europe (Bedford, 1992; Howe, 1984). Stronger links between the settler communities in New Zealand and Australia on the one hand and those in the Pacific Islands on the other evolved through the second half of the nineteenth century, especially after the development of a fledgling cotton industry in Fiji in the 1850s, a coconut oil industry across tropical Oceania from the 1860s, and a sugar industry in Fiji from the 1880s. The roots of a 'modern' migration system, driven by exchanges in capital, commodities and labour between groups in and on the rim of the south Pacific, were well established by the end of the nineteenth century (Bedford, 1992).

### Building linkages

Both New Zealand and Australia assumed responsibility for administering some of Britain's colonies in the Pacific. In 1900 New Zealand took over the administration of the Cook Islands and soon after of Niue and Tokelaus. Australia assumed responsibility for administering the British colony of Papua in 1906. In 1916 the German colony of New Guinea came under Australian administration as a League of Nations Mandate. New Zealand assumed similar responsibilities in Germany's other Pacific colony, Western Samoa, in the same year.

In addition to these formal links through colonial administration, other strong connections between the two countries on the rim and their island neighbours developed as a result of the activities of various Christian missions. Crocombe (1994) points out that the remarkably thorough incorporation of Pacific Islanders into the broad world of Christian ideas, coupled with education policies which tended to fit people for occupations most readily practised outside the islands, has a lot to do with the subsequent success of Pacific Islanders as migrants in countries such as New Zealand and Australia.

While there are clearly some similarities in Australia and New Zealand's nineteenth and early twentieth century interactions with, and colonial interests, in the island Pacific, a significant difference in approach was to emerge after the Second World War. In 1947, when New Zealand citizenship was first introduced, the indigenous populations of the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelaus were also granted this status given that they were deemed to be 'part of New Zealand' because of their colonial status. Samoans, by now in a UN Trust Territory under New Zealand administration, were in a more ambivalent position and were not automatically granted New Zealand citizenship (although, as noted earlier, this was subsequently challenged successfully in the Privy Council in 1982), but there were few restrictions over their movement into and out of New Zealand before the independence of Western Samoa in 1962.



A Treaty of Friendship between New Zealand and Western Samoa, signed on independence, included provision for a quota of Samoans to be admitted to New Zealand for residence each year. From the late 1960s this quota allowed for annual entry of up to 1,100 adults and their families as long as prior arrangements had been made for employment in New Zealand. The quota system has been a significant factor behind the development of the large Samoan descent population resident in New Zealand (101,700 in 1996).

Australia never granted citizenship, or privileged access to its labour market through a quota system, to any Pacific Island peoples. Entry of Pacific Islanders seeking employment and residence after the Second World War was strictly controlled by an immigration policy which strongly favoured Europeans as settlers. Even though the deliberate 'White Australia' policy officially ended in the early 1970s, Australia has never openly encouraged immigration from the Pacific Islands. Growth in the Pacific Island populations of cities like Sydney and Melbourne during the 1970s and 1980s was due more to the movement of Polynesians into Australia from New Zealand, rather than direct immigration from the islands (Connell, 1985).

New Zealand's much more obvious focus on the Pacific Islands after the Second World War, both as a source of labour and as a significant destination for development assistance, marked an important distinction between the two countries in terms of their identification as Pacific states. In the rhetoric of Australia's post-war foreign policy there is little reference to being 'part of the Pacific'. New Zealand's discourse about national identity has had a strong Pacific focus since the Second World War, especially after the United Kingdom decided to join the European Common Market in 1973.

Through the 1950s and 1960s, as the New Zealand economy underwent a major industrial transformation associated with development of an import-substitution manufacturing base, Pacific Island colonies provided a convenient labour reserve. Labour migration was encouraged through a number of work permit schemes, and the immigration authorities tended to ignore those 'overstaying' their work permits while the demand for unskilled cheap labour remained high (Gibson, 1983; Bedford and Gibson, 1987). New Zealand's Pacific Island population, which exceeded 200,000 in 1996, was given a substantial boost by these post-war labour migration flows -- flows which accelerated rapidly in the 1970s once airstrips had been established in the Cook Islands, Niue and Samoa (Bedford, 1983 and 1986; Crocombe, 1992).

Through the 1970s and 1980s successive New Zealand governments have used a range of strategies to dampen flows of Pacific Islanders who are not New Zealand citizens by right. At times (such as the infamous 'dawn raids' of the mid-1970s) there have been crack-downs on 'overstayers' and amnesty

arrangements have been attempted to 'regularise' the residence status of people who do not have valid visas or permits. Until the policy changes introduced after the 1986 review, it was difficult for Pacific Islanders to get approval for members of their extended families to enter New Zealand for permanent residence. A change in policy in 1986 relating to principles underlying family reunion, including rules relating to adopted children, allowed for a more culturally sensitive approach to Polynesian family migration (Bedford, 1987b; Bedford, Farmer and Trlin, 1987). Through the 1980s and 1990s the majority of Pacific Islanders gaining residence in New Zealand, who were not already entitled to New Zealand citizenship, entered under family reunion or humanitarian provisions, rather than as workers. The main exception was the Samoan quota and, at times of high unemployment in the late 1970s and late 1980s, few gained access via this route.

#### Meta societies and transnational exchanges

By the mid-1990s, less than half of New Zealand's Pacific Island population had been born overseas (48 percent). It has not really been appropriate to talk of New Zealand's Pacific Islanders as an 'immigrant' population for more than a decade (Bedford and Lerner, 1992). A more appropriate conceptualisation, and one which underlies the recent writing of sociologists such as Hau'ofa (1994 and 1998) and Macpherson (1997), is the notion of Pacific Island 'meta-societies' -- societies which span several 'nations' in terms of their significant population concentrations. There are sizeable Samoan populations in New Zealand, Australia and the United States (especially Los Angeles) -- populations that in aggregate will soon exceed the size of the population of Samoa. There are twice as many Cook Islanders living in New Zealand as in the Cook Islands, and over seven times more Niueans living overseas than on their raised coral island in Polynesia.

Through a process of 'world enlargement' Hau'ofa (1994) argues that Polynesian extended families have deliberately sought access to opportunities for education, employment, material goods, welfare support, indeed all of the essentials for a rising material standard of living in the modern capitalist world for their own generation as well as for future generations. This strategy involves maintaining a strong connection to the places they term 'home' -- the rural and urban communities where they have rights to land and where their indigenous cultures and languages are rooted -- as well as establishing bases in towns and cities in a number of countries overseas. These bases take their human form in the presence of kinsfolk who have residence rights and, sometimes, citizenship rights in several countries. A collective strategy of creating multi-local, multi-national communities of kin, or, in the words of Marcus (1981), establishing 'transnational corporation of kin', has been emphasised in much of the recent research on international migration of Pacific Islanders (Bedford, 1997 and 1998).

Powering the transnational exchanges which drive the economies of these Pacific meta-societies are two sets of forces. On the one hand there are the social networks and exchanges of money (especially remittances from workers in the rim countries), goods and what James (1991) calls the 'human remittances' or children sent to live with and assist families either at home, in the islands, or in the new homelands overseas. On the other there are the economic imperatives which are driving a burgeoning 'trade' in island produce and manufactured goods from metropolitan countries through the informal channels that link family members in different countries (Ward, 1997).

One transfer, which has recently been negotiated, concerns the portability of New Zealand's superannuation entitlements for Pacific Islanders who have spent large parts of their working lives in New Zealand, but who wish to retire to their island birthplaces. Cook Islanders, Niueans and Tokelauans, as New Zealand citizens, have such portability, but long-term residents from Samoa, Tonga and Fiji, who have not become New Zealand citizens, do not have access to superannuation entitlements off-shore. These arrangements have been finalised and people who have lived in New Zealand for 20 years or more can retire to their country of birth and collect New Zealand superannuation. People who had lived here for 10 years get 50 percent portability of their entitlement.

### Illegal transfers

A new dimension to the flows facilitated by transnational corporation of kin is the trafficking of drugs, from the United States, via the Pacific Islands to Australia and New Zealand. The 'yam scam', involving the importing of 1.75 kilograms of cocaine into New Zealand in hollowed out yams exported from Tonga, is one of the recent examples of drug smuggling via the social networks underpinning Pacific meta-societies (Wakefield, 1997: A1). Border security issues, associated with importing of illegal drugs and the entry of undeclared fresh foods, have become a prominent immigration policy issue in recent years in New Zealand.

Concern over outbreaks of fruit fly, which could devastate New Zealand's major export industry in fresh fruits, have prompted stringent checks of luggage at airports, especially luggage accompanying visitors and migrants entering from Pacific Island airports or ports. The penalty facing passengers bringing in undeclared items of fresh fruit is now NZ\$100,000 -- compared with the US\$25.00 fine which passengers arriving at Los Angeles Airport are repeatedly warned applies for violations in this context. Drug shipments into New Zealand from the Pacific have rarely featured in the courts or media, however; these have been much more a concern for Customs and Immigration authorities in the case of passenger entry from countries on the Asia-Pacific rim.

Australian police and border control officials have also been concerned about New Zealand being used as a 'backdoor' for movement of illegal drugs as well as immigrants across the Tasman. New Zealand's visa-waiver provisions for visitors from many Asian countries, including Thailand, are seen to be a security risk by Australia and, as noted earlier, was one factor behind the failure to reach agreement in the early 1990s on a common border for customs and immigration purposes in the two countries. New Zealand did experiment briefly late in 1986 with visa-waiver entry for visitors from three of its major Pacific migrant and visitor sources (Samoa, Tonga and Fiji), but this was short-lived (Bedford and Lerner, 1992; Bedford and Lidgard, 1997). The only Pacific Island countries to have visa-waiver status (aside from the three whose nationals are also citizens of New Zealand) are the central Pacific atoll nations of Kiribati and Tuvalu. Largely because of the expense (and irregularity) of air transport between New Zealand and these island states, there is limited movement of Tuvaluans and I-Kiribati into Auckland.

Visa-waiver provisions for Pacific Islanders are unlikely to be extended to the major sources of visitors and migrants in the near future, but facilitating the entry of tourists and potential migrants from countries on the Asia-Pacific rim is a high priority under New Zealand's current immigration policy. It is this aspect of New Zealand's immigration policy, rather than the provisions which facilitate the long-standing Pacific connection, that are behind the concern over trans-Tasman 'backdoor' migration highlighted by Birrell and Rapson (Lagan, 1998). New Zealand's belated efforts to 'become part of Asia' are the subject of the next section.

### **Part of Asia?**

In the 1970s, a century after an influx of Chinese migrants to work on the goldfields of Victoria (Australia) and Otago (New Zealand) respectively, both the Australian and New Zealand governments began to dismantle the substantial barriers to immigration from the most populous part of the Pacific rim. In 1973 Whitlam's Labour Government finally abandoned the 'White Australia' policy and introduced a system of selecting immigrants which was based on criteria other than birthplace or national origin or race. The target number of migrants was reduced accordingly, in line with a move in both Australia and New Zealand to reduce their annual intakes (Castles, 1992).

A year later, in 1974, the New Zealand Government introduced restrictions on the automatic entry of British and Irish citizens for the first time, requiring all permanent and long-term immigrants, other than those travelling under the Trans-Tasman Travel Arrangement, to have valid entry visas (Farmer, 1979). New Zealand still retained a traditional source country preference as the basis of

its immigration policy, but by the mid-1970s it was clear that a diverse flow of migrants was becoming the rule. New Zealand's Indo-Chinese Refugee Resettlement Programme, which was initiated in 1975, in effect launched the second phase of Asian migration just over a century after the short-lived 'invasion' associated with the gold rushes.

#### Refugee intakes and new flows

The annual refugee intakes from Vietnam and Kampuchea added a new dimension to the limited direct contact which New Zealanders, other than travellers and those who chose to work overseas, had with Asian cultures. Before this, it was military action on the Korean Peninsula in the early 1950s, participation in military manoeuvres to contain a communist threat in Malaysia in the 1960s (and the on-going commitment of New Zealand forces to a multinational defence force in Singapore until the late 1980s), and involvement in the Vietnam War in the late 1960s and early 1970s which characterised one of the main ways New Zealand 'engaged with' societies on the Asian rim of the Pacific.

There were more positive linkages, such as those sponsored by the Colombo Plan which New Zealand supported and used as a basis for assisting with the education of students from Malaysia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka (Lidgard, 1998: 367), and the excellent low-cost development assistance activities of Volunteer Service Abroad which had projects in Asian countries from the outset of its work in the 1960s. There was also some trade and, with the onset of jet travel, the gradual development of tourist flows both from Asian countries to New Zealand (especially Japan) and New Zealand to countries on the rim. However, an Asian dimension to the traditional 'overseas experience' so favoured by New Zealanders in their late teens and early twenties, has become popular in the 1980s and 1990s; in the 1960s and 1970s Australia, the United Kingdom, Europe and the United States remained the primary destinations for New Zealanders heading overseas.

The Indo-Chinese refugee intakes were followed quickly by family reunion flows. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, for example, the biggest net gains of permanent and long-term (PLT) migrants from countries in Asia (from Afghanistan in the west to Japan in the northeast – see Vasil and Yoon (1996) for a discussion of New Zealand's conception of 'Asia') were from Vietnam and Kampuchea. Indeed, between 1 April 1979 and 31 March 1986 (just before the significant changes in immigration policy introduced by the Labour Government in August 1986), 6,640 of the 10,666 PLT net migration gain from countries in Asia (62 per cent) was from Vietnam, Kampuchea and Laos (Bedford and Lidgard, 1996). The four main 'traditional' Asian sources in the 1960s and 1970s (India, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Singapore) together only

accounted for 1,522 (14 per cent) of the total PLT gain from Asia during this period.

### Business migration

In the late 1970s the New Zealand Immigration Service initiated an Entrepreneur Investor Policy (EIP) designed to encourage migrants with capital to come and invest in what became known as the 'think big' economic growth strategy of the then Prime Minister, Robert Muldoon. This policy was directed mainly at European migrants, and between 1978 and 1986, when it was replaced with the much more ambitious Business Immigration Programme with its focus on Asian entrepreneurs and investment capital, just over 200 migrants were approved for entry under the EIP. Summarising the achievements of the EIP over the 7 years, the Hon. Kerry Burke (1986: 19-20) observed in August 1986 Immigration Policy Review:

Two hundred and twenty-five applicants and a total of NZ\$106 million investment ... while useful, could not be described as a significant element in either the total immigrant flow of the nation's development. ... [T]he entrepreneur programme has not succeeded in capturing the attention of more than a few of the potential investors who are also being actively sought by countries such as Australia and Canada.

Competition for business migrants between Australia, Canada, the United States and New Zealand has been intense during the 1980s and 1990s. Not surprisingly, New Zealand comes a distant fourth as far as numbers of immigrant entrepreneurs are concerned. However, on a per capita basis, immigration makes a larger contribution to overall population change in New Zealand than in the other three 'traditional lands of immigration' (Smith, 1997). Comparatively small absolute numbers of immigrants do not necessarily mean small impacts.

The history of New Zealand's business and entrepreneur immigration schemes has been reviewed elsewhere (Trlin, 1992 and 1997; Trlin and Kang, 1992; Bedford and Ho, 1998). From the point of view of the New Zealand government, business immigration has been one of the key elements of official immigration policy since the mid-1980s. Depending on how one counts approvals for entry of potential entrepreneurs, up to 20,000 immigrants with investment capital or business skills could have been approved between April 1986 and March 1998 (Bedford and Ho, 1998). Over half of these immigrants were from Hong Kong and Taiwan. The business immigration policy has had a significant impact on applications for residence in New Zealand from these two Chinese communities since the mid-1980s.

Between 1 April 1986 and 31 March 1998 New Zealand gained 162,000 nationals of countries in Asia (101,300 or 62.5 per cent from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan), comprising just over half (52.3 per cent) of the total net gain of non-New Zealand citizens (309,800). While this was by far the largest influx of people from countries on the Asia-Pacific rim in New Zealand's history, it hardly constituted the 'invasion' which it was frequently termed by the mid-1990s. There are some distinctive phases in this 18 years migration history -- phases which are discussed in some detail in Lidgard (1998), Lidgard and Bedford (1999) and Lidgard, Bedford and Goodwin (1998a and 1998b). The Asian component of New Zealand's net migration gain, while rarely more than 50 percent in any one year, certainly attracted much greater attention from the public, the media and politicians than the flows of Pacific Islanders, and peoples of European descent from South Africa, Australia, the United Kingdom and countries in Europe (Bedford, 1996; Bedford and Pool, 1996).

By the mid-1990s Asian immigration to New Zealand had become a significant issue for both the media and some politicians (Trlin, Henderson and Pernice, 1997). Largely in response to an increasingly negative reaction to levels of immigration which were well in excess of the Government's notional target of 20,000 approvals per year, the Minister of Immigration approved some significant amendments to policy governing entry under the two main categories of the 'points system' in October 1995 (Farmer, 1997; Trlin, 1997). The most important changes as far as prospective immigrants from countries on the Asia-Pacific rim were more stringent English language requirements (for all members of the family) and stricter control over the issuing of re-entry visas to migrants who were not registered in New Zealand for taxation purposes.

#### Astronauts and policy changes

The 'astronaut' family phenomenon has attracted considerable negative comment, especially from some politicians in the lead up to the 1996 national election even though evidence for the wide-spread existence of this phenomenon was very sketchy. Research into the incidence of 'astronaut' families by the Migration Research Group at the University of Waikato, using both interviews and innovative approaches to the analysis of census data, have demonstrated that multi-local families are not uncommon amongst Hong Kong Chinese and Taiwanese, but are very rare amongst Koreans (Ho and Lidgard, 1997; Ho, Bedford and Bedford, 2000; Ho, Bedford and Goodwin, 1997a and 1997b; Lidgard, 1996; Lidgard et al, 1998c). The phenomenon is by no means confined to migrants of Chinese descent, however; multi-local families have long been a feature of the migration of New Zealanders to Australia (Bedford and Lowe, 1993) as well as of the Polynesian meta-societies discussed in the preceding section (Macpherson, 1997).

A combination of policy changes in 1995 and the onset of the Asian economic crisis from mid-1997 dramatically reduced the inflow of migrants from the Asia-Pacific rim to New Zealand. The September year figures for net migration gains tell an interesting story: in the year ended September 30 1995, just before the policy changes designed to dampen the flow of migrants into New Zealand were introduced, the net gain from countries in Asia was 22,000 (15,000 from countries in northeast Asia). In the year ended September 1998, just before policy changes designed to increase the flow of migrants into New Zealand were introduced, the net gain from Asian countries was 11,000 (7,400 from northeast Asia). The impact of policy changes and the Asian crisis on flows of visitors, migrants, capital and commodities between New Zealand and countries on the Asia-Pacific rim has been discussed elsewhere (Ho and Bedford, 1998; Lidgard and Yoon, 1999). It is sufficient to note here that economic circumstances in both the migrant/investment source region, and the antipodean destination are unlikely to encourage flows which will produce the net gains that became common in the mid-1990s, at least in the medium term.

#### Settlement issues

It is interesting to note that during the months before the October 1998 policy announcements the Minister of Immigration, supported by the sole Chinese Member of Parliament in New Zealand, Mrs Pansy Wong, went to some lengths to consult with members of the Chinese business community and representatives of the major Chinese associations over the proposed changes to the language requirements and the business immigration scheme. A major issue which was raised at all of these meetings was the absence of a government-sponsored migrant settlement policy in New Zealand. Unlike Canada or Australia, the New Zealand government has not had a migrant settlement policy since the termination of sponsored immigration from the United Kingdom and the Netherlands in the 1960s, other than for the annual refugee quota. The immigrant selection procedures are supposed to identify individuals and families who will settle without undue difficulty in New Zealand, using the human (and financial) capital they have brought into the country.

The massive economic changes which New Zealand has undergone since the mid-1980s have, however, changed considerably the contexts for both social security as well as employment opportunity. Immigrants in the 1990s face a very different New Zealand from migrants entering the country in the 1960s and 1970s. More deliberate efforts by a range of government and non-governmental agencies are now seen to be an essential ingredient for successful adaptation to and integration into New Zealand society of immigrants from cultural and linguistic backgrounds which differ markedly from those of the host society (Ho et al, 2000). This was an issue which Asian contributors to the national Population Conference in November 1997 emphasised repeatedly (see especially the paper by Manying Ip, 1997).



Ip (1997: 163-164) captures the essence of much of the frustration amongst Asians who have come to New Zealand under the 'points system' when she writes:

In our 'New Chinese New Zealand Survey', many of the interviewees expressed great frustration, wondering aloud why New Zealand has been targeting highly-skilled people, enticing them to come only to tell them that they were over-qualified for most of the jobs available in the country. Many want to set up business rather than be employees. However, they were unprepared for the monopolistic control of producer boards, and hampered by other subsidiary factors like high labour and high transportation costs. Some lost considerable sums of capital when one venture after another failed. 'In New Zealand the harder you try starting a business, the more money you will lose' was the current adage among some luckless Asian businessmen. Many preferred to cut losses by putting their money in fixed-term deposits or in property investment, which carried lower risks.

The above points suggest that we may have been heading in the wrong direction and labouring under false assumptions so far. They show up as a fallacy the assumption that migrants who have excellent personal qualities (education, skills and business experience) can come to New Zealand and be just as equally successful, without help, without extra information, and without much preparation on the part of the host country.

This is not the place for an extended analysis of the experiences of Asian migrants in New Zealand. The Department of Internal Affairs (1996), Ho (1995), Ho et al. (1996, 1997c), Ip (1995), Friesen and Ip (1997), Lidgard (1996) and Lidgard et al. (1998c), amongst others, have endeavoured to document some of these for the recent immigrants. There is clearly scope for more research on immigrant adaptation in the re-structured New Zealand of the 1990s, especially as the country's economy is likely to take longer to emerge from the recent recession than many that have been affected by the Asian economic crisis. A government-sponsored survey of immigrant settlement experiences -- the Longitudinal Immigration Survey of New Zealand (LisNZ) will provide invaluable information on migrant adaptation as well as many other dimensions of international population movement.

## **Migration in the twenty-first century**

New Zealand has entered the twenty-first century on a rather uncertain note as far as immigration is concerned, if one goes by comment in the media and by some politicians. Reference has been made frequently to the significant loss of New Zealanders, especially to Australia, and the fact that the target for immigrant approvals (38,000) was not achieved for the years ended June 1999 and 2000. In fact around 34,000 approvals were registered during 1999 and 36,500 in 2000, not far below the target, and for the year ended March 2000 New Zealand experienced a small overall net migration gain (2,150), not the sizeable net loss that many commentators expected. There was a net loss of 21,900 New Zealand citizens in the year to March 2000, but this was just over half the net loss of the previous March year (-40,670), and lower than most of the net losses of citizens since 1995. Net gains of citizens of other countries have been hovering around 24,000 to 26,000 per year since 1997. These are unlikely to rise to the heady heights of the mid-1990s when gains of over 40,000 were recorded in 1995, 1996 and 1997 (Lidgard and Bedford, 1999).

### Migration and ageing

Notwithstanding the present lower levels of immigration than in the mid-1990s, the first decade of the twenty-first century will be a 'decade of migration' in New Zealand. Migration (both in and out of the country) will be a prominent topic in the media and in political and public debate, partly because the population will be experiencing a contraction in the working age groups as a result of ageing of progressively smaller birth cohorts from the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. This shrinking in the working age groups will be occurring as the demand for skilled labour in many of the advanced capitalist societies intensifies, and competition between labour markets becomes more severe.

In the latter part of the decade there will be a short-lived surge in the workforce as the 'baby blip' cohorts of the early 1990s work their way through the age structure. This development could be associated with quite sharp increases in levels of emigration amongst the younger New Zealand workforce, especially if jobs are not available in the domestic labour market at competitive salaries. Emigration to Australia, Europe and North America will clearly be an option for educated and skilled New Zealanders as the effects of persistent sub-replacement fertility in all of the OECD countries become more deeply entrenched. There will be significant irregularities in the patterns of growth of different age groups as the baby blip cohorts age, and this will cause short-lived differential pressures on the labour market and services. In such unstable conditions it is common for immigration policy to be used to respond to current pressures and demands. This, in turn, can be quite destabilising. There needs to be greater acceptance of the cyclical nature of net gains and losses in New

Zealand's population through international migration -- the result of a 'balancing' of two highly irregular flows: emigration of New Zealanders and immigration of others.

The New Zealand Government's medium term target of 38-40,000 approvals, with an overall objective of achieving a net gain of 10,000 per year, thus allowing emigration of 20-30,000 New Zealanders a year, remains very generous by international standards. The target is the equivalent of 1 percent of the national population and, as noted earlier, was not far from being achieved despite intensifying international competition for migrants and the relatively sluggish New Zealand economy. The 10,000 net migration target was achieved through the 1990s if the annual net gains and losses for the 1990s are averaged. It is therefore not an unattainable objective, although it is a very high average annual net gain for New Zealand by historical standards. Over the 46-year period (1953-1999) the average annual total net migration gain was 5,900, well below the current ambitious target.

#### New forms of migration

Through the first decade of the twenty-first century the importance of a 'temporary' migration, as distinct from the classic 'settler' migration of the previous century, will become more obvious to researchers and policy makers (see Hugo (1999) for a useful review of international migration trends). The New Zealand Immigration Service and the Labour Market Policy Group are expressing greater interest in forms of mobility which link high-skilled labour in particular into residence and work in several international locations. New Zealand might be a base for only a relatively short part of someone's career, especially for those whose technical and managerial skills are in demand in the labour forces of multi-national companies. Complex patterns of population circulation will cause even more volatility in annual arrival and departure figures as more and more people with internationally marketable skills develop transnational careers and multi-local lives.

It is unrealistic to expect that these migrants will necessarily show great 'loyalty' to New Zealand, as evinced in long-term residence intentions. Astronaut family strategies will become more widespread as families develop their opportunities and lives in several countries. This will apply especially to family relationships in an increasing number of New Zealand's families that literally span the Tasman. It is interesting to note that during 1999, 60 percent of the applications for residence in New Zealand by highly skilled migrants involved only one person. A further 20 percent were for couples, and only 20 percent were for families. Astronauting is already a widespread phenomenon.

Migration between New Zealand and Australia is not going to diminish, no matter how much New Zealand's politicians, business people and media

reporters beat their breasts and wring their hands over the 'brain drain'. The sizeable population of New Zealanders living in Australia will ensure that the transnational connections through population movement between the two countries intensify. It is not all one-way traffic. The latest migration figures (for the year ended May 2000) show that while 35,900 people left New Zealand with the intention of spending the next 12 months or more in Australia, 10,800 came to New Zealand from Australia with the same intention. In the case of short-term movements, the 652,500 people leaving New Zealand for stays of less than 12 months in Australia were matched by 546,500 coming in the opposite direction. Australia is clearly 'gaining' in these population exchanges, and will continue to gain, but New Zealand is not losing out entirely. The patterns of movement between the two countries are much more complex than is captured by the emotive terms 'exodus' and 'brain drain'.

### Regional patterns

Population movement between the Pacific Islands and New Zealand is also much more complex than the stereotypical view of regulated flows of settlers seeking opportunities in New Zealand's cities. The large population base of Pacific peoples in New Zealand (202,000 in 1996) ensures that there is substantial circulation of people between the islands, New Zealand and Australia. New Zealand tends to gain in most years from this circulation in terms of net migration, but the overall gains are small in relation to the total movement. There are also years when New Zealand loses more Pacific peoples than it gains through international migration, and this volatility in flows is likely to intensify rather than diminish through the first decade of the twenty-first century. Political instability in Fiji will ensure that there is increased emigration of both Indians and Fijians from that country, especially the more skilled and entrepreneurial groups in the population, and New Zealand and Australia will be favoured destinations. In addition pressure from some small Pacific microstates, such as Tuvalu and Kiribati, which are experiencing negative impacts of global warming on their fragile atoll environments, will ensure that there is continued pressure from Pacific states for opportunities to migrate to New Zealand and Australia.

Migration to New Zealand of settlers from countries in Europe is unlikely to reach the levels of the post-war years in the 1950s and 1960s. In large measure this is because of the fact that the domestic populations in European countries are ageing rapidly and these people will not find it easy to find satisfactory work in New Zealand. Short-term movement of Europeans and North Americans to New Zealand for recreation will intensify, and there will be some immigration for lifestyle reasons. However, Australia far more than New Zealand, is the 'down under' destination for Europeans and North Americans. New Zealand tends to pick up visitors as part of a round trip to this part of the world, rather than being the primary destination in its own right. Net migration

gains from countries in Europe and North America have remained relatively steady through the 1990s and this is likely to continue into the twenty-first century.

Migration from countries in Asia and southern and eastern Africa is likely to become increasingly important in terms of New Zealand's immigrant approval target. China (1,800) and South Africa (2,400) contributed the largest net migration gains of their nationals to New Zealand's population during the year ended March 2000, followed by Australia (1,400). New Zealand's reliance on immigration from Asian countries and from parts of Africa will become greater during the early twenty-first century as the flows of skilled New Zealanders out to work in Australia, North America and Europe (as well as Asian countries) increase, and immigration from traditional sources in Europe and the Pacific (aside from Fiji) remains relatively stable. The composition of New Zealand's population will continue to diversify in terms of groups with different cultures and lifestyles.

#### Skilled migrant flows

The increasing competition for skilled migrants, which is inevitable given demographic deficits in most developed countries, will ensure that New Zealand remains relatively low on the list of priorities for potential long-term high-skilled settlers. New Zealand's skilled migrant flows will be increasingly dominated by short to medium term residents. New Zealand is becoming one of a number of nodes in the multi-national career cycles of an international skilled labour force. There will be no shortage of refugees or immigrants seeking to escape from economic hardship and forms of political and social persecution. Illegal trafficking in migrants is increasing rapidly and New Zealand will be a destination for some 'entrepreneurs' in this trade in human capital. However, there are other much more favoured destinations at this stage, including Australia.

The issue of emigration of New Zealanders will continue to be contentious -- indeed it will become even more contentious as the search for desirable immigrants becomes more competitive. Losing skilled New Zealanders to overseas destinations when it is proving difficult to replace them with suitable immigrant stock is certainly raising concerns amongst politicians and the business community. New Zealand will be seen by many to be failing on two counts: it is not capable of holding its own people, and it cannot attract others. But we need to watch carefully this tendency to treat a country as an isolate in the complex world of flows of people, goods, capital and services in the global economy.

For many countries 'people' are a key export with a view to generating other kinds of flows back into the source country. The key policy issue in these

countries is how to make this 'export' generate on-going returns for the source country. It is well known that Pacific countries depend for their economic survival on returns from migrants or second generation settlers. They can never provide the employment opportunities for all of their skilled (and unskilled) labour. There are great opportunities for exploiting transnational dimensions of a society, as the Irish are currently learning. New Zealand has a transnational society and in the early years of the twenty-first century we must 'work' the benefits of transnationalism much more aggressively than we have in the interests of the national economy and society.

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