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NEW ZEALAND

NEW ZEALAND'S  
CULTURAL IDENTITY

PREPARED FOR:

Saatchi and Saatchi Advertising  
On Behalf Of :  
New Zealand Broadcasting Commission

DISTRIBUTION

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Job No. 10-1428  
August, 1990

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1. BACKGROUND

1. BACKGROUND

The New Zealand Broadcasting Commission's primary function is to use the broadcasting fee it collects to promote programmes which reflect New Zealand's identity and culture. Revenue generated by the broadcasting fee enables the Broadcasting Commission to ensure that programmes which address the needs of smaller segments of the population (which would otherwise be regarded as less commercially viable) are produced and broadcasted, thus not only addressing needs of specific target groups, but also broadening the range of programmes available for "mainstream" audiences.

This report presents the findings of the first stage of a two-stage research exercise, which has been specifically designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the key dimensions which reflect New Zealand's identity. This information will, in turn, assist the Commission in its policy formulation with regard to its role in addressing the needs of specific minority groups.

The first stage, reported on here, has focused upon exploring and understanding, in breadth and depth, the range of values and opinions which reflect the cultural needs of a range of different groups within New Zealand, and their needs and expectations of a broadcasting system.

The second stage will provide a larger scale measurement of the values and themes identified by this research. This will add 'weight' or prioritise the themes identified by the first stage, and enable the needs of specific interest or minority groups to be profiled on a more valid, and accurate quantitative database.

2. OBJECTIVES

2.        OBJECTIVES

Specifically, the objective of the qualitative stage of the research is to explore the needs and expectations of various interest and minority groups within New Zealand by :

- 2.1        Understanding the aspects of New Zealand culture which are of importance to them.
  
- 2.2        Exploring how these dimensions of importance match New Zealand's current cultural climate.
  
- 2.3        Exploring the role of the media in this context.

3. METEHD AND SAMPLE

3. METHOD AND SAMPLE

To ensure that all issues of importance and relevance to respondents were raised and covered, the research was undertaken on an individual, face-to-face basis using a semi-structured questionnaire (see appendix).

The questions, by necessity, were very open-ended, and considerable probing was undertaken to ensure that all issues and concerns were voiced and thoroughly clarified.

Each interview was approximately two hours in duration and undertaken by Research International New Zealand's exclusive team of trained interviewers. Individual interviewers were carefully selected to interview the members of different interest minority groups to facilitate rapport and quality response. Interviews were by appointment in respondents' own homes, and contact was made through a variety of sources including Research International New Zealand's Panel of Homes, affinity groups, random calls and groups representing specific interest groups.

All interviews were undertaken between 23rd July and 10th August, 1990.



The sample structure was devised to provide an overall regional spread, and to include members of the interest groups of importance. The sample was as follows :

	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Disabled</u>	<u>Other Ethnic</u>	<u>Rural</u>	<u>Maori</u>
Auckland	24	3	4	3		5	3	6
Gisborne	6	2		2				2
Wellington	23	3	4	3	6	4	3	
Christchurch	25	2	2	2	6	3	6	4
Dunedin	6	2	2	2				
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	84	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

- NOTE :
- (1) "Rural" was defined as those living in an isolated farm situation or from a rural community, and not an "alternative life-styler".
  - (2) "Children" included those aged between 8 and 15 years.
  - (3) "Maori" included a broad cross-section of Maori.
  - (4) "Disabled" covered a range of physical disabilities.
  - (5) "Other Ethnic" included Singaporean, Thai, Malaysian, Chinese, Cook Islanders, Samoan and Indian.
  - (6) In all cases, a spread across age, lifecycle and socio-economic groups was achieved.

4. DETAILED SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

#### 4. DETAILED SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

##### 4.1 PREFACE

This report provides commentary on New Zealanders' own definition of New Zealand's culture and identity. It looks at spontaneous imagery and isolates perceptions of New Zealand's unique characteristics and weaknesses. It examines New Zealand people and how they perceive themselves, and consider themselves to be perceived by others.

This report also identifies issues concerning New Zealanders' today, their perceptions of their's and others' perceptions of contemporary New Zealand, and it discusses New Zealanders' ideals for the country's future.

It is against this backdrop that the role of the media is discussed and evaluated. Its role and current focus and future direction are considered.

Many universal themes are apparent and span the various interest or minority groups included in the research. The text therefore focuses upon these dominant and typical threads, and highlights any difference which may have occurred between groups. It is a subtlety of emphasis which, at times, provides differentiation, rather than any major conflict of opinion.

4.2 NEW ZEALAND IDENTITY4.2.1 New Zealand : Spontaneous Imagery\* The Land - Natural Beauty and Pollution-Free

Without exception, spontaneous imagery and associations are dominated by aspects of New Zealand land and its landscape.

This includes notions of space, freedom, clean air and water, and easily accessible natural beauty.

"Open spaces - endless forests. Roads where you don't meet a car for miles. Clean rivers, clean lakes. Endless beaches. Clean air, snow-capped mountains and very, very blue sky. As soon as you get away from the town, there's nothing but nature until the next town. Landscape uninterrupted by highways and byways - open in that sense, uncrowded."

"My images are the wide open spaces and easy access to scenic reserves and parks. New Zealand has all the world's scenic pleasures, all in one nation and very close together. Such as the snow-capped mountain ranges, surfing beaches ..."

"Bush, mountains, trees. As far as I'm concerned it's the land. I think where I am I'm not far away from the country and as a child every weekend we always went to a river at weekends and had picnics or to the beach, and we were always out in the open in the countryside."

"Lots more trees. Generally all over most people have trees and gardens where they live, and you can see them anywhere you go."

"A natural piece of country - mountains, glaciers, beaches and trees - a little bit of everything - the most wonderful country in the world."

"It's clean, it's growing, basically untouched, unpolluted."

"My daughter has written saying skies in Britain have that continual haze which shows pollution - ours is bright blue."

"We are a long way from the older, heavily polluted countries that are having problems with over-population and pollution."

### Differences In Emphasis

Whilst the imagery and spontaneous association with the land dominates perceptions of New Zealand across all groups, the land has more emotive, meaningful links for Maori who talk about the land as their heritage, their roots.

"I see a real family unit country. I see it as a place for living, safe and secure because it's home. I see it as my roots. My heritage. It's my land and heritage. I'm not talking about land rights, just that my heritage or forefathers were brought up in New Zealand for hundreds of years so for me New Zealand holds a lot of roots and culture, something that will always be here. That's how I see New Zealand."

"We can see our stars at night."

"The Maori people ask the Gods of the lands if they can take the trees or the animals."

"I think of the importance of land to the Maori and their affinity with nature."

For disabled, the land was described from a more personalised focus, with emphasis on their own interaction with the land.

"We went to Ferrymead today and over to Lyttelton - I said to mum that this scenery here is as good as anywhere in the world ... coming into Sumner and looking down to the sea, the way the water comes into the estuary - the seascape."

"When I was in Auckland I used to go swimming down at the beaches - when I was there, it was sunny and it was clean."

"I used to go to the Outdoor Pursuits Centre at Turangi - I loved that."

"I spend a lot of time looking out the window - I like the view - all the homes full of people."

For children, imagery and descriptions were more detailed. For example, rather than simply discussing expanses of greenery and native bush, the grass itself would be discussed. Children also had a stronger focus on farms and animals. Children made constant comparisons between New Zealand and the rest of the world, in particular, the U.S. and Australia.

"I think of lots of trees. The trees are everywhere in the cities. New Zealand has plenty of farms. All over the country - everywhere. New Zealand is surrounded by the sea and there's plenty of grass. Looking at other countries, New Zealand has an abundance of green fields."

"Lots of healthy animals, not like other countries. Like in Australia, they only have brownish sheep, in New Zealand sheep are white and healthy. We don't have many die of Foot and Mouth and we don't have lots of sick animals."

"The native bush and all that. Parts of New Zealand are untouched and others are made into walkways and scenic reserves. You know how when you go down to Picton and you go down on the boat and you can see the little baches near the sea. If you buy things from souvenir shops, they've got sheep on them and there's a symbol with a fern on it that tells you that New Zealand has got a lot of native bush and birds and things."

To rural people, the space and isolation, characteristic of New Zealand's landscape, means peace, serenity, safety and freedom. As for Maori, it is their life.

"Good place to bring up kids in a rural lifestyle ... a lot of advantages living in a small community, it's caring."

"As far as I'm concerned, out here, living in a rural area, I enjoy the quiet and the non-invasion of neighbours, but perhaps that's because I was born here."

Some members of the ethnic group saw New Zealand landscape as beautiful and safe, clean and green, and considerable emphasis was placed on the regularity of four seasons.

"It's a good country. We are well looked after because we don't get droughts and earthquakes and things like that. It's safe. It's beautiful scenery and people. It's a nice place to live, safe and clean."

"It's clean and green. We have four distinct weather seasons which makes the country more interesting and is good for recreation, sports and sightseeing."



\* Leisure And Sport

New Zealand embodies a relaxed and easy lifestyle, where people take their leisure time seriously, and have the opportunity to become involved in a wide range of outdoor sporting leisure pursuits.

"It has a nice, lazy type of lifestyle with plenty of recreation available."

"You can do anything you want in New Zealand. Any sort of sport. Skiing is accessible to most people - horse riding's readily accessible. You can't do these in other countries unless you have heaps of money. Fishing is a right here - best salmon harbour in the world and you don't even need a license."

"They know how to enjoy themselves. They tend to have a broad range of interests so they are very outgoing and really get out and involved in whatever interests them, especially sport."

"The freedom, basic space - areas of space ... you can go to the beach and a lot of places and it will cost you nothing ... my husband can go fishing for free."

\*

The People

New Zealand is its people. New Zealanders are relaxed, laid-back, accommodating and very friendly.

"We're not in such a great hurry. We're interested in people."

"Easy going, friendly, small island."

"It's a friendly country. People are obliging and outgoing, and accommodating on the whole."

"Good blokes, good family people, good sports people, prepared to give people a go."

"New Zealand people on the whole are friendly - especially those in North Otago ... you became part of the family."

"Generally laid-back, especially in the farming community. 'She'll be right' is their attitude. Very easy-going."

However, many felt that there was an over-dependence by New Zealanders on the welfare state.

"The people. My feelings have been changing as I grow more accustomed to the lifestyle and expectations of people. They've been progressing. Initially I think people are too protected, not very competitive. They need to be taken out of their enclaves to see the real world. I think that's got a lot to do with New Zealand being a welfare state. However, now the people are slowly beginning to strive harder and become more self-reliant."

"Here people are never satisfied. In my country (India) you have to fend for yourself. Here when you're old or widowed, you get help from the state ... and people still complain."

"New Zealanders are very much protected. New Zealand is very much a protected society, very conservative society, but I can see a trend towards open markets, decentralising of political power ..."

"People on the dole. People lining up for handouts. Very welfare oriented. The economics suffer because of the liberal handouts the government gives. Perhaps we are helping the lower income people too much, so they come to expect handouts and don't fend for themselves."

\* For Families

New Zealand is perceived to be an ideal place for families. This appeared to be particularly marked amongst the rural, Maori and ethnic groups.

"New Zealand is the place for families. They tend to go in for family activities. The family barbeque, picnic or watching their families play sport."

"New Zealand is seen as a nice place to bring up children. It's safe, clean and pleasant with lots to do in the fresh air, and the education system is O.K."

"We have a free, wholesome and healthy environment. We have many avenues for families to enjoy. Beaches, forests, rivers, just walking on tracks, lovely parks."

"New Zealand is a good place to bring your children up, it's a slower pace, it's a good place to bring kids up. They can learn to crawl before they walk."

\* Small Population - Friendly and Pollution-Free

The relative lack of population and an uncrowded, "easy", clean, "free" environment with its friendly inhabitants is readily linked to New Zealand's small population.

"Because of its low population, we don't have the pressures on us in relation to other countries. We are about the size of Sydney, but because we are more spread out, people are more relaxed in attitudes, and because of this, they get more enjoyment out of life."

"Clean, fresh air, plenty of sunshine. Not as populated as other countries, consequently the air is not polluted."

"Communities are smaller, uncrowded, not so many people. Space to move around, we're not living on top of each other."

"Relaxing style of life.. I suppose. Well there's not so much pressures regarding our way of life compared to other countries. New Zealand is not overcrowded with everyone living on their nerves."

### Differences In Emphasis

Whilst for many of those in the ethnic group, the small population was strongly linked to easy acceptance in a new society and a better quality of life, for others (especially those from parts of Thailand), felt unstimulated by a society which is so dull. This sentiment is also common to children. Once again, strong comparisons between New Zealand and America were made by children.

"Boring place, a farm place, sheep. Boring, not much partying. Just like a country, I mean just like a farm. It's quiet. About 4 o'clock shops close, nothing else to do. A place for old people who sit down enjoying the weather, not for young people. It's good for weather and old people, it's not noisy, and it's not polluted."

"A small country, a bit of a backwater. Not much to do, like in America."

"We haven't got any great Disney Worlds - we can't do things like this."

\* Multi-Racial, Egalitarian And Politically Free

The freedom epitomised by expanses of unspoilt natural beauty, is also reflected in imagery and perceptions of the social and political climate of New Zealand. New Zealand is described as a one-level society, where you can have freedom of speech, and interact with a wide range of nationalities in a multi-cultural society.

"The people are basically a one-level society."

"We're a country with a mix of nationalities, all living together. New Zealand's identity is very rich, we have the advantage of many cultures adding to the variety of our culture. Lots of different people from different cultures."

"Wellington is New Zealand to me - harbour and sea, all those houses all different, down on the flat, stuck on the hillside squashed together - different shapes, sizes and colours, just like the people who live in them."

"You're accepted for what you are no matter what nationality."

"You can express yourself freely about everything in general without anyone getting aggro about it."

"We're a country with a rich mix of nationalities."

"Jack's as good as his master. Everyone has an equal chance."

"We are a lovely country. How we are different from everyone else. How we are together but all different kinds of people. Hardly any people are racist. In America they have black states and white states. In New Zealand you can do what you want, go where you like. It's a free country."

"I like living here. There's nothing I don't like. Even though we have a multi-cultural society, to me they are people. If you cut them, they bleed like me."

"It's classless. That's the wonderful thing. It's not very obvious. You don't have to be superficial. People respect you for what you are. If you want to strive hard for a specific goal, society doesn't look down on you for not having the latest car or nice house. You just do it because you have your own personal goals."



### Differences In Emphasis

The ethnic group was more likely to draw comparisons with their own homeland. Consequently, their spontaneous images of New Zealand were often strongly focused on the more "luxurious" or comfortable lifestyle offered by New Zealand society.

"It has a western lifestyle. Because I come from India in a rural district, this is more city life - cleaner, more luxurious living. Good water supply, good roads, modern houses, milk delivered to your door. Everyone has a telephone so it's easier to be in touch with people. Everyone has cars."

"There's better education and better health - the social welfare system ..."

"It's a welfare society which there is social services provided for those who require help. For example, benefits, such as medical services and free education. New Zealand has a picture of peace and security."

Particularly for the ethnic group, and to a lesser extent, children, New Zealand is strongly identified as a "free" country.

"You can speak your own mind, have your own point of view. It's not a police state, we are free to choose for ourselves. Good education, church, free choice."

"Very unique, egalitarian ... we worship who we like ... we can speak freely while respecting other viewpoints."

"Imagine if you were in India or Malaysia. They have laws governing everything you say. No freedom of speech. Because here we have equal opportunity in vocation and study in employment, either Maori or New Zealanders. We can reason with people if there are disagreements. We can talk it over. In other countries we can't - take them to court as in China."

"You can choose any job you like, go to any school you like, just about do anything you like. We don't cut down forests, we have lots of services that anyone can go into. You can leave school, you don't have to go to university or anything. You have the freedom to choose all these things."

For some members of the ethnic group, New Zealand society is a little too free.

"New Zealanders are too permissive - no caring in schools. For example, if a child comes home and says 'I don't really care about homework' you can't touch them. We tend to give in to demands. The children too often have their own way."

"There's too much swearing in public and people don't care - and they don't believe in God."

For women, the lack of equality of opportunity for women was not a prominent theme in the research, and although some felt sexism was still apparent, they appeared to be resigned to its presence.

"New Zealand women - years back we were tough, pioneering women in a hostile land. Nowadays we're the same as Australia, England and the U.S., we have the same opportunities - you can still excel in what you want, within the limits of sexism. I hate it. I did a big debate against it. Equal opportunity is the best way to deal with sexism instead of keeping them in secretarial jobs and paying them lower, give them better opportunity to begin with. But New Zealand is the same as everywhere else."

Maori opinions reflected those of the ethnic group, but central to their evaluation was the notion of New Zealand society as a land of opportunity.

"Safe country, we have a lot of opportunities here."

"Opportunities to achieve a good standard of living."

"A country which has everything going for it ... the opportunities are there if you want to pursue goals."

With a note of caution and concern about rising unemployment.

"I wouldn't persuade anyone to come here, unemployment is high and government policy stinks."

\* Increasing Racial Tension And Segregation

However, New Zealand's multi-cultural and egalitarian strengths are tempered by concern over increasing racial tension and segregation between Maori and Pakeha. This is a recurring theme which clearly permeates the totality of each interview for all New Zealanders.

"A bit of half and half. Clean air, clean environment, a racial problem. Peace and harmony, but you wouldn't want to live next to the minority group. Kids are free. Do as you please - not restricted to what you do."

"I was all for sticking up for Maori people till recently. I went to a speaking competition in Napier Maori Girls High School where they speak Maori only. I felt like a foreigner in my own country."

"The people in our country argue amongst themselves more than the people in most countries in the world. Like I said before, the Maori wanting to claim their land back. The Maori people are always protesting about other people taking their land, but it's not really their land. Once they have sold it, they can't claim it back - in my opinion."

"The way they treat people in South Auckland. They put people down, especially Polynesian and Maori. Don't like the way the gangs are forming as the police seem not to do that much about them."

"Racial disharmony - the Waitangi claims - sitting for 150 years and then suddenly came to the notice of everyone ... at this late stage we are talking about separate facilities."

"Extremists on both sides and causing a general sense of friction for the whole country."

"There's not much understanding generated between the races - neither side is prepared to accept or understand each other - that's causing 90% of the problems."

"It's mainly through the media - because down here we don't have the problem so much. I think it's sad to see one race of New Zealanders say the country is all theirs and all of the problems they have are caused by the Pakeha... and it's all their fault. I think we should be working towards all being New Zealanders."

"The Treaty should have been dealt with and abided by our forefathers and shouldn't be an issue now - we should be proud of it instead of having a noose around our necks."

"The Maori - some of their expectations are so unrealistic. They think of themselves as a privileged group that should be getting so much, but every contribution should be helpful in getting the country back on its feet."

Differences In Emphasis

Racial conflict was an issue for all groups who participated in this research, but in the case of the ethnic group (characterised by a strong need for the retention of individual cultures in a united New Zealand), Maori - Pakeha activity is also seen as predictive of future developments in race relations in New Zealand generally.

"New Zealand's more culturally diversified. There's more Islanders living here now and more emphasis on Maori. It should be compulsory. I have my own culture to deal with and I have to make an effort to teach my children my own culture, so I think it should be the same with the Maori people - younger people should be taught to be more tolerant of other cultures. Taught that all people are different and that's not abnormal."

"It's pretty divided with the Maori stuff - the land rights and all that. The Maori want their own way like universities so they sort of split away from Europeans, isolating themselves from the rest with the university. They shouldn't get their own way - education's a national thing."

The Maori group expressed similar sentiments and concern about race relations, and more specifically, "radical" Maori.

"Too many radical Maori helped along by the news media."

"There are a small minority of Maori radicals who are causing trouble by pressuring the government to make decisions in their favour and this causes friction with the majority of New Zealanders, and also unhappiness."

"The radical Maori, they get too much time on T.V., they get highlighted by the media. People tend to listen to what they say and think all Maori think that way. The land issues have got way out of hand as well as the Treaty of Waitangi, fishing rights etc."

"I always thought of it (New Zealand) as a kid growing up and in my time it was very unique. I don't see it now and we've lost this bondage between Maori and Pakeha and Maori are united in their own group."

The concept of bi-culturalism was raised only once.

"I would like to see a truly bi-cultural society where the Maori stand equally alongside the European. The only way it would be improved is by education beginning with the young."



#### 4.2.2 Its Unique Characteristics

As we have seen, spontaneous imagery of New Zealand centres on the beauty of land and accessibility of outdoor pursuits, friendly people and an environment which provides an egalitarian and multi-cultural base and political freedom. The latter is marred by concerns about growing racial tension between the Maori and Pakeha. Whilst reflecting these themes, New Zealand's unique characteristics are more focused, and specific. Generally, New Zealand's ascribed strengths and "special" features have both positive and negative elements.

#### \* Maori

In contrast to other countries, New Zealand has the Maori. Whilst Maori people are unique to New Zealand, positive and negative feelings are evoked by this unique asset. These feelings build on those spontaneously raised, and discussed in Section 4.2.1. In this instance, it is not so much Maori - Pakeha relations which come to the fore, but concern is expressed in the context of our ability to accurately portray New Zealand society to outsiders through the image of Maori which is promoted. Maori is a symbol of New Zealand... but the image portrayed is not always contemporary.

"New Zealand's got Maori as its native people.  
Poi dances, haka and hangi are all part of  
N.Z."

"Maori. If someone important comes to New Zealand,  
they put on a haka or costumes or some sort of  
performance for them. They are always in the  
headlines mainly to do with their land claims and  
the Treaty of Waitangi is always coming up."

"I'm quite happy with life in New Zealand.  
I just think that things aren't as bad as  
people think sometimes, but there's too much  
emphasis put on the Maori culture sometimes.  
Sometimes overseas people only get to see the  
haka and things like that on T.V. when they  
come to visit. I think they get the wrong  
impression that all of New Zealand is like that."

"They think we're all like that, that we all go  
around in grass skirts and wear headbands."

\* Multi-Cultural

Whilst Maori might symbolise New Zealand and be a unique component of New Zealand society which sets it apart from the rest of the world, New Zealand society today is seen to be characterised more by multi-culturalism, not bi-culturalism or any single culture.

"The Maori race is unique to New Zealand and so is our own background or mix of heritages where we all came from."

"We're different, cultures and legends. Maori, Samoan, European ..."

"We're culturally diverse. I think that every race on earth is represented in New Zealand. We have members of every race living and working in New Zealand."

"They would see us as a race of people of so many different cultures trying to work together as a nation. We have culture and history with regard to all groups."

"New Zealand is full of people from different places. They bring on their different cultures, food, music, dress codes which adds a different flavour to New Zealand (compared with other countries)."

"The beauty is that each culture retains its own culture and enriches New Zealand's culture - if multi-culturalism is compromised, these separate ethnic cultures will also suffer."

\* Physical Isolation

New Zealand is also unique in its physical isolation from the rest of the world which has positive and negative connotations. It is seen to engender safety, independence and resourcefulness, but to make international trading difficult. Problems related to the economic health of the nation caused by isolation are more apparent amongst men and rural people.

"It's unique at being out on a limb at the bottom of a large ocean ... it's good, it gives us a different perspective, it gives us independence."

"We are isolated geographically from other countries which has its good and bad points. It's good because we're not prone to terrorist attacks and we're identified as our own country and not part of a large mass. It has disadvantages in that it's very expensive to trade."

\*           Nuclear-Free

New Zealand's isolation has helped to generate a strong sense of independence. New Zealand is special and set apart from the rest of the world by its strong anti-nuclear stance.

"We have no nuclear weapons in our society which could lead to a nuclear war. With being nuclear-free this may stop another country from attacking us."

"For a small country we're big in political issues such as nuclear weapons, and we won't back down."

\* Cares About The Environment

Whilst New Zealand is fortunate in comparison with the rest of the world because it is perceived to be relatively pollution-free (helped by its small population), New Zealand is seen to be unique in that it cares about the environment. This is strongly endorsed and discussed by children.

"Another good thing about New Zealand is that they try to do something about the environment like Greenpeace."

"Not much pollution ... other countries have more pollution - we've got some atmospheric pollution but not much compared to other countries."

"It's one country where they haven't wrecked the land with bulldozers and that - there's still a lot of country left."

\* "Better" Than The Rest Of The World

Whilst it is acknowledged that New Zealand is experiencing negative forces such as an increase in crime and unemployment, generally speaking, in comparison with other countries, New Zealand is considered to be a good place to live. New Zealand's isolation and relatively small population contribute to this positive environment.

"I think we've got a low crime rate. I don't think we've got as many murders and rapes as they've got overseas, especially in America and England. They always say how bad it is, but I must admit that our murder rate has increased but I still feel secure."

"New Zealanders all moan and groan about everything and don't realise how well off and lucky they are. In many ways New Zealand is a land of plenty, and not too many people go without."

"It's not as dangerous as other countries. You're not as worried to walk out on the street at night. All the other countries have more crimes because they are bigger."

\* Own Your Own Home

Unlike other countries, New Zealand is seen to offer better opportunities, specifically. One of its unique characteristics is the expectation of New Zealanders that home ownership is a right. All New Zealanders aspire (and are usually fortunate to be able) to own their own home. This is a sentiment of special importance to women, and the disabled.

"If I had to persuade someone to live in New Zealand, I'd tell them that you can own your own home in New Zealand is a short space of time. That's a real plus."

\* Kiwis, Sheep, Etc.

Other miscellaneous imagery is seen to be unique to New Zealand. New Zealand has a large sheep population, and the Kiwi is a symbol of New Zealand. It has hot pools, tuatara and bungy jumping, and much more.

"The first thing that comes to mind is the Kiwi - the flightless bird which is our namesake and symbol."

"I think of lots of sheep and rolling countryside."

"We start our day before everyone else. We have more sheep than people. We're nuclear-free, we have hydro electricity. We're unique for our thermal reasons. We don't have any poisonous or dangerous animals and we have the closest relative to the dinosaurs which is the tuatara. Then there's the Kiwi bird and bungy jumping."

"Tin roofs and 1950's cosiness."



#### 4.2.3 Its Weaknesses

As discussed in the previous section, many of New Zealand's unique strengths can also depict its weaknesses. These are elaborated on below :

##### \* Maori - Pakeha Relations

Whilst Maori people are characteristic of New Zealand, Maori - Pakeha conflict is causing increasing concern. As we have seen, New Zealand was once seen to set an example to the world in terms of its good race relations, but now this is felt to be changing. Conflict between the groups is now strongly cited as one of the key weaknesses of New Zealand society. It is a major concern.

"I dislike the way the media goes on about the racial problem. It's boring, over-exaggerated and I don't think the government should jump every time the Maori group says something."

"Racial tension is now coming to the fore. It never used to be so bad. The New Zealand government at present seems to be scared of Maori and don't seem to be able to say no to them."

\* Multi-Cultural, But Lacking Identity?

Despite New Zealand's multi-cultural profile which is positively regarded, it is felt that as a result of this, New Zealand has no truly appropriately unique culture, or a united identity.

"I don't think New Zealand has a cultural identity. We don't have the great philosophers or the great artists. New Zealand is a mixture of everything."

"I hear people talking who reckon New Zealand is very divided and that we don't have an identity as a whole, so at some events we don't seem patriotic like, for example, the Australian, who always get behind everything. In the U.S.A. they're extremely patriotic - flags everywhere, anthems sang everywhere. A relative lack of patriotic display here."

"There have been changes for the better because you're unravelling our culture and bringing out our heritage. But I don't know if it's really our heritage. I haven't got a drop of Maori in me. I hope we don't get to the point where they're ramming it down our throats till we get sick of it."

The lack of patriotism in New Zealand is more readily commented upon by members of the ethnic group.

"They're less patriotic. For example, singing of their own national anthem. Our attempts are generally half-hearted. If you walk to The Square with the New Zealand flag, how many would treat it reverently. How many would joke about it?"

\* Increase In Crime And Unemployment

Whilst clearly tempered by comparisons with other countries which seem to experience more severe problems with crime and unemployment, New Zealand is seen to be suffering from both an increase in crime and an increase in unemployment. The two are often linked and inter-related. The issues of increasing crime was particularly pertinent to women, children and the disabled who were more likely to express strong claims of vulnerability.

"Unemployment is at its worse for years. There doesn't really seem to be an end to it. There are now so few opportunities for people leaving school."

"The violence is getting worse, and this is the same all over the world."

"Crime is not good. The numbers seem to be going up and up all the time. It's a hard thing to solve. The government has to do something about it and then it comes up to another election, then you don't know what's going to happen. Everyday you hear of a crime, and it's more likely to be a serious crime like rape or murder."

"Unemployment is at its highest for years. There doesn't seem to be any end to it."

"Unemployment. It's soul destroying."

"The unemployed. They should employ New Zealanders into the jobs and stop letting more people settle in New Zealand, by doing this they increase the unemployment problem and violence."

\*

Deterioration Of The Health And Education Systems

There is a strong feeling that the country's social and support services are being allowed to deteriorate. In particular, the health and education systems were cited as experiencing neglect. Both issues were more strongly voiced by women.

"The education ... it used to be higher than it is today ..."

"Education is also struggling. All schools are short of money and teachers, children are not therefore receiving a better education, and you need this to secure a better job."

"Our health system seems to be going to the pack. They've reduced the maternity service in Auckland, cutting back on psychiatric services so people who should still be in care are out on the street - so to speak - without proper follow-up."

"Our education system, the changes that have recently occurred - Tomorrow's School - have yet to prove themselves, but the feeling I get from talking to people who work within the education system or parents with school age children is that it's not going to work or benefit the users."

\* The Environment

Whilst it is generally acknowledged that New Zealanders genuinely care about their environment, some concern was expressed that this could change and felt that it is not the time to be complacent and take our heritage for granted. This is especially important to children.

"I don't like it much when I hear New Zealand has been killing animals like the ones we are trying to save and protect, all the smuggling and that ... like the keas."

"I don't like the way people are making the cities where all the beautiful land is being destroyed."

"I don't like that some of the beaches are polluted or the mining in the Coromandel which is where our bach is."

"Quite a bit of pollution - the fact that the beaches are getting polluted now with sewerage."

"Wildlife with animals getting extinct ..."

\* Isolation And Small Population

And New Zealand's physical isolation which, together with a small population, ensures unspoilt beauty and minimal pollution, also creates a feeling of isolation, and a lack of exposure, experience and oneness with the greater world. This is particularly felt by children. Once again, comparison with the U.S. dominates for children.

"We are behind everybody else in our ways - because of our isolation and geographical situation."

"We are a lonely country because we are further away from any other country - Australia is nearer to the U.S.A. and the U.S.A. is closer to everything else. We're just alone."

New Zealand's geographical isolation and small population is not conducive to prosperity. This was particularly felt by the ethnic group, in the context of its small population and by males and the rural group (as discussed before) when talking about difficulties experienced in trading with other countries.

"Our geographical position makes us unique because we are sort of out in the ocean over here which means anything we produce must be taken a long way away."

"You can't get rich here, there just isn't the population to buy your goods."

"It's at the bottom of the world from an economic point of view. We are far from places ... so it's hard to transport goods to other countries and get goods likewise."

\* Colonial

Related to New Zealand's isolation and small population, New Zealand is perceived to be somewhat colonial and backward. This is especially felt to be the case in a technological sense. Children are more likely to be of this opinion.

"In the 1960's when my mother travelled in India, she could get Coke everywhere because they couldn't drink the water, and you couldn't get Coke in the South Island then!!"

"It's behind the times in a technical way. Like we are about six years behind the U.S.A. Just life really."

\* Limited Opportunities

New Zealand offers limited opportunities in certain spheres, e.g. drama and the arts. In such instances, it is felt that the only way to gain exposure or to succeed is to travel overseas. This is more likely to be a concern expressed by children and younger people.

"Seeing we're so small and so far away, we don't get the same opportunities in film or theatre. If you want to make a name for yourself, you've got to go away to another country."

"We have more people that go overseas to make it big overseas."



\* Slow And Unexciting

New Zealand is considered to be a little slow, conventional and unexciting. These perceptions are particularly apparent amongst children and the ethnic group. Again for children, many comparisons were made between New Zealand and the U.S.A.

"I wouldn't try to persuade anyone to live in New Zealand, it's too slow and unexciting. There is not all the theatres London or Sydney has these places, and they seem to be buzzing day and night. In New Zealand it closes down and there doesn't seem to be a lot going on in the evenings and weekends."

"New Zealand seems to close on Sundays and to be very, very slow."

"It's just a quiet little country. It's not an exciting country like America."

\* A Country Of Insignificance

New Zealand is a country of insignificance on a world scale, although the anti-nuclear stance has served to thrust New Zealand into the limelight.

"Because we are so small, no-one takes much notice of us except when we stood up and said 'no' to Anzus."

#### 4.2.4 The New Zealand People

##### \* How Do They See Themselves?

New Zealanders see themselves as resourceful, proud, and above all, friendly. Resourcefulness is a function of the colonial heritage, whilst pride is generally discussed in the context of sporting achievements. Rural people were more likely to focus on the resourcefulness of New Zealanders.

"They are survivors. Being a small country away from the main big countries. They have had to use their own ideas and make them work."

"Many people who come here from overseas build their own houses which they would never dream of doing back home because it's the heritage of New Zealand. The first settlers had to make and invent the things they needed to survive and that's how they've carried on through generations."

"New Zealanders are 'do-it-yourselfers'. They'd try their hand at anything and give it a go."

"I think New Zealanders are proud of themselves and their sportsmen and I think that they know they're achievers."

"Why buy it if you can make it ... give anything a try ... we know we have the ability to do things and do it well."

"Fit and healthy, friendly - they like to welcome visitors to the country - they are friendly to them."

"Friendly people - most people I have met are friendly and welcoming - they talk easily to you ... if you are lost they take you to the police station."

"Kindness - some of them - my Brown Owl teaches us things at Brownies - like road safety, brushing my hair properly and eating healthy food."

"They are helpful, they like to do things for you ... if you are in difficulty they like to help you."

New Zealanders see themselves as open-minded.

"They must have been open-minded in the first place to allow women to vote. The first in the world to allow women to vote."

New Zealanders see themselves as conscientious, hard-working and sports-minded.

"They are kind - most of them anyway - they are fun - if you want to play a game, most of them will - they are good sports."

And very curious and aware of the rest of the world.

"They take pride in being curious. They're curious about other cultures and the way overseas people live. That can only be good for New Zealand with so many people travelling away now and seeing what the rest of the world is like - they bring back ideas which become part of this culture, especially in the arts and design and so on."

"We're caring people. We care about the rest of the world. We don't just hide, we go to war and the Commonwealth Games."

"People here are very interested in other people and other countries. They have that openness which comes from being an uncrowded country."

Despite the predominantly positive imagery and attraction for New Zealand people, once again the underlying concern about racial conflict comes to the fore and some felt New Zealanders are becoming less homogenous and harmonious, and conflict between Maori and Pakeha is peaking.

"More and more so I think New Zealanders are seeing themselves as two separate and two different races. One for Pakeha and one for Maori. This is causing a great deal of tension between Pakeha and Maori. Maori shouldn't be treated any better or worse than Pakeha."

Further, it was also felt that New Zealanders lack security, and are unnecessarily self-critical.

"Many New Zealanders put themselves down by thinking that expertise or products from overseas (i.e. America, Australia, Europe) are better than the New Zealand products."

\* How Do Others See New Zealand And New Zealanders?

Perceptions of how others see New Zealanders more or less reflects New Zealanders' own perceptions, New Zealanders are perceived to be hard-working and reliable.

"I have a daughter working in London and her sister has just come back and they have been in full employment all the time that they were there and I asked them 'why did employers hire them'? and they said it was because their accents would have told their employers that they were travellers. New Zealanders (and Australians) are highly thought of because they are hard workers, inventive and get on with the job because they like to get finished while the English start before time (sometimes), work through their lunch-hour and stay after finishing time and still get less done."

New Zealand is thought to be seen as a sporting nation.

"I think a lot of people from overseas see our country as a country of outdoor sports, sheep and dairy products."

"Our national costume is a track-suit because that's what you mainly see people in New Zealand wearing (...New Zealanders are mostly poorly dressed.)."

New Zealanders are thought to be seen as friendly, down-to-earth, easy-going and accepting.

"They see New Zealanders as very down-to-earth and easy-going. Resourceful people who make do with the basics."

"They see us as very friendly people. Very helpful on a one-to-one basis, treated as equals, not as inferior."

"Friendly nation from what I have heard overseas, New Zealanders are sought after in the hotel industries because of their friendly nature - and they are good at doing their jobs."



New Zealand is seen to be the ideal place.

"They see New Zealand as idyllic - an easy lifestyle, environmentally pure. The cleanest, purest country in the world."

"A paradise. Where life is easy - and not overcrowded."

"They're led by the images of New Zealand as green and blue and clean. People are aware that we don't have acid rain, chemical pollution and the anti-nuclear policy has attracted people to New Zealand. Western Europeans are frightened by the nuclear age and see New Zealand as a place to get away from it."

"A low pressure lifestyle. Friendships that you develop. Caring communities."

"They love New Zealand. The wide open spaces, the lack of smog. They see New Zealanders as friendly people."

On a more negative side, New Zealanders are seen to be inward-looking, insular, backward, and culturally lacking.

"Class themselves very New Zealand, that is they only care about New Zealand and don't have much input in the rest of the world, probably because we're so far away from the rest of the world."

"You feel very much like country cousins when you see how they perceive you."

"Many people overseas probably think we're quite good at all sports and they think all we tend to do is play rugby and live very primitively as they associate us all with the Maori race."

"Also see New Zealand as a country where nothing much happens but the bleating of sheep. Very far away. In the middle of nowhere."

"People think it's a cultural backwater. A farming country. That we wouldn't have a symphony orchestra, no rock concerts, no art galleries. Innocent in terms of unspoilt by ravages of life and having no culture of its own. Imported English culture because so little is know about New Zealand culture. New Zealanders themselves are only just discovering it."

Corroborating this, New Zealand is thought to be a country and people that no-one really knows or cares about.

"We see an enormous amount of news about the rest of the world on our T.V. screens and in our newspapers, but if we went to Australia, for example, you wouldn't see very much on their news about what is happening in New Zealand."

"People in Europe don't even know where New Zealand is."

"Most people think it's pretty small, and don't know where New Zealand is when you ask them."

"Well to be perfectly honest, I really don't think many of them think about us a lot at all as many don't even know where New Zealand is. We're just a small country way down under."

"A lot of Americans, and the rest of the world see New Zealand as a typically south-sea Pacific island. A little backwater country, an American idea of a hicksville. A small, out of the way place."

And divided with no real identity.

"A lot of people have asked me about the Maori - European situation and how we treat the Maori."

4.2.5 How Do New Zealanders Feel About New Zealand Society Today?

\* Overall Perspective

There is a general feeling that life is becoming more difficult and complicated in New Zealand. The key issues are broadly political in nature. They are dominated by concern over increasing violence and crime, unemployment, deterioration of the health and education systems, increasing racial tension and government policy generally. As we have seen, these were all issues raised spontaneously when discussing New Zealand's weaknesses.

"Times have got hard. Everyone's moaning about our health system. There are a lot of people living in state housing - too many people living in them ... Maori seem to get a hard go - most of the prisoners are Maori. I don't know why, just because they've got a different skin colour doesn't matter. Some seem to have a massive chip on their shoulder because their land was taken away. I don't know, maybe it's their attitude. Seems to be negative right from the start. You're Pakeha, we're Maori - that's our beach out there, you took it off us ..."

"New Zealand society is deteriorating and the quality of life is poorer. People certainly got along with each other much better 20 - 30 years ago."

"It has slipped rather badly. This has happened over the last few years as our social services, e.g. hospitals and schools, have been allowed to run down. Violent crimes have increased at the same time as our police force has been reduced in numbers. The government again has cut funding to the police force. The whole place has been allowed to slip into semi-decay."

"There have been changes for the worse. There is going to be a bit of an uprising. It cost millions for Maori to make the canoes, and now they want money to keep them in use - what a joke! They are not sharing the money around among all people, just giving it to the Maori, only everyone should have a share, the country can't afford it with so many people unemployed, the money could be used to help create jobs instead."

"I'm concerned now, worried about the crime rate and the lack of jobs for young people which is leading to crime. I'm sure of it. I feel that the young people who are idle are the ones who are glue-sniffing and robbing. Taking from the "haves". We've been lucky not to be robbed yet, but around here people have been burgled. Businesses are closing down because of the decline of the monetary system, and this causes closures and redundancies and idle people who get into mischief."

"The economy - we used to have one of the highest living standards in the world, but this certainly isn't the case now. Not as much money going around in the marketplace, the stock exchange crash hit everyone across the board."

"The government selling off all our assets. There will be nothing left that belongs to us as New Zealanders soon."

"I don't think the government is doing a great job in the country. We are running out of money. They are trying to bribe people to vote for them. They should sort of, like with the taxes and benefits, make sure people who don't need it don't get it. I hear on the news that we're in billions of dollars of debt, and we've sold all our own assets and now can't pay it back. Not enough money for schools ..."

"Stop closing down hospitals. I've had a couple of accidents and the quickest way to get it dealt with was to go to hospital but by the time we had run around to find a doctor, injuries could have got worse."

"A lot more money should be generated into the health care system. We're moving into the likes of the third world. 50 - 60 years ago we were on top. What's happened? - cost-cutting."

"The issue to be concerned with more than anything is the welfare state. New Zealand is perched at the edge of a precipice and toppling and the reason for this is the outgoings of the welfare state and coupled with the mis-management of the government, it will toppled into the abyss."

Some felt that New Zealanders were having to change to cope with societal changes. The 'she'll be right', laid-back attitude is inappropriate in a tougher environment, and New Zealanders will have to change in order to survive. New Zealand is "growing up". This is a sentiment particularly held by men and rural people.

"I don't think New Zealanders like to change - I guess that's why the Labour Government was a bit of a shock."

"Subsidies that have gone in manufacturing and farming - the government has removed a lot of subsidies to bring us in line with the rest of the world - we had to get free trade."

"We've all had to work to balance our books in the last 10 years which is probably a good thing."

"We as New Zealanders have to change, nobody can do it for us."

Despite a prevalent feeling that New Zealand is slipping from its past utopia, considerable optimism is also apparent. New Zealand's identity is seen to have changed, and to be in a state of evolution. It is felt that New Zealand is becoming more forceful in a global sense and that this revitalised presence is positively perceived by New Zealanders and people from overseas. New Zealand's higher profile has been facilitated by strong political stands with specific examples being the Rainbow Warrior affair and a commitment to a nuclear-free Pacific.

"New Zealand is not going to be bullied by the rest of the world. This goes back a long way with the Rainbow Warrior case where New Zealand wasn't going to be bullied by a world power and also the stand Lange made with America and not letting in the nuclear ships. I think that for too long New Zealand has been sub-serviant to the rest of the world powers. I know we're not a world power by any means, but New Zealand should stand up for itself."

"New Zealand used to agree with everything America and England said, but now we have our own standards, like the nuclear policy."

"I think New Zealanders are becoming more enlightened in that issues are more openly debated. I feel very hopeful about New Zealand becoming a world trendsetter in peaceful relationships (e.g. nuclear-free Pacific). I don't feel any doom and gloom about it. I feel very positive about it."

"New Zealand's identity has definitely changed. We are far less in the shadow of the 'super' powers. We've grown up, we are beginning to take more initiative in dealings with other countries. We've become more globally aware."

"More aware of our situation within the world, more confident to make the stand and know what we want - prepared to think more individually rather than following overseas needs."

"I think it's better - other countries can see we are independent."

"Nuclear policy, the Labour Government has put a big ripple around the world ... Chernobyl must have been a lesson to the rest of the world, everyone would have learned."

"Yes, we are starting to get to know ourselves instead of worrying about other people's problems."

"The nuclear-free stance was a world leader that made David Lange a household name."



New Zealand's increasing independence is also reflected in the context of environmental policies, business and sport.

"Our identity has changed for the better. We are world renowned for our achievements in business, sport and environmental policies. New Zealand business is now part of the world economy. Apart from the All Blacks, New Zealand has competed in the top class of many other sports. New Zealand is a supporter of organisations that are 'green'. Organisations that are trying to save the environment from the greenhouse effect - a hole in the ozone layer which is damaging the earth by causing it to have climate changes. In other words, the world is getting hotter."

"New Zealand has taken the drift-net problem to the United Nations for them to sort out as we are against this because it is killing fish and sealife and the idea of fishing is to kill the fish, not other sealife like dolphins, whales etc."

"Getting bigger, getting known in other parts of the world ... catering more for ourselves and overseas with wool and wine and that."

However, New Zealand's increased prominence in the world arena has a negative side. In order to compete, and to align ourselves with world forces, we are inheriting some of the less attractive aspects of political and social life in western society.

"Yes, New Zealand has changed. Better in some ways, worse in others. Because New Zealand is more exposed to ideas, some good, some bad, from the rest of the world as our isolation has diminished through better communication (satellites and air travel). The bad parts have now come here. We are exposed to drugs and religious intolerance, but we have more art, more culture, more sporting visits, technology, better consumer goods, better choice ..."

New Zealand is seen to be at a crossroad, an emerging nation with many issues to resolve, but a nation which is 'growing-up' and able to stand and be recognised as an independent country which can make a valuable contribution in world affairs.

"New Zealand society is at a bit of a crossroads where people have to decide which way to go in respect of a number of issues. Racial problems, environmental problems, economic problems. In the context of world societies, I don't think it's bad and we don't have any catastrophic problems."

"I think it has changed enormously over the last ten years on the edge of becoming a great country. It has grown from a conservative, rural society into a modern, international nation - not quite, but almost."

#### 4.2.6 Special Concerns Of Individual Groups

Whilst dominant areas of concern (to a greater or lesser extent) span all groups, the greatest differentiation between groups occurs in the way in which they relate to these issues, and the areas of particular importance to each group. The groups are discussed separately below.

##### \* Children

Children are very knowledgeable and informed about current issues in New Zealand society. Their concerns closely mirror those held by the total population, perhaps with the exception that concern over unemployment appears to be less pronounced. Two key issues dominate. Children place great importance on a high quality education and environmental issues, especially relating to animals. These two areas are seen to have a significant impact on their future.

"The environment concerns me, if we don't look after it soon, it won't be very pleasant for me as I grow up. With education we have one of the lowest amounts of money per child, it's comparable to third world countries."

"The future that I'm going to grow up in. I hope my great great grandchildren are still alive before the world becomes one big hot sun. How long have we got before the ozone layer is all wrecked?"

"The animals and nature, I want my grandchildren to see the whales and the keas - all those that are getting extinct."

"With the environment going down the way it is, even if as a country we all started to be totally friendly to the environment, it wouldn't make much difference. If we're being totally environmentally-friendly, and the rest of the world isn't, then it's not going to make any difference. The rest of the world's being polluted by them. I think it'd be hard to make everything environmentally-friendly."

"Drift-net fishing. It's killing animals that we don't need to kill. They are getting caught in the nets, it makes me feel angry. I would have it banned if I could."

"Some animals are getting nearly extinct. The kakapo and birds they've been trying to smuggle out of New Zealand. These have been bad things that have been happening. I feel pretty sad, because a whole lot of animals might start to become extinct."

"The Greenhouse effect. New Zealand might be completely changed by the time I'm an adult. The pollution. We might not be able to swim in the sea and we might need gas masks because of air pollution. We did a topic on the Greenhouse effect. If Australia melted, it could cover most of New Zealand and we might have to leave - be evacuated to other countries. That really worries me."

"School's important, helps me learn to get a good job when I'm older."

"Getting a good education - succeeding in life through a good education."

"If I don't go to school, I won't be able to get a good job, and I'd probably go on the dole and I wouldn't be able to do as many things as I'd like - like buy a house."

"School, if I didn't go to school, I wouldn't be anything. I want to learn as much as possible because one day I want to be Prime Minister - I want to be a lawyer before that though."

"My education is important so I can achieve and become a worthwhile citizen and benefit to society."

As discussed earlier in this report, children are also more likely to place importance on whether or not New Zealand is keeping pace with the rest of the world, in particular America.

"Commercially it's backward, we don't have as much variety of choice of products and clothes, it's expensive."

"I think we should catch up with the rest of the world like technology and things because we seem to get things a couple of years late."

"I would like to see it progress and by doing that we will become like America."

When discussing crime, children are more likely to speak in the context of their own personal safety and to cite specific cases.

"The crime and that bothers me, because people do crimes and they don't really have any reason. Those people who don't really have any reason for doing it, just do it. Mostly Maori men have been doing crimes and mostly all those people who've been going out of their heads. Sometimes they have a reason, they could be angry or on medication, but where there's no reason, that really bothers me."

"I don't like the way people kidnap people, because they hurt them, and sometimes they kill the people."

"I feel that there is too much crime. People can be so nasty and give the country a bad name. I feel disgusted and quite sick about what happened to the boy in Wanaka and other things like that happen."

"It's not really safe to go out at night by yourself, or walk through subways. It concerns me the way tourists to New Zealand get robbed and murdered. New Zealand's name will be a bad one. You can get mugged or kidnapped. Anything can happen, you really don't know. Karla Cardno was not far away from home, but there are crazy people around, really bad people. They caught him that time, but others being around worry me."

Variety of social activities, friends and hobbies are very important to children. Their preservation is vital.

"Having friends - you can share your problems with them - it makes me feel glad to be able to talk to them about problems with your parents - they might have the same problems and know what to say to you."

"One of the most important issues is being able to communicate and learn from others (friends)."

"My hobbies which are netball, clarinet, dancing and swimming. Having fun, being successful and making friends is what I do."

"If they ban skateboarding from the streets, it would upset skateboarders. Some people can't see that only some skateboarders break tiles (in Octagon) and scare older people, I'd be quite upset if they ban it here. It's only a small issue but if they take it away, they're taking some people's hobbies away and we could be doing worse things - smoking, drinking, shoplifting and making a nuisance of ourselves."

Having the support of a family that is caring and nurturing is also a fundamental issue.

"My family and friends - if I didn't have them, they wouldn't be there to encourage me."

"If I didn't have my family, I wouldn't be alive."

"Mummy and Daddy - I wouldn't be able to cook tea. My brother and sister and the cat and dog. Going to gym, my school friends and going to Brownies."

"My family, because where would you be without a family. Who else is going to wake you up in the morning? Who else would take your pulse for you at 7.30 in the morning for 10 seconds?"

\* Maori

This group places great emphasis on difficulties experienced through rising unemployment, and values equality of opportunity. Unemployment is strongly linked by this group to rising crime. A strong stance tends to be taken on punishment for criminal acts.

"The issues are equal opportunities for everyone regardless of colour, creed, race or religion, and for all New Zealanders to be familiar with the implications of the Treaty of Waitangi and the historical path that New Zealand has come down."

"The unemployment situation is the major thing and a certain amount of the crime problem stems from this. Corporal punishment at all levels should be reinstated."

"Unemployment concerns me and crime rates and the very weak penalties. With the economic situation, there's less jobs available because of a lack of economic growth. I'm also concerned about class distinction. I totally disagree with it."

"Lack of employment for school leavers in the future. In a few years time I can see simmering away racial strife between the Maori and Europeans, industrial strife is already here."

"What sort of future there is for my children. I'm concerned about the level of unemployment and especially what the future holds for them."

"Unemployment, even for students, you've got six years at university and you aren't guaranteed a job. It used to be you could choose a job. The youth are our future of tomorrow, but they have no future."

Concern is expressed over community and family breakdown, which, like unemployment, is also felt to negatively impact on the level of crime in society. Street kids were often cited by this group as a major concern.

"There was a time in my generation when the neighbours all knew each other on my block, but now we're losing neighbourly interest and concern for each other. We're losing respect and honour for the older generation - their wisdom and guidance. I'm concerned about the younger generation who don't get support and guidance from their parents, e.g. street kids. More or less principles and values are going out the window."

"The justice system and the prison situation with all the prisons being full and nothing is being solved. They seem to be trying to fix the problem but not the cause. The way the family unit falls apart and doing abuse concerns me."

"I worry about the young people in Christchurch, the street kids, the ones that hang about in The Square. There's no future. Our main concern should be for that rather than Maori and their fishing rights and the Treaty of Waitangi."

A breakdown in harmonious relations between Maori and Pakeha in the wider society is of considerable importance and concern to Maori.

"New Zealand is growing apart and becoming separated with the Maori on one side, the Pakeha on the other side. I believe New Zealand should be more united as one people, lots Maori, Pakeha or Chinese etc. They should have equal opportunities as one people. Maori subjects should not be made compulsory at schools, as that should be the choice of the individuals."

"I think it's going downhill. As in like racial relation, it's going backwards. I was on a job last Thursday and there was an electrician who asked if I've claimed any land back, then asked 'I know one bit of land you want back - the pub' and I said 'who wants the pub?' That's an example of a person who doesn't know anything historically."



Of particular importance to Maori people is the family and religion. When they discuss family, it includes a broad, extended family network.

"Our family. My children and their spouses and children, my brothers and sisters and all my in-laws, my aunties and uncles, my church family."

"My religion and my family and my whole environment (the importance of land and our affinity with nature), I care very much about."

"Family unity - keeping the family together, teaching them right and wrong. I would definitely say a good home environment. Bring to children's attention some passages of the Bible to help and guide them in their daily life."

"Religion, family life, spending time together to study various things including the Bible."

"What's most important in my life is my family and that's extended family, not just my kids, but grandparents, cousins and a high profile on the extended family. You don't see any Maori elders, males or females, in a Rest Home because it's not done. If my Grandad dies then my Grandmother goes to my uncle's home. I give a lot of credit to my parents and they do to their parents and it's handed down. It's important. If my family is happy, I am."

"Religion and my family. The emphasis is on the family unit. It's totally family-orientated. I identify very readily to my religion before I can even consider my culture or anything else. I'm a child of God which is more to me than my culture. The family unit is very important because what's taught in the home is what will be in the next generation. There must be love to get through the hard times, communication is important and you must accept with an open mind. Your children need to be free."

\* Rural

Over and above the major common concerns, of particular important to rural people is their environment. Like Maori, rural people value their land, and wish to safeguard it, and many believe in limiting the use of unnecessary chemicals on the environment.

"I'm a believer in conservation and I believe we shouldn't use too many sprays in the countryside. Insecticides and hormonal sprays for fruit trees, and I'm against that because it gets into the water. People here should have less wells. They shouldn't have so many sprays because two or three people have cancer and aren't sure if it relates to the sprays. Sprays leak into wells."

"I just want the environment to stay the way it is. We've lovely sights that I don't want ruined, got to help the ozone layer."

"Living in a healthy atmosphere, if you don't look after yourself and your surroundings, it's going to go to the dumps. Like keeping the environment tidy and clean, and keeping our air clean."

Unemployment is of central concern. The same links between crime made by Maori were made by rural people.

"Well unemployment must be the number one. Unemployment doesn't do a lot for the person, not to have a job, not to be able to hold your head up high ... unemployment causes more problems like they say, the Devil makes work for idle hands, people drink more, fights, break-ups and crime increases are all or mostly due to unemployment."

"Unemployment worse than racial thing - leading to social disaster, they have no sense of being or self-worth. It's contrary to everything we stand for - our natural instincts which are to be able to work, build a house, raise a family and be self-sufficient."

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However, some rural people felt that while unemployment was a real problem, the social benefits available in New Zealand made it too easy to stay unemployed. They also cite that it is an attitudinal change that is required by the individuals to gain employment and that expectations of some are too high in the current economy.

"If you have some get up and go you'll get a job - I think a large proportion of unemployed wait for it to come to them."

"At the moment, it is too easy. An example - a young lad is on a farm working, decides it's not really for him and resigns and goes on the dole - I think it's too easy for him."

"Unemployment - people on the dole are too lazy to look for work."

"Welfare state is giving too much away and will cripple New Zealand."

"People wanting pay rises - government wasting so much money."

Also, like Maori, rural people place great emphasis on family life and the community. They value the quiet, rural, unhurried lifestyle where they are able to enjoy space, independence and freedom.

"It's important to have my own space, especially when I had children, to have space was important. I never was a party animal, I like the quiet life, and I like the security of rural village life."

"I like having my freedom and independence. Having a house and family, and surrounded by land that we own. Leading a lifestyle that's not too busy, just having nice friends to socialise with."

"Pleasant working conditions, pleasant living conditions. Space to breathe and develop. Family life. I feel my life is very pleasant and I wouldn't want for anything else, but that is a reflection of me, who I am, what I am."

"Family life, enjoying it. Making the most of what you've got. The youngest has just started work and I just enjoy the company of them. When they're not here, I keep communicating with them. I try to communicate openly with our extended family."

"I'm concerned that we seem to be getting away from our basic family of mum, dad and kids. Troubled children that schools aren't equipped to handle and a lot more turning to crime ... family is important and working for ourselves, being your own boss and being able to be innovative."

"Homeless children are a real concern. They may have left home for a good reason, like not enough love or too much tension, so they need support and people must show they care."

"Lack of respect for one another. Today's society has more violence, more vandalism."

"We are becoming uncaring as a nation ... we tend to turn the other way if we see something not right happening."

"Morally we have deteriorated - gone away from the importance of the family unit."

"Our social behaviour and respect for elders."

Race issues also underpin rural peoples' evaluation of life in New Zealand.

"There's not much understanding generated between the races. Neither side is prepared to accept and understand the other, that's causing 90% of the problems. The Maori feel inferior and the Pakeha are the opposite - lack of willingness to accept each other."

"The Treaty should have been dealt with and abided by our forefathers and shouldn't be an issue now - we should be proud of it instead of having a noose around our necks. It was a document prepared to let two peoples live and work together."

"I don't think we should have separate Maori or European New Zealanders. We're all born here, we shouldn't have special education for Maori. They're just the same as us. They're not any different."

\* Ethnic Group

For this group, fair treatment (and equality of opportunity) in terms of employment in order to achieve progression and success, is extremely important. There is also concern for a politically stable country.

"I should be treated fairly in terms of employment and people should be given merit where it's deserved in terms of performance and I would like to see a more stable government. Once that's confident of its policy and what it hopes to achieve. One that's able to be a more positive kind of government, one that doesn't waiver in what it hopes to achieve."

"I want the government to help create jobs, not collecting for Africa, they should put money towards homes for street kids and Greenpeace. New Zealand should help themselves and get people over here for jobs and opportunities."

"Being able to get a job, having a better standard of living."

"Job security. There are less jobs around since the recession."

Linked to a concern for fair treatment in employment of particular concern to the ethnic group is financial security. The ability to earn enough money to live comfortably and to save to progress is central to their needs.

"Security is important. To be able to have enough to spend as well as save."

"A roof over my head. A car to drive. Enough money to make ends meet. The children may have good schooling, and there may be a job for them at the end of schooling."

Members of this group watch carefully any decisions made with regard to Maori. These impact both on the political stability of the country, and are used as a yardstick against which to measure their own future security.

"Issues that concern me would be political decisions with regards to the future of Maori people. Things like the rights of Maori. What does the future hold for Maori in New Zealand? Will the New Zealand government cater for Maori needs? I feel this is important because of a very possible internal conflict like that which is happening in South Africa. The Bill of Rights concerns me because it protects the smaller minority groups."

A country which makes (equal) provision for health and education and offers the opportunity of a good lifestyle is very important to this group. Education provides opportunities for a successful and prosperous future.

"Health. A clean environment, healthy food accessible to all."

"Education concerns me in a sense that, well, the increase in fees will discourage children from universities. Children from poorer families may not be able to afford sending their children to universities."

"Education concerns me. I'm grateful for the opportunity of receiving education in New Zealand and training in New Zealand."

"I value the general quality of life which I'm in. The comfort of the welfare and hygiene my ethnic race presently enjoy which we miss badly at home in our home country China."



Like the Maori and rural groups, strong emphasis is placed on the importance of a secure home and family life. Many of society's ills are attributed to a breakdown in the family. This group tends to have high moral standards.

"I'm concerned about the crime rate such as rape and stuff like that. All the crimes are caused by confusion which begins from the home. People are doing what they want to do and are not prepared to stick by the law. Social work is needed to help families that are in situations with violence and stuff."

"Abortion. I'm not too keen on that, it's taking away a human life, it's got no defence, it doesn't have anything to say. Drink drivers are pretty inconsiderate especially if they get in an accident and injure someone else."

"Important to me is my family and the way I've been brought up. I have a home to stay in and live and family that will support me."

"Unemployment and crime. I think it's because families in New Zealand are not so close as Indian families. Both parents often have to work so the children are left too much to themselves. That way they can get into trouble."

"The moral standards are not what they should be. Drug and drink abuse is too high which are factors that cause road accidents, particularly amongst younger people."

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This group's religion and culture is central to their feeling of well-being.

"Knowing that I have Jesus, and prayer, and having a home."

"I've been brought up good, not like others have. My culture is important to me because I'm Chinese from Philippines and I believe in God and Buddha. In our culture, we're meant to stick up for each other if we're in trouble and family is more important than friends because friends you can get anytime you want, but family you can't."

"Feeling safe and secure, being able to go to church when I want to."

"I can be educated here and still able to retain my own culture to serve my own race."

"What's important to me is my culture, in terms of my language and also my religion."

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Disabled

Disabled peoples' concerns are very self-focused. Independence is key. Like all groups, the disabled feel very strongly about increasing unemployment generally, and more specifically the lack of employment opportunities for themselves, and the negative impact on their independence.

"I'm concerned about the inability to come to terms with earning a steady income and understanding that going to sheltered work is a step down."

"Employment is important to me as it would afford me the ability to live reasonably well, to take a holiday when I wanted one and to keep me in the working community so I wouldn't lose touch and stagnate."

"Unemployment. There are too many people on the dole - that costs a lot of money, so taxes have to be high. People on the dole get depressed and commit suicide or become vandals."

"I want to get a job and earn money - a good job ... I want to be educated to do something useful. I will be able to earn a living and be independent."

"I'd like to try to get an office job - getting a job is important to me at the moment because I want to have a go at office work to be more independent and have a real income and something to do in my life ... and to have my own flat with able-bodied flat mates. I like living with my parents but ... I need a lot of personal care so I can't live by myself, there are not the facilities or services available at the moment to let me. It's important for me to be independent and to have a job."

"I worry about unemployment. I know what it's like to be out of work. I feel sorry for the ones with no jobs to go to, the worry of getting jobs for a lot of them, the effect it has on the family, some children these days don't know what it's like to have a dad that works ..."

"My security, my peace of mind. Probably going to employment and knowing I'd have a steady income. Nothing great, not a fortune."

Facilitating and maintaining the highest level of independence possible is manifested in a focus on problems experienced with access in public places and mobility needs generally. Great emphasis is placed on having the ability to socialise and mix with a range of people.

"The roads concern me. There's not enough pedestrian crossings. The footpaths are not in good nick. They slope and are uneven. Disabled people aren't considered enough. All steps should have handrails so that disabled people have something to hold on to. The shops often aren't big enough for wheelchairs to move around in and there aren't enough ramps for access to buildings ... all these things annoy me because I can't get around very easily."

"My freedom, being able to have the freedom to go to the country, the beach."

"I enjoy being able to get around, to go into Wellington to see how things change. I like moving around. I'm very lucky because I can move around a lot better now ... I like being independent, you can't have your parents to look after you always. One day they will die and then you have nothing."

"With me personally, I find the state of the roads and footpaths is a hazzard with the wheelchairs, I have to have them level and straight and there are all sorts of slopes and cracks in them. It's hard for chaired people to get around safely."

"Having sufficient funds and having someone to drive a car so you can go places. I can't drive because of my disability."

"It's important for me to know myself and what I want to do. I don't like it when I'm treated differently to other people. I try to treat people and things the same ... I like to develop my own views ... I try not to be judgmental ..."

"Being able to do my own thing, to get around and do what I want to have the mobility to get out and go out shopping, go to a group meeting, just generally not house-bound, that I have the means to get out when I want to."

Aspects of individuals' health and health support and the help needed for improved mobility, and by implication, independence, are crucial.

"My feet - my boots, I need my boots badly. I need special boots because I drag my feet, that are stronger so they don't wear out so quickly. A pair lasts me a week normally ... I don't like sitting at home, I like being out and about, meeting people, going places, enjoying myself, it gets boring if I stay at home. I watch T.V. or read, that's it, that's why I like to get out. It's much more interesting."

"I feel very strongly about the Auckland Area Health Board's possible decision to close the Spinal Unit in Otara. Many, mostly young people, be they suffering from a disease or a disability related to an accident, have got to have somewhere other than an institution where they can go and be assisted into coping with the fact that they have a disability ... learning how to cope with coming back into society, the frustration to cope with the inability to enter buildings because they are not catered for the disabled. The difficulty doing the housework, cleaning windows, hoovering, the ability to shop."

The support of family is important for disabled people, and having a safe, comfortable home.

"My family - a feeling of belonging to a family unit. My parents, my children, my grandchildren. Also have this idealistic view that perhaps one day New Zealand could feel itself a family - belonging together ... having a home is just so important, my daily living is so much harder, with support of different services and things I can learn to overcome these things and lead a reasonable life."

"The ability to maintain my own home, to make myself mobile and to be employed. I certainly don't want to go into a home for the disabled because I would lose all my independence and privacy. If I couldn't get about and go places, I would vegetate, I would lose interest, I'd become a bore and no-one would visit me."

"I want to own my own home so I can do what I want to it. Put ranchsliders in the bedroom and make alterations we want to, alter the home to suit my needs and my disabilities."

Disabled place emphasis on social activities and community support.

"Meeting people is most important to me because you can learn such a lot from them, learn how to be tolerant. People need to be more caring, more aware of each other's needs."

"Friendship is important because man's not made to live alone. Being alone is a terrible thing ..."

The concept of crime is broadly interpreted and concern is for individuals' (and their own) personal safety and the neglect of vulnerable groups in society like the aged. Disabled people themselves feel vulnerable.

"Elderly people living on their own. It happened recently where elderly people were found dead in their apartments because no-one had missed them for a few days. This will become a problem in the future as the number of people reaching their 60's, I understand, will be greater than those in employment."

"Vandals like to break things. They spray paint on the station at Naenae and break the telephone down. It makes the place look dirty and frightening. If they do that, they might mug you. I don't like the station at night, it's not safe, you have to walk down under the subway and there could be bad people waiting for you, so I don't go on the train at night, you could get mugged or raped. I don't like not being able to go out at night because I can't do some of the things I'd like to do. I move very slowly and if they chased me, I couldn't run away."

"Lack of safety on the streets. I don't want to get beaten up. It does happen, they rob you and stab you with knives. It's not imagination, it's happened."

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Women

Women's concerns mirror those expressed by all groups, except in many cases their focus is more of a nurturing one. When talking about education, unemployment and health issues, these tend to be couched in an awareness of their impact on children.

"Unemployment would be a great concern to me and worrying about if my children are going to be able to get full employment."

"Having a good job, salary and financial security, being able to keep a roof over my head and food on the table."

"Education is important so I can get a job, a good one and support my family."

"Children's education. I would like to see all children educated in a way that suits their potential, for example, if a child has a problem learning to read and they love sports or cars or sewing machines, they should be taught from a manual of those things. We need ordinary New Zealanders to go into these schools and talk to children about their experience, e.g. in jail."

"My health and my family's health and being financially secure, being able to provide a roof over your head to own your own home, put food on the table and have a comfortable life."



In the context of crime, women, like the disabled and children, feel vulnerable for their own safety and that of their children.

"Rape and sexual abuse of children - especially when I discovered a friend's family had broken up over this. She was abused herself."

"The fact that we have a fairly bad crime rate and that violent and psychologically disturbed people are allowed to a certain extent to roam free in society and it concerns me that you can't go into the city at night and not feel safe, you can't leave your doors and windows untouched, even when you might be at home."

Owning one's home is very important to women. This is important to the disabled because it would provide a tangible indication of independence. For women, owning a home gives freedom, satisfaction and peace of mind.

"Well, being able to own my own home with space around. I like the privacy of having my own home, my own space. I can do what I like without someone else telling me what to do. It gives you a chance to relax."

"Having a nice home. I'd like to have a place that I can feel secure, nice to have a place to go to when you know it's your own space."

"Security for me means a freehold home to call my own. A good home environment where there is good discipline, respect, warmth and love."

Like all groups, a strong family base and friendship is important.

"The most important aspect of my life would be family relationships. To make sure that my children get the best of education and channels available. Having friends that I can rely on and enjoy their company."

"Friendship and companionship. Having good friends to share your activities with and the good and bad times."

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Men

Once again, male concerns mirror those common to all groups, except this group tends to adopt a more global perspective. More discussion about the financial health of the economy and government policy direction is evident when considering concerns. Rather than simply stating concerns, they are more likely to look for relationships between problems, and to offer their suggestions for managing the country and resolving issues. Men are more likely to speak specifically about business security.

"Issues of concern to me are unemployment, education, policing and health. We have a level of unemployment that is far too high, we cannot afford to have that many people being unproductive, not producing for the country, the wealth of the country depends on the whole country producing. The Tomorrow's Schools are a joke because of financial mismanagement by the government, there's not enough money for teachers and resources and class numbers are too high. Not enough police to cope with anything but major crimes - a shortage of police officers due to cutbacks. The health system has had hospital wards closed because of a lack of funding, insufficient care of patients due to nursing levels, have dropped too low and also the waiting lists have got longer again due to insufficient funds from the government."

"Taxes are too high, people can't afford to pay them because unemployment has risen, people have no money. Land taxes which may be coming on to New Zealand properties is just another way for the government to bleed you of your money. Political parties don't keep their promises. Health and education has been slipping, I thought our taxes went to pay for this but can't see where. Unemployment, this problem needs to be rectified by the government because with unemployment going up all the time, the government is using money which would be spent on health and education to pay the dole ..."

"Overseas investment and meeting house prices out of reach of New Zealanders because of what it does to the cost of living in New Zealand."

"Tradesmen will become fewer and fewer. There won't be any skilled people around in the next 70 years. Our apprenticeship dropped from 68% to 38% in a year, brought about by the 1987 stockmarket crash ..."

"Two areas concern me, a commercial free market and a stable, sound society. I bet that the actions of our present government have been beneficial to our country from a commercial point of view, it has offered and is going to offer greater opportunity commercially, creating better business attitudes, a stronger commercial environment and will have long-term benefits to the country as a whole ..."

"The main concern for me is government policies. There's no initiative to assist in decreasing unemployment. Our ability to compete on the export market plus our slow economic growth is also of a concern. Also the elderly. These people have to rely on the smaller amount of younger people to support the large elderly numbers."

Further, men are more likely to focus on aspects of life which concern them in the context of being the family provider or bread-winner and protector.

"My family - their well-being and their welfare ... I'd like them to receive a well-balanced life by getting an education, medical help when needed and a cleaner environment by getting rid of pollution."

"My family, having enough money to survive, not only for me, but for my family that I have to support. Wages, they don't pay you enough to survive on, especially when you have a family."

"The future. What will the future be like for my children? Will there be a future? Health, happiness and my family. The opportunity for myself and family to improve themselves by way of new experience and education."

"My family - achieving the highest level of commitment to the family that I can. Being able to enjoy my family and encourage my family ... working towards a minimum standard of living that I was brought up to achieve and now a package that will enable myself and my wife to live a stable, retired life."

"Freedom for my family and myself to live without being threatened, financially or physically."

#### 4.2.7 The Way Forward

The following verbatim comments selected from a cross-section of all groups included in the research, aptly summarise New Zealanders' ideal for their country's future :

"We are a young country. We haven't been around as a nation for a thousand years or anything. A true New Zealand culture will only result if we all work as one to help New Zealand develop as a nation. We are New Zealanders, not Maori, Samoan, English, Scottish, Russian, Americans etc. but New Zealanders living in New Zealand."

"New Zealand needs a new flag because the old flag is a relic of colonial times. We are a new nation that has a great future and we need to show it."

"The government needs to be very careful with the racial-going issues. I feel that they cannot give Maori descendants great pieces of land - handouts which would have been worthless had it not been for European developments - back to the original owners who originally stole it off the Maori. The gang problem which can be directly related to unemployment should not be allowed to develop when there are so many environmental jobs need doing, tree planting, general tidying."

"They should try to patch up or drop this Treaty of Waitangi and try to live in our multi-cultural society of New Zealand. The Treaty of Waitangi is literally pulling people apart."

To Entertain And Inform

The role of the media has been assessed against the back-drop of New Zealanders' perception of their country and their individual needs and goals. Taking into account the notion of New Zealanders as inquisitive about other countries, cultures and people generally, and their active desire to keep up-to-date with current and world affairs, strong emphasis is placed on the need for comparative news and documentaries to help New Zealanders assess their place in the world alongside other countries. Local news is also essential. One of the key roles of the media, therefore, is to act as a source of information.

This inherent curiosity and open-mindedness extends to New Zealanders' entertainment needs. The media by definition supplies entertainment. Whilst other functions are also necessary, it is felt that this should not be at the expense of entertainment. The entertainment provided should be broad-based and offer a variety of programmes, both New Zealand made and sourced from overseas. For the radio, it means a range of different types of music, talkback shows and stories.

"People watch television and listen to the radio for entertainment and information. People like to be entertained and informed, to enjoy themselves and find out what's going on in New Zealand and the rest of the world."

"Television is improving. There are one or two current affairs programmes - 60 Minutes, Foreign Correspondent. They're interesting. You get pieces from all over the world, most cultures. Like to see international things and a wide variety of subjects."

"It has the obligation to inform people what is going on in the rest of the world as well as entertainment. That's what they're meant to do. I feel we don't get full coverage of the issues in the rest of the world."

"Radio has more talkback shows where everyone has their say and so keeps people informed of others' ideas, a form of media that has more response, you can't talk to a T.V. set."

"They find out things. People get to talk about what they think and they get to hear what other people think and they get a chance to hear what's going on."

"An important aspect of entertainment to New Zealanders is humour."

"To be informed and entertained. Get the up-to-date news and learn from documentaries, relax and see things they like - have a laugh."

"At the moment there are too many ads and sport. These should be cut down and there should be more English programmes. They are more entertaining. They have our sense of humour and the Americans don't, they're sarcastic. English humour makes you laugh and New Zealanders like to laugh."

### Differences In Emphasis

The entertainment and information roles are common to all groups. For children, the same themes emerge, but in addition, as we have seen earlier in this report, children are more likely to focus on specific details which are personalised and diverse.

"To warn people of escaped convicts."

"More science programmes. I find these really interesting."

"More programmes for girls - all the programmes after school are boys programmes."

For women, emphasis is placed on the role of the media in educating children.



To Provide Company, Relaxation And Escapism

In addition to the two fundamental roles of providing entertainment and information, television and radio are also seen as sources of company, a means of relaxation, and in the case of television, escapism. Disabled and rural people strongly focused on the "company" aspect of the media. For disabled, television, whilst an essential part of their lives, is often criticised as being a substitute for more interesting pastimes.

"To be informed, to be entertained, to forget about their own problems and that's why they watch soaps. It's a reflection of their own lives, but happening to other people. Just getting out of our own reality."

"You watch T.V., you don't have to think about other things, it takes your mind off them. Escapism and fantasy."

"Radio, it is company ... well it's someone talking and it keeps you informed."

"I listen to the radio in the morning, particularly as company and as news and information."

"With talkbacks I feel like I am part of the conversation, just like being there."

"I find radio is company - radio goes on in the morning and it's like company being there."

"Radio for personal development, talkbacks, informative."

"Listen to the radio, to listen to the news, to be informed of what is in the community and for company. If you live alone and have a tendency to play your radio more because you can hear people talking and talkbacks can be informative."

"I like the radio if I'm on my own. It's company for me. Some sort of noise."

"I think that lonely people listen to the radio, especially on the talkback."

"Maybe they haven't got anything better to do ... just sit down and watch the box."

"I think it's just something to do."

"It's just a habit ... I don't think people like being alone and quiet, it's a security thing."

"Sad to think that kids watch T.V. all day instead of going out and playing."

"For escapism - people can't motivate themselves to do anything else ... I know a lady who watches all the soaps - she almost lives her life with them."

Radio is more likely to provide "background" entertainment and information throughout the day, compared with television.

"T.V. is different from radio and I don't think we can clump them together. Most people watch T.V. in their home, whereas more listen to the radio, whilst travelling and so on."

Differences In Emphasis

In addition to fulfilling entertainment and information needs, children see television as an escape from doing homework or other chores, or something to watch when there is nothing else to do. They generally seem to like watching television more than listening to the radio.

"Because they've got nothing else to do. If I sit down and draw a picture, I feel it's boring. There's nothing going on, it's too quiet."

"Lauren watches T.V. if she's bored and hasn't got any friends around. It's pretty exciting. Why just sit on the couch, when you can sit there and watch T.V.?"

"Something else to do. Sometimes it's the best thing to do to get information and entertainment. Like watching T.V. is better than doing work or listening to the radio."

Addictive Power?

Television is criticised for its addictive power, and there is a feeling that too much television is not a good thing. This is particularly felt by women.

"It concerns me how much T.V. my children watch and the quality of the programmes. I don't know what I can do about it, I've no doubt that T.V. is a social enigma. It creates the social atmosphere which is a bad thing. I have no doubt it's changing our social life."

"T.V. - some people are addicts and watch it as a matter of course rather than being choosy or able to switch off."

"But I don't know whether it should have a role, it's such a mundane thing. Basically all it does is get children hooked. It's basically a time waster, you don't go out and do other things."

### New Zealand Programmes

Reflecting New Zealanders' preference for a heightened New Zealand profile and a more realistic portrayal of New Zealand life, there is concern for more New Zealand made programmes to be aired. However, this is on the assumption that they will be of international standard, and provide an accurate and relevant reflection of New Zealand society today and its identity. In this context, Maori programmes are criticised for being too specialised, and in some cases, limited and retrospective - about the past not the present, and programmes like "Shark In The Park" are seen as New Zealanders trying to copy a standard and format set overseas which is inappropriate for New Zealand.

"Its role is to keep us in touch with world affairs and what's going on in New Zealand. Give us more New Zealand programmes on T.V. and radio which are of the same standard as overseas, by this I mean we don't want a whole load of Maori programmes, but of all cultures of New Zealand, European and otherwise. Overseas programmes tend to be of a higher standard than our locally produced programmes, better put together, higher quality of production. We need to see New Zealanders in our programmes and producing them to show people that we can do it. Show the rest of the world that we can act and produce our own programmes just as well as they can, or in some cases better, e.g. current affairs programmes."

"Shark in the Park. They reflect American ideas of what the programme should be, not New Zealand ideas."

"More local content, not overseas crap all the time. I can't speak Maori but I'm proud of Maori culture such as concerts on T.V."

"Wouldn't like to see radio stations being forced to broadcast a percentage of New Zealand music. If the music is good, then the radio station will play it."

"More New Zealand programmes. New Zealand artists are going overseas to get more money because they are not given a chance to produce New Zealand programmes and when they do, they aren't paid enough so they go overseas to earn the money and we lose talented New Zealand artists. The same applies in the field of radio."

"I'm dramatically opposed to T.V. the way it is now. The direction should be dramatically opposed. It should present people with a very wide range of viewpoints of cultural options, of new ideas, role models."

Children are particularly interested in New Zealand made programmes based on a lack of empathy with American programmes targeted at them.

"It should be kind of educational programmes for all ages made in New Zealand because all the American ones have nothing to do with what we do here."

New Zealanders' desire to be acknowledged in the international area impacts on the premise that New Zealand made programmes have an important role to play in promoting New Zealand on a global scale. Against the background of perceptions of New Zealand as an emerging nation, the role of the media is seen to be one which contributes towards enlightening other countries on New Zealand and New Zealanders.

"I think the role of actually promoting New Zealand by radio and television - to let people know around the world who we are and what we have achieved, there should be more documentaries about New Zealand overseas."

"More New Zealand documentaries and films produced for New Zealand by New Zealanders - it's an important input into New Zealanders' identity."



## Unbiased Coverage

Impartial reporting is important to the media, but it is felt that this is not always achieved. When talking about a lack of bias, reference is made to less sensationalism and a positive, rather than negative, perspective to reporting issues, and a lack of discrimination between countries and cultures. Impartial coverage also relates to freedom in terms of broadcasting and a lack of total control by any one interest group.

"A T.V. that treats people as intelligent beings ... not as ignorant consuming sheep. The 6.30 news has been developed into a glossy, briefly entertaining magazine sensationalist. Paul Holmes is a good example of that, dangerous, because a lot of people watch T.V. ..."

"Current affairs at the moment is far too much editorialisation of news and current affairs. We are too often subject to the opinion of writers and presenters of their views. I want the facts so I can make up my own mind."

"We must retain state control within T.V. and radio. It provides a more stable diet, because everything comes back to financial return on ratings and for any fledgling body to improve their ratings, they must sensationalist and this can be bad."

"I wouldn't like to see total government control and I wouldn't like legislation to dictate what was or wasn't shown or interest to."

"I would hate the media to be run by the State. They would pick and choose what programmes you could watch - they would dictate the news that we heard and thus only hear half of what was going on."

"I wouldn't like it to become one-sided. You get Radio Rhema and all that sort of thing and then 10 minutes of Maori news. I wouldn't want to see any one group take over and dominate."

"Not government control - it goes back to what I've said about biased reporting. I wouldn't like to see a decrease in integrity, a Maori channel or any other channel, or any other minority control unless that minority is self-funded and on an individual channel so we have the situation where we don't have to pay for what we don't want to watch."

"Wouldn't like to see the programme restricted to what people could see, mainly to do with movies. They shouldn't cut them as much as they do."

"Positive rather than negative, especially racial issues because they are sometimes blown up by the media."

"Everything that excludes violence, racial dissension. These films that show one country is inferior or there is hatred and domination over another country."

"Should promote New Zealand but not by discriminating other countries. Should promote New Zealand culture through fictional programmes like Quantum Leap which investigates racial problems."

### Maori Programmes

For all groups, a greater emphasis on Maori programmes is not seen to be appropriate, reflecting New Zealanders' need for an "unbiased" media. Further, based on a perception of New Zealanders' heritage, the media is expected to reflect multi-culturalism, and a united New Zealand, not segregation. Isolating and emphasising Maori programmes is seen as enhancing separation and conflict between the races, rather than promoting a positive future or accurately reflecting New Zealand society today.

"I wouldn't like the broadcasting system to place too much emphasis on the Maori programmes, but if you are going to be cultural, it's got to be multi-cultural and cater for all cultures in New Zealand."

"I would have to be honest and say I'd hate to see TV3 become a Maori channel because I think it would die because I work around your Maori fellows and they rarely speak Maori. To make one channel Maori would be a terrible waste. Te Karo, I can't see what it's about, I've watched it by mistake, it's repetitious, hakas, rugby league and carvings, they rarely give any other news. The impression is that they're struggling to find other news so I don't know how they fill a complete channel. The mind boggles."

### Differences In Emphasis

Reflecting the opinions of all New Zealanders, Maori people feel that one of the key roles of the media is to promote the positive side to New Zealand's identity. In order to achieve this, some considered other cultures beyond Maori and European were under-represented in the media, and that "cultural" coverage should be presented in an easily accessible, relevant, and understandable form for all New Zealanders.

"I can't speak Maori but I'm proud of Maori culture ... Maori news with sub-titles would be better because I can't understand Maori. More ethnic programmes - should have a station for it - Pacific Islanders especially because they are our closest neighbour."

"There's a Samoan programme sometimes but it's at such an obscure hour, only Samoans would watch it - other people want to see these cultures too."

"Good for all of New Zealand to watch other ethnic groups then we could understand other people's thinking - that must be good for New Zealanders."

## The Programme Mix

As we have seen, entertainment is central to the role of television and radio. For television, entertainment is compromised if a variety of programmes, topics and styles does not exist. Much criticism is levelled at the over-exposure of American sit-coms, the excess of violence and crime portrayed on the screen, insufficient overseas news coverage, numerous repeats and too much advertising. Too much emphasis on rugby rather than a cross-section of sport was also raised as a criticism, supporting New Zealanders' desire for variety.

"Too many repeats, need to cut these out and show more entertaining programmes. Sunday was a nice day to watch T.V. without advertisements, but now we have advertisements which interfere with the programmes and upset your Sunday by having to watch adverts. Too much of one sport - rugby - they should show a cross-section of sport so people can see different sports being played, not just rugby."

"There are too many of those trite sit-coms, American sit-coms and not enough quality drama."

"I think sometimes there is too much fighting and killing on T.V. I think it should say that violence is bad, don't do it kind of thing."

"Currently, overseas news is a small segment of the news programme, with only one or two specialised overseas report programmes. Keeping most of New Zealand in the dark and feeding them far too many American programmes - showing a totally different way of life - violence. Not helping the development of children by having excess violence."

"At the moment television and radio is showing too much fiction such as American cops and robbers. I think the programmes are showing too much violence."

"They should cut out the violence on T.V. and in the media in general. The thing is that people who constantly watch violence become desensitized to it."

"I would definitely not like to see any more advertising breaks. These seem to interrupt your concentration on a programme and spoil it for you."

"For a country that actually promotes peacefulness, there seems to be a lot of T.V. shows whether for adults or children that show a lot of violence."

"We could do with less American programmes or Australian. I'd still like to see more New Zealand input even though it's expensive."

"Radio I'm happy with but T.V. I haven't been. There's too much violence. Too many repeats. Too many cops and robbers programmes, too much crap. I'd like to see more New Zealand content. There's a lot of potential here that hasn't been developed."

Differences In Emphasis

Echoing the feeling of all New Zealanders, children are particularly interested in the media showing how New Zealand compares with other countries. In addition, they express considerable interest in coverage relating to the environment and nature. These aspects closely mirror children's perspective of the world. Children also place a strong emphasis on entertainment generally.

"More programmes of nature - about what people are ruining and how you can help prevent these things."

"I'd like to see some of the results of trying to clean up the environment and see how it's helping but not too much because that would become boring."

"I'd like more current events. Really only have 60 Minutes and Foreign Correspondent. We need more educational programmes."

"It should tell you what's happening and what's not happening and why these things are happening. It should show New Zealand up against another country and the advantages and disadvantages we have. So we can see how the rest of the world's changing and what we need to do to keep up to the standards and technology."

"Some education stuff but not too much because people want to relax when they watch T.V. To have a good laugh and watch a good film."

Maori and women are particularly concerned about minimising the amount of violence shown on T.V. in order to safeguard children and young people.

"It should provide positive role models for young people to follow. There should be less emphasis on violence and more programmes about believable people."

"There is too much exposure for children to cops and robbers, wrestling and other violence. T.V. has had a detrimental effect on society."



Television And Radio's Progress

Overall, television and radio are seen to have improved in recent years. This is seen primarily a function of the greater variety of channels and programmes from which to choose.

"I think they've improved. We get a much wider range of programmes on T.V. and radio. As a general rule, T.V. programmes are of a better quality and not so much rubbish."

"With the introduction of TV3, TVNZ has finally got some competition. This is shown in the vast improvement programmes being screened, i.e. more modern films ..."

For those who feel there has not been a marked improvement, rationale relates to dissatisfaction with aspects of the programme mix, discussed earlier.

The Media As A Reflection Of New Zealand

Overall, television is thought to provide the most immediately accessible picture of New Zealand, primarily because of its ability to communicate on two levels - through images and sound. Through television people can actually see and feel in touch with New Zealand (and the rest of the world). For some, radio was seen to be successful in portraying New Zealand primarily because of its perceived greater involvement and emphasis with local communities and related issues. Its focus is more New Zealand specific, rather than global.

"The radio reflects my impression of New Zealand and being a New Zealander by getting involved in the community, helping the community with fundraising for charities and sponsoring different local events."

"Just Country Calendar. That's the only programme that reflects my impression of New Zealand. It shows New Zealand's farmers, and after all we are a farming country."

"Sometimes they have profiles on New Zealand people and their ways of life which is excellent to see how people live."

"T.V. would have to be it because of its visual impact. Your visual image is so closely linked to your impression of a place, put faces and names to events, but I prefer the integrity of the radio which allows a broader range of viewpoints to be presented in an impartial way."

"Programmes about New Zealand and New Zealand wildlife - New Zealand sport like Magic Kiwis, Wild South and Mud and Glory."

Disabled people, Maori and members of the ethnic group in particular were more likely to feel that radio is more community-based, offering access to more New Zealand information.

"More human touch, more local ... I listen to talkback shows, they are New Zealanders talking to New Zealanders."

"You listen to the local stations and get local news. Radio stations are more accurate."

"Radio - I find what goes into their programmes is very much New Zealand. You've got a variety of stations, they all appeal to different varieties of people - that's what New Zealand is, a variety of people."

"National programme ... with a lot of New Zealand content - deals with more New Zealand issues, there's less international stuff."

"The radio because it's almost wholly New Zealand content."

5. CONCLUSIONS

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- \* New Zealand's assets are its land and its people. In contrast to other countries, New Zealand has a landscape which is spectacular in its natural beauty and is relatively pollution-free. Its people are characteristically open-minded, accommodating, friendly and resourceful, and their origins are worldwide.

However, New Zealand is a young country and many New Zealanders have "roots" in the relatively recent past outside of New Zealand, and by implication a mixture of heritages. As such, New Zealanders do not feel that they have developed their own unique cultural identity in the conventional sense, rather their identity is a multi-cultural one, with aspects of culture from a range of sources adopted and mingled together to form the basis for New Zealand society. In this context, Maori culture is but one component of the cultural background of a multi-cultural society. Reflecting this, New Zealanders are inherently curious about cultures, countries and people in their own country and internationally. Exposure to, and understanding of, a range of cultures is crucial to New Zealanders.

- \* New Zealand is also seen to be unique in its provision of an egalitarian society providing opportunities for all, a place where people from diversified backgrounds progress together. There is a strong feeling that this reputation should be fostered and maintained. If this is lost, so too will be one of New Zealand's key assets and a central aspect of its identity.

Against this background, strong concern exists with regard to increasing segregation between Maori and Pakeha through the concept of bi-culturalism. It is in direct contrast to the notion of a multi-cultural society. If New Zealand's egalitarian profile is criticised as an ideal, bi-culturalism is felt to exacerbate and ignite discontent, rather than provide a constructive, plausible solution.

\* New Zealanders see their country as ~~an~~ emerging nation. It is "growing up". It has been thrust ~~into~~ the limelight by strong independent stands on anti-nuclear, ~~environmental~~ and peace issues. This is helping to put New Zealand ~~on~~ the international map. New Zealanders aspire to be seen to be ~~able~~ to stand alongside the world powers and to be acknowledged as a ~~useful~~ contributor to world affairs. They want their country to ~~break~~ away from its dated colonial image, and to develop its ~~own~~ contemporary profile and independence.

In this light, concern is expressed ~~that~~ we may lose our valued assets by adopting others traits wholesale, and inheriting some of the problems characteristic of the ~~major~~ world players. In particular, increased disharmony ~~within~~ the country, a breakdown of the welfare state, increasing unemployment and crime. To date, New Zealand has boasted a fine record and this is the way New Zealanders would like it to stay.

\* Against this background, New Zealand is at a crossroads. It is striving to develop its own identity which retains past strengths, whilst providing the means to become an international contributor.

The role of the media, therefore, is to help reflect and support New Zealanders' quest. It should .....

- Provide up-to-date information on New Zealand society.
- Provide comparative information between New Zealand and the rest of the world.
- Place emphasis on New Zealand made programmes, but be fair in their development and airing to ensure :
  - i) Only those of international standard are supported.
  - ii) They reflect New Zealand society today and its broad range of origins.
  - iii) They are contemporary and present New Zealand and New Zealanders in a credible light.
  - iv) Presentation of cultures in New Zealand in an easily accessible and relevant manner to all New Zealanders.
- Use appropriate New Zealand made programmes to promote New Zealand to the rest of the world.
- Air a wide range of programmes of New Zealand and international origin.
- Be impartial, be forward thinking and positive.

Over and above this, the role of the media is to entertain. In the context of television, in particular, New Zealanders are looking for variety first and foremost, together with minimal repeats and advertising breaks, and a reduction in programmes depicting violence and crime.

APPENDIX : QUESTIONNAIRE



Approach :

"Good morning/afternoon/evening. I am ..... from Research International, a market research company. We have been commissioned to undertake a research study amongst a cross section of people in New Zealand. For this particular interview I need to speak to

- a female ) "... who is ..."
- a male )
- a person who is of Maori descent ) between 16 and 20 years
- a person who belongs to an ethnic ) between 20 and 35 years
- group other than of Maori ) between 35 and 50 years
- or European descent ) over 50 years of age
- a person who has a physical disability )
- a person who lives in a rural area )

"Is there anyone in your household who comes into that category ?"

Yes  "May I speak to him/her please ?"

No  CLOSE INTERVIEW WITH THANKS

IF 'YES'

"Our company is conducting research to obtain opinions from people about their impressions of life in New Zealand. We would very much like to spend some time with you and talk to you about your feelings and opinions of life in New Zealand. The interviewer could come to your home at a time which is convenient to you, the interview would take about 1 - 1½ hours and we would have a small gift for you as a token of our appreciation for taking part. Most people who take part in these types of studies usually find them very interesting and enjoyable experience. Would you be happy to take part in this survey for us ?"

Yes  ENROL

No  CLOSE WITH THANKS

- (a) "What day would suit you for an interviewer to talk to you ?"
- (b) "And what time would be best for you ?"
- (c) "And your address is ?"
- (d) "In case we need to contact you, can I just check you phone number ....."
- (e) "And your name ?"

NAME : ..... DAY OF INTERVIEW : .....

ADDRESS : ..... DATE : .....

..... TIME ..... AM/PM

PHONE NUMBER : .....

Date Enrolled : .....	Interviewer : .....
Date confirmed : .....	Interviewer : .....



































