CONTRACT LABOUR MIGRATION BETWEEN FIJI AND NEW ZEALAND:
A Case Study of a South Pacific Work Permit Scheme

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Science in Geography in the University of Canterbury by Wayne Levick

Abstract

This thesis addresses the phenomenon of short-term labour migration between Fiji and New Zealand that operates within the confining structures of formally instituted work permit schemes. Established since the late 1960s on the initiative of New Zealand governments, as part of attempts to regulate labour movements from Pacific Island nations to New Zealand, these schemes have had their greatest success in controlling flows from Fiji. Numerically the most significant users of the schemes, many among this flow have sought rural work in New Zealand. This in turn has led to the expression of hopes that a degree of skill and money transfer will operate through this means to assist Fiji's development. Establishing the efficacy of such mechanisms is a major aim of this thesis.

The study also details the pervasive role of government policy in the fortunes of short-term South Pacific labour migration. The need for integrated and flexible approaches to this study is accepted, with the proviso that the requirement to situate this controversial migration in the context of policy is paramount. The latter is achieved here, with the result that the conclusions drawn are generally sympathetic to scheme labour migration, and are therefore somewhat at odds with observed but not openly stated New Zealand government policy.
CONTENTS

Frontispiece i
Abstract ii
List of Figures v
List of Tables vi
List of Plates vi
Conventions vii
Acknowledgements viii

Chapter One: Labour Migration from the Third World: an Introduction 1

Theoretical Approaches to Migration 5
Theory and Methodology Adopted 11

Chapter Two: Contemporary Labour Migration between Island Nations and New Zealand 15

The Background to the Contemporary Period 16
A Short-term, Work-intending Labour Migrant Flow 18
Western Europe and the Middle East 31
Parallels and Criticisms 34
Summary 43

Chapter Three: South Pacific Work Permit Schemes: the Practice 44

Origins of the Schemes 46
The Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme 51
The Tongan Schemes 60
Mounting Pressure... 67
...Leads to 1975 70
The Fiji Urban Work Permit Scheme 74
The South Pacific Work Permit Scheme 77
Summary 83
### Chapter Four: Fiji Workers In New Zealand: Case Studies  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment in the 1970s and Early 1980s: Historical Patterns</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The De Facto Amalgamation of the Fiji Schemes</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Contemporary Scene</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Halal Slaughtering</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Scrub Cutting and Forestry Contracting</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Market Gardening</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money and Skill Transfers: Some Conclusions</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fate of the Case Study Workers</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chapter Five: South Pacific Work Permit Schemes in Policy  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Towards the South Pacific</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Complex Commitment</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The View of the Fiji Government</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longer-term Employment and Training Schemes</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment for Islanders, in the Islands</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wider Strategy</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Factors in the Schemes' Decline</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent Years</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chapter Six: Theory, Intention, and Reality: Perspectives from Fiji and New Zealand  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Work Permit Schemes and Development</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nature of Policy and the Work Permit Schemes</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations for Further Research</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### References  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix I  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix II  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix III  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1.1</td>
<td>New Zealand and the South Pacific.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1.2</td>
<td>Framework for a General Theory of Migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.1</td>
<td>Short-term Visitor Arrivals in New Zealand: 1960 - 1987.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Fiji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Tonga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Western Samoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. Cook Islands/Niue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.2</td>
<td>Short-term Visitor Arrivals as a Percentage of all Migrant Flows from those Countries: 1960 - 1987.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.3</td>
<td>Migrant Flows to New Zealand as a Percentage of all Inflows: 1960 - 1985.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Work/Working Holiday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Total Immigration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.4</td>
<td>Business and Tourist Flows to New Zealand: 1960 - 1985.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Business Flows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Tourist Flows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.5</td>
<td>Age Distributions of Short-term Visitor Arrivals in New Zealand: 1979 - 1986.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Fiji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Tonga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Western Samoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. Cook Islands/Niue/Tokelau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 2.6</td>
<td>Sex Ratios of Short-term Visitor Arrivals in New Zealand: 1979 - 1986.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. All Ages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. 25-34 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. 35-44 Years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3.1</td>
<td>Summary of Work Permit Schemes between New Zealand and Island Nations: 1966 - 1977.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3.2</td>
<td>Numbers of Registered Unemployed in New Zealand: 1964 - 1977.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 3.3</td>
<td>Numbers of Farm; Factory and Process Workers Registered Unemployed in New Zealand: 1968 - 1977.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure 4.1</td>
<td>Location Map of Migrant Source and Destination Locations Specific to Forestry Case Study.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1 Specification of the Migration Phenomenon: Equilibrium and Historical-Structural Approaches. 7
Table 2.1 Pacific Island Population in New Zealand: 1936 - 1986. 17
Table 2.2 Arrivals and Net Migration Gains of Short-term Visitors to New Zealand: 1961 - 1986. 24
Table 2.3 Total Dependency Ratios among Short-term Visitor Arrivals: 1979 - 1986. 42
Table 3.1 Seasonal Concentration of Arrivals under the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme: 1969 - 1974. 55
Table 3.2 Entry to New Zealand under Fiji, Tongan and Western Samoan Work Permit Schemes: 1967 - 1987. 65
Table 3.3 Overstayers Registered with the Department of Labour in Response to the April-June 1976 Stay of Proceedings. 76
Table 4.1 Entry to New Zealand under Fiji Work Permit Schemes by Nature of Employment: 1982 - 1987. 85
Table 4.2 Entry to New Zealand under Fiji Work Permit Schemes by Ethnic Origins: 1968 - 1987. 87
Table 4.3 Entry to New Zealand under Fiji Work Permit Schemes: 1976 - 1987. 91
Table 5.1 Personal Remittances and Transfers, and New Zealand Government Aid to Fiji, Tonga, and Western Samoa: 1973 - 1976. 131

LIST OF PLATES

Plate 4 after 101
a. Workers' Accommodation at Mangatokerau.
c. Supervision and Skill Transfer.
CONVENTIONS

Two principal sets of abbreviations used in the text are "DL", in reference to the New Zealand Department of Labour, and "MFA" for the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Information taken from the files of these is denoted by shortened file numbers (fully sourced in the reference list) and prefixed by "F". The Fiji Labour Department has experienced several name changes during the time frame considered here, and is therefore referred to by this title throughout.

The use of terms such as "Fiji workers" is adopted, unless it is clear whether Fijians or Fiji Indians are being referred to.

Data sets for work permit scheme and also more general flows, used extensively in places here, are mostly available for March (and not calendar) years. Thus, unless where the discussion is of events as opposed to statistics, or it is otherwise made clear to the contrary, figures are for years ending in March.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have many people to thank for the assistance and support I have so appreciated in my year of research. First among these is my supervisor, Dr. Richard Bedford. Dick's advice, his help in refining my work, and also his observance of an 'open door' policy, were real bonuses.

Department of Labour officers in Wanganui, Manukau, and Gisborne, were more than approachable. Particularly appreciated are the staff in the Immigration Division of the Department in Wellington, who provided valuable insights into 'behind the scenes' aspects of my study material. Mr. Gordon Shroff, Mr. Mike Scrivener, and Ms Mary Riches are especially thanked for refraining from too many grimaces, not least at the news of my joining their ranks.

The New Zealand Geographical Society is thanked for its contribution to my expenses. Indirectly contributing also was my 'bed and breakfast' (and video games) supply in Wellington - thank you Simon and Jo. Accommodation provided for a few short perspective-changing nights and days by Mr. Don Scott, and the latter's readiness to allow this researcher access to a set of new 'realities', were both appreciated. Thanks also to the Fiji workers who are the most important part of those realities.

The other 'gang' - my fellow set of thesis and other students and peers, are equally real. I particularly enjoyed the friendship of Russell, the 'chatty' lunches with him and Dorinda, and the help and more, of troops such as Marty.

In these thanks I express also the appreciation of my closest mate, Sue. Her encouragement, typing (no, that's not why I'm marrying you), and most importantly love, through a trying year, have really made the difference. Finally, but really first, are thanks to my Mum. Your support and continued understanding amidst my run around in '87 will never be forgotten. Neither will our thoughts of the one who is no longer with us in this life. He would have been a great proof reader. For Dad, I give thanks.
"Despite the recognition of the significance of the migratory process in any understanding of society, as evidenced by a vast literature, those involved in guiding communities, and economies, whether it be local or national governments, exhibit considerable ignorance of its workings and likely effects" (Lewis, 1982, preface).

Temporary labour migration between developing and developed nations has long been a controversial subject. Alternately encouraged and halted by governments, and desired by both potential migrants and employers, the phenomenon is one of considerable importance to those most central to it. It is a debated issue among many academics, and emotively reported by the media. However, despite the contention over issues of cause, effect, function and merit, little of substance is known about many of these human transfers.

The objective of this thesis is to investigate some features of one such human transfer: the temporary migration of contract workers between Fiji and New Zealand. There are two main reasons for focusing attention on temporary labour migration between a developing and a developed nation. The first is that while this form of movement is only one of several in the diverse field of international mobility, temporary labour migration has become an increasingly important mode of entry by foreigners other than visitors into developed countries. As Kritz and Keely (1981) have pointed out, these migrations are an element in the complex set of exchanges between nations possessing unequal quantities of economic and political power. In contrast to the situation which existed in the 18th and early 19th centuries, however, contemporary short-term labour flows are primarily from less
developed nations to more developed ones. Further, relations between sending and receiving countries can be significantly affected by migration flows and the government policies that influence them (Kritz and Keely, 1981). These points lead to the second major reason for the focus that is adopted in the thesis.

A conventional but controversial wisdom exists regarding these labour transfers and the costs and benefits they generate for source and destination countries. Certainly with respect to developing areas, it is often held that labour migration is an initiator of change more than a reflection of it. Such change is thought in this literature to be positive and beneficial both to the migrants and the development process in migrant-source areas. King (1986, 18), in a recent overview of literature on return migration and general regional economic development, has observed that two themes in particular are emphasised:

One is the notion of returning migrants as bearers of newly acquired skills and of innovative and entrepreneurial attitudes. The second is the use to which returnees put accumulated capital; this includes both the savings they have put by and brought back with them, and remittance income which was sent back periodically during their absence.

These benefits to migrant-source areas were affirmed as a justification for one of the largest labour migrations in history - the movement of millions of workers into the developed European countries between 1945 and the mid 1970s (Castles et al., 1984; Piore, 1979). Similar benefits have also been identified in the South Pacific (Figure 1.1); here, international labour migration is clearly regarded by many Island governments as a development option of considerable merit (Gibson, 1983). A mechanism by which development can be facilitated in less developed Island countries is perceived to be the acquisition of skills and money through temporary labour migration to New Zealand. Connell (1982a) believes that the skills transfer aspect of this is one of which little is known in the South Pacific, and that it is an area where further research is required.
An understanding of the way and the extent to which these transfers operate in South Pacific labour migrations is important, when viewed in the light of the emphasis which many South Pacific countries have given in recent years to the problem of skilled labour shortages in their prescriptions for development (Connell, 1982a). Several development programmes, including those of Fiji, pay particular attention also to the need for rural enterprise to play a greater role in national development (Connell, 1985; Economist Intelligence Unit, 1986; Sevele, 1979). Successive New Zealand governments have identified the capital and skill transfers accompanying temporary labour migration as a means by which New Zealand can contribute to development in neighbouring countries, and on numerous occasions have cited the opportunities to attain money and skills in New Zealand as being a major objective underlying contract labour schemes (for example, DL, 1978a). In the light of these observations it is appropriate to assess the degree to which formal work permit schemes have operated to provide job skill training and capital
for migrants, and also the place of such schemes in New Zealand's overall foreign policy in the South Pacific.

New Zealand governments have acknowledged a responsibility to allow and maintain labour flows between certain South Pacific countries and New Zealand, because of a 'special relationship'. While many development aspects in these intergovernment relations are well covered in the literature, the role of labour migration is not. In the case of the European labour migration experience referred to above, various ideological justifications have been offered by migrant-receiving countries for policy reversals from the mid 1970s (Castles et al., 1984; Miles, 1986). Similar reversals have occurred with respect to New Zealand-South Pacific nation migrant flows, and the extent to which parallel justifications and motives may exist, and thereby explain changes in migration policy, is worthy of consideration.

The work permit schemes that have operated between New Zealand and Fiji provide a convenient case study within which to integrate several of the areas of interest outlined above. More than any other South Pacific people with access to official work permit schemes, Fijians and Fiji Indians have used the schemes established by New Zealand and selected Pacific Island governments in the 1960s and 1970s. Furthermore, many of these labour migrants are from rural areas in Fiji and have been employed in rural work while in New Zealand. Fiji authorities have endeavoured to maintain a regular flow of Fiji-born workers into such work in New Zealand, viewing the operation in the context of Fiji's rural development. The schemes for workers from Fiji have received relatively high use compared with those for other Pacific Islanders, and possibly have had the greatest potential among South Pacific-New Zealand labour exchanges to contribute to rural development. All of these factors make their operation somewhat unique and certainly worthwhile for study. Another reason for undertaking the research is that no detailed academic account exists of the schemes.

Events which have taken place during the course of this work - specifically two military coups d'état in Fiji and the cancellation by the New Zealand Government of contract labour migrant schemes for citizens of that
country - could appear to reduce the value of what is being attempted here. However, it is believed that this is not the case. Indeed, the ending of formal work permit schemes between the two countries should not be viewed solely in the context of these events. Their removal provides an opportunity to evaluate wider aspects of the schemes: in particular, the forces that shaped and maintained them.

Viewed in this way an additional reason can be advanced for undertaking this study. This is that there is a need among policy makers and migration and development theorists alike for a greater understanding of the patterns and processes of, and also the rationales for, labour migration in the South Pacific. The upsurge in development planning in the South Pacific since the late 1970s, and the ongoing review of immigration policy begun in New Zealand in the early 1980s, are two pointers to this. There is value to be gained from examining theories of and approaches to, migration-development linkages such as those encompassed by the Fiji work permit schemes.

**Theoretical Approaches to Migration**

It has been stated in a recent review of the methodology of migration studies that:

In the past decade or so, techniques for assessing the extent and the impact of such phenomena [as migration] have emerged...refined to the point where quite legitimately it can be claimed that the relevant facts can be selected for critical analysis and used in social and economic planning (Bilsborrow *et al*, 1984, 1).

However, a review of many of the works in which those techniques are advanced leads to a less optimistic view. Migration studies are in disarray. Not only are there several quite divergent approaches, but their proponents speak in "utterly different languages for which there is no common idiom" (Wood, 1982, 312). Marks and Richardson (1984) agree. In their recent collection of papers on international migration, they observed that "There is certainly no consensus about either theories of labour migration or the
methodology that would derive from such theories, whatever the perceived inadequacy of the literature" (p. 17). Thus, the claim of Bilsborrow et al., that there was agreement on what was and what was not worth talking about and on the very legitimacy of researchers' questions, is a debatable one. The reason for this is that the major competing analytical frameworks in migration studies are polarised, almost irreconcilably so.

Numerous authors have noted the problems that beset migration research and attempts to integrate the volume of material which has been produced on this process over recent decades (for example, Chapman and Prothero, 1985a, 1985b; Wood, 1982). The problems are many: the difficulty of defining migration, a lack of cumulative empirical results, the prevalence of ad hoc explanations, the triviality of many principal generalisations and a lack of direct policy relevance. To these are added an excessive reliance on perspectives which preclude analyses of broader socio-economic and political transformations in developing nations, or generate insights not able to be linked with these. Arguably both the cause of and the solution to these problems are the two principal theoretical approaches adopted by researchers. A consideration of these two approaches - the equilibrium model and the historical-structural perspective - helps to explain how some of the problems arose and also possible solutions to them. Dominant features of the different ways in which the two approaches specify the migration phenomenon are summarised in Table 1.1.

**Equilibrium Perspectives**

Equilibrium or functionalist models have traditionally been the dominant approaches in migration analyses. They are the longest-established, tracing many of their conceptual origins to the seminal works of Ravenstein (1885, 1889), which postulated several laws of migration. These prescriptions, and subsequent classical theories of migration, have generally presented large scale population movements as being essentially voluntary in nature (Richmond and Verma, 1978). Theoretical propositions specify the optimising or economically rational behaviour which takes place in a given market
context, a behaviour dictated by individuals alone. Thus, the neo-classical perspective within equilibrium theory places primary emphasis on the premise of individualistic, rational behaviour, holding that people will move from areas of low economic opportunity to areas where opportunities are greater (Peek and Standing, 1982). In this perspective, "Society is assumed to be a conglomeration of individuals who exercise free choice in leaving or staying" (Marks and Richardson, 1984, 5).

### Table 1.1 Specification of the Migration Phenomenon: Equilibrium and Historical-Structural Approaches.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specification</th>
<th>Approach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equilibrium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit of Analysis</td>
<td>Individual migrant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale of Analysis</td>
<td>Resource rich/poor regions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notion of Change</td>
<td>Equilibration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Causality</td>
<td>Rational decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projected Outcome</td>
<td>Balanced regional growth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: After Gibson and Graham, 1986.

Perhaps the more conventional of the equilibrium models used in developing countries is the dualistic model. This explains labour migration in terms of an oversupply of labour acting as a natural mechanism, working to restore a balance. The existence of a dualistic economy is postulated, in which "the two sectors are basically unrelated other than by the supply of labour and in which it is assumed that the traditional or 'subsistence' sector is stagnant
and uncommercialised" (Peek and Standing, 1982, 4). Further, it is assumed that a surplus population, among whom there is mass underemployment, will be ready and able to shift to urban areas in response to a growing job market there.

Richmond and Verma (1978) have offered generalisations of the assumptions which these models make in terms of some of the costs and benefits of labour migration. The models assume that through competition in an open system in which upward mobility is possible, migrants will eventually improve their condition. Those defending the employment of temporary workers from a functionalist viewpoint "suggest that the workers acquire skills and sometimes capital they are able to utilise for their advancement on return to the country of origin" (Richmond and Verma, 1978, 9).

**Historical-Structural Perspectives**

In striking contrast to these approaches is the historical-structural view. This approach is found in a variety of models (including dependency theory, the centre-periphery framework and the global accumulation perspective), and this variety, combined with the wide scope adopted in the perspective, makes a concise summary difficult (Wood, 1982). The broadened scope, however, is perhaps the most distinguishing feature over that provided by equilibrium theory. Thus Wood (1982, 301-302) observes that:

Rather than treating migration as a discrete dimension of social reality that can be subjected to separate investigation, the perspective assumes that population movement can only be examined in the context of historical analysis of the broader structural transformations underway in a particular social formation.

Such an analysis in this perspective draws its principal insight from Marx's method of historical materialism. Of particular interest to researchers using this method in migration studies is the examination of capitalist accumulation and expansion, in which it is held that a geographical spread of capitalist forms of production is accompanied by the incorporation of increasing numbers of people into production as wage labourers (Miles and Spoonley, 1985). This often involves the use of migrants from backward
regions, who comprise a 'reserve army of labour' available for capitalists to draw on at will. In certain phases of capitalist expansion, labour migrants are imported to sites where the factors of production are being moulded into productive capacity. Here migrants permit capital accumulation to continue at a time when other workers threaten to recoup through wage rises a larger share of the 'value' they produce. Being foreign, they also undermine working class solidarity. Furthermore, when no longer needed, the migrant workers can be exported back to their country of origin (Fielding, 1985).

Writers within this broad perspective see few benefits gained by workers from their migration experience (Richmond and Verma, 1978). Excluded from many benefits within host societies, migrants become alienated from these and the home societies to which they may return, and in the latter face continuing economic problems and a lack of opportunities.

Critiques and the Need for Integration

Marxist historical-structural approaches to labour migration between developing and developed nations have dominated the migration literature in recent years. They have done so out of a proper concern among their advocates that migration as a phenomenon was being treated to a large extent in a trivial way (Standing, 1985). Thus, individualistic explanations seemed to treat as unproblematic the extent to which human actors were aware of the structural preconditions for what appeared to be freely-willed actions (Marks and Richardson, 1984). Revelations that certain personal or household characteristics were more important than others in individual migration decisions, while useful, were "ill-suited to explaining the role of migration in the transformation of the structure of production and distribution" (Peek and Standing, 1982, 4). Similarly, dualistic models were attacked, partly on the grounds that they were being used to justify policies for accelerating a certain type of industrialisation to the neglect of agriculture in particular.

Historical-structural frameworks, however, have evoked equally valid criticisms. Their weak conceptualisation of the decision-making process at the level of the individual, for example, is one aspect of the difficulty they face in
linking their unit of analysis (economic structures) with what is ostensibly being explained (the movement of people). Further, the use of historical data to explain particular social and economic transformations is viewed by many as an invalid attempt to adapt theory to experience by introducing ad hoc explanations for empirical anomalies (Wood, 1982).

Following from his critiques of the predominant perspectives, Wood (1982) has ventured the view that the divergence between the two approaches is so profound that it often precludes the possibility of meaningful dialogue. Even without making reference to their most fundamental ideological differences, it is possible to distinguish one major cause of the discontinuities that characterise the contemporary literature. This concerns the use of facts and theories, and the observation should be made that evidence produced using methods accepted in one approach may constitute something very different in the eyes of researchers using another framework. Thus, not only are the theories employed different, but there is disagreement over the material considered relevant for study.

Despite this, calls for integrated approaches to migration studies are common in the recent literature. In the diverse cases of early migration to Australia, recent migration within the European continent and internal migration in Britain, Jackson (1986) has shown that classical approaches which place emphasis on migrants' decisions and motivations, and structural perspectives emphasising external factors shaping the market or limiting perfect knowledge for migrants, are views which are necessary and corrective to each other. Similarly, in the early 1970s and with reference to aspects of population movement in a Melanesian archipelago, Bedford (1974, 129) noted the advantages of combining various hypotheses and models to provide "a more comprehensive explanation of this process than would accrue from any one 'model'". These approaches are symptomatic of what Prothero and Chapman (1985, 438) see as the greater sophistication in migration research during the 1970s and the permission also in the 1980s of "more than one plausible explanation to be tested at any one time" during the progress of research. Again, Clark (1986, 84) has observed that "It becomes increasingly
apparent from considering both self-equilibrating and Marxist themes that to understand the process of international labour flows we require both an understanding of individual migration behaviour and the actions of economic and political institutions".

**Theory and Methodology Adopted**

*Three Perspectives Within a General Framework*

The need for integrated and flexible approaches to migration studies is accepted in this thesis. It is contended here that both historical-structural and equilibrium approaches can be applied to aspects of a South Pacific labour migration, and a simple theoretical framework advanced by Woods (1985) illustrates the approach that has been adopted. Presented in Figure 1.2, the framework contains two important elements. One is the structural context, relating primarily to the economic, social and political circumstances of a population. Conditioned but not determined by this is the second element, where the processes of perception and cognition influence the formation of group and individual attitudes. Arising from this, though again not automatically, are actions or behaviours. Finally, there is the outcome: "that which is observable, measurable and recognisable as pattern. In its spatial form it is the subject matter of most geographical enquiry" (Woods, 1985, 3).

Two caveats must be sounded regarding the use of such a framework in this thesis. The first is that while the broader scale approach adopted here is historical-structural (in senses to be explained below), it is not essentially Marxist in orientation. The concern of Marxist historical-structural perspectives is frequently to "maintain an analytical link with Marx's conception of the inner dynamic of the capitalist mode of production" (Miles and Spoonley, 1985, 7). However, this is not a study which is expressly concerned with the dynamics of the capitalist mode of production. Rather, the approach is historical in that it reconstructs migration events between South Pacific Island Nations and New Zealand over the past 20 years in particular,
and structural in that it is explicitly concerned with the inputs contributed by economic and political structures in New Zealand to those events. Individual political structures are therefore held to maintain a greater degree of independence from the 'demands' of capital than is normally ascribed to them within Marxist historical-structuralism.

**Figure 1.2** Framework for a General Theory of Migration.

This consideration leads to the second *caveat*. While perhaps more readily obvious for equilibrium approaches, it is only in recent years that a satisfactory political perspective has been noted to be largely absent from macro-analytical approaches (Gibson and Graham, 1986; Miles, 1986; Peek and Standing, 1982; Zolberg, 1981). As Gibson and Graham (1986, 146) have noted, to apply only the equilibrium and historical-structural approaches "is to depoliticise the whole process whereby capital creates and maintains its labour supply". Thus, informed by the contributions of the research cited above, the third and perhaps the overriding perspective applied in this thesis aims to
incorporate political factors into observed patterns and processes. One precedent for using such a perspective in this way lies in Friesen's (1986) study of labour mobility and economic transformation in the Solomon Islands. There the author achieved some integration between perspectives emphasising individual agency and those concerned with structural determinism, by considering the mediating role of institutions - primarily government, capitalist enterprises and church missions - in migration.

**Methodology**

In order to approach aspects of temporary labour migration between Fiji and New Zealand from different theoretical viewpoints, it was necessary to apply flexible and diverse methodologies to obtain relevant information. This was to confront what has been described as "the classical methodological problem in geography of integrating analysis of 'form' with that of 'process'..." (Bedford, 1974, 129). Thus, extensive use is made in this thesis of various New Zealand government department files and official and unpublished statistics. Numerous interviews were conducted with officers in those departments, who worked in both policy making and administrative positions. Supplementing these approaches was consultation of the considerable literature on international labour migration within the South Pacific region as well as in other parts of the world.

An intention at the outset of this research was to gain greater understanding of labour migration between Fiji and New Zealand through field work in Fiji. Events in that country in May 1987 and afterwards made this impossible. However, New Zealand government files and Fiji Government representatives in New Zealand provided extensive information on policies in relation to the work permit schemes. This knowledge, and also insights gained from time spent with one group of Fiji scheme workers in New Zealand, meant that it was possible to continue with the study. Finally, interviews with employer representatives and an individual employer currently involved in the Fiji schemes, and a questionnaire sent to a group of
employers of Fiji labour, completed the range of approaches adopted to obtain information.

The thesis which has emerged from this research has the following structure. Chapter Two situates the South Pacific work permit schemes in the context of short-term population movement between certain Island nations and New Zealand. This provides an understanding of some of the pressures which generated these schemes and also an indication of their limited numerical significance within total South Pacific labour migrant flows to New Zealand. The extent to which parallels can be drawn between these patterns and those of labour migrant flows in other spatial settings is then examined.

In Chapter Three, the introduction and evolution of the Fiji schemes at the level of governmental involvement is detailed. Chapter Four narrows the focus to an examination of the work undertaken in New Zealand. This draws largely on case studies of Fiji workers in New Zealand in 1987-1988. An important aim in these case studies is to look at the extent to which work skills and capital transfers are inherent in the schemes' actual operation.

It is then necessary to return to the broader scale and locate the work permit schemes in New Zealand and Fiji foreign policy. This is done in Chapter Five, which examines the motives behind the schemes' existence and also their changing fortunes as instruments of immigration and foreign policies. Finally, Chapter Six reviews the place of such temporary labour migration in the wider context of Fiji's development. Some reflections on and lessons for policy development in the area of the work permit schemes, are then outlined in this concluding chapter.
"While small by comparison with labour migration...to the Middle East, or...to Europe, the flows to New Zealand of...[Pacific Islanders]...are a classic example of the process whereby an inexpensive labour reserve has been incorporated into the expansion of an urban-industrial capitalist economy in a neighbouring country" (Bedford and Gibson, 1986, 50).

The proposition is advanced in this chapter that contemporary population flows between several South Pacific Island nations and New Zealand are primarily ones of short-term migrant workers. This is especially so in the case of Fiji, where labour migration to New Zealand has taken the form of a classic 'guest worker' flow. As this thesis deals with the most tightly regulated form of migration which exists between South Pacific nations and New Zealand, the formal work permit schemes, establishing the nature of broader population movements between these countries provides one useful context within which to evaluate the relative significance of the schemes.

Short-term labour migration from countries of the European periphery to industrialised nations of Western Europe, and similar movements from South-East Asia to oil-rich Middle East countries, are the principal settings for an extensive and critical literature on labour flows between developing and developed nations. A second objective of this chapter is to establish the extent to which parallels, both in pattern and in criticism, exist between these flows and labour migration from Island nations of the South Pacific to New Zealand.

In terms of the general framework advanced in Chapter One, what is being presented here is essentially a description of pattern in South Pacific
labour migration and an introduction to elements of behavioural and structural levels which underlie this.

The Background to the Contemporary Period

Whilst it is little disputed that within many Pacific Island peoples there has long existed a disposition towards population movement (Chapman and Prothero, 1985a; Graves, 1984), and that indeed the history of these peoples is one of extensive and on-going migration (Crocombe, 1983), the volume of Pacific Island migrant flows to New Zealand has only become of significance to policy makers since the 1960s (Table 2.1). For the six Island countries which have contributed most to this - the Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau, Western Samoa, Tonga and Fiji - various reasons can be advanced for the fact that it is only in more recent years that there has been an upsurge in migration. Until the 1950s flows were small, largely because of poor transport links between New Zealand and the Islands, a lack of knowledge or interest in the Islands in opportunities for attaining a livelihood in a much colder country, and a limited demand in the New Zealand economy for external sources of unskilled labour (Bedford and Gibson, 1986). Further, until the 1960s New Zealand's immigration policy emphasized a preference for immigration from selected European countries (especially the United Kingdom), to the virtual exclusion of all other groups (Hegarty, 1977).

Since the 1960s in particular, however, "a cornerstone of New Zealand's immigration policy has been an officially acknowledged 'special relationship' with the peoples of Polynesia" (Bedford, 1982, 1). During that decade, large numbers of Cook Islanders, Niueans and Tokelauans migrated to New Zealand, a country in which they had been granted citizenship and therefore the right to reside since the early 1900s. Tokelauans were actively

---

1 The Tables and Figures presented in this chapter use as their basis the birthplace of migrants, as stated by migrants on arrival cards. A discussion of the problems associated with the use of this data is found in Appendix One.
encouraged by New Zealand governments to make new lives for themselves in New Zealand (Douglas, 1977). Special provisions also existed for Western Samoa, which had been governed by New Zealand until 1962. Samoans could enter New Zealand on the three month visitors' permits which were granted to all Pacific Islanders able to demonstrate possession of sufficient money for a return fare and evidence of accommodation and maintenance for their visit. In addition, for a number of years Samoans had been allowed entry to New Zealand on six month temporary permits, one requirement being that applicants had a guarantee of employment in New Zealand. These permits were subsequently renewed six monthly until after five years when the holder became eligible to apply for permanent residence. Since the imposition in 1967 of quotas on this flow, provision has been made for between 1000 and 1500 Samoans to enter New Zealand each year by this means.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cook Is.</th>
<th>Fiji</th>
<th>Niue</th>
<th>Tokelau</th>
<th>Tonga</th>
<th>W. Samoa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>819</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>999</td>
<td>1702</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>608</td>
<td>1336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>2273</td>
<td>753</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>768</td>
<td>2995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>3374</td>
<td>3038</td>
<td>1414</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>777</td>
<td>4450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>5838</td>
<td>5384</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>1005</td>
<td>7447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>7389</td>
<td>5274</td>
<td>2912</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>1273</td>
<td>12354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>12 223</td>
<td>6671</td>
<td>4395</td>
<td>1240</td>
<td>3965</td>
<td>19 711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>14 010</td>
<td>6621</td>
<td>5127</td>
<td>1293</td>
<td>5379</td>
<td>24 525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19862</td>
<td>15 678</td>
<td>7239</td>
<td>5457</td>
<td>1320</td>
<td>7218</td>
<td>33 864</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-- unavailable.

1 Total population in New Zealand at the time of the census.
2 Usually resident population.

Source: Department of Statistics, various years, Census volumes.
In contrast to the provisions for citizens of the four countries referred to above have been the arrangements for entry from one further Polynesian nation, Tonga, and in addition a Melanesian nation, Fiji. Formal political ties never existed with New Zealand for these countries, though there was a tradition of co-operation in various fields (Bedford and Gibson, 1986). Douglas (1977, 144) has maintained that until their independence in 1970, citizens of these countries "had what amounted to 2nd and 3rd class United Kingdom passports" and that "New Zealand's interests and responsibilities towards them have been at a lower level". Finding permanent entry to New Zealand difficult to obtain and certainly not encouraged by successive New Zealand governments, migrants from Fiji and Tonga have used temporary entry permits to gain access to work opportunities in New Zealand.

The last comment can be widened to encompass the majority of Pacific Island nations in the post-war period. Thus, regardless of the mechanism (short-term or longer-term) and ease of entry for migrants from all six countries, there was one major reason for these migrations. This was the need within New Zealand's economy for labour, which was coupled with two further factors: limited opportunities for wage labour in the Islands and an absence of any serious attempts to control immigration into New Zealand at a time of labour shortages (Bedford and Gibson, 1986). The primary means by which these complementary demands for labour (in New Zealand) and for job opportunities (in the Islands) came to be reconciled was through the avenue of short-term labour migration.

A Short-term, Work-intending Labour Migrant Flow

Short-term Visitors

A distinguishing feature of population flows between South Pacific Island nations and New Zealand is the predominance of short-term migration

1 Fiji had previously been a British colony and Tonga a British protectorate.
- many migrants state that their stay in New Zealand will be temporary. Migration statistics series for the period under study classify people who arrive in New Zealand into three broad groups. These are first, short-term visitors (for whom intended stays are of less than 12 months); second, immigrants intending long-term (longer than 12 months) or permanent residence, and third, New Zealand residents returning after an absence of less than 12 months. The concern here will be to establish the primacy of the first category in Island migrant flows.

This can be done by reference to Figures 2.1 and 2.2. Figure 2.1 demonstrates the rise in short-term visitor arrivals in New Zealand from Fiji, Tonga, Western Samoa, the Cook Islands and Niue, between 1960 and 1987\(^1\). Disaggregated into "work (full-time) and working holiday" and "other visitors", they show a rapid increase in short-term arrivals from Fiji up to the mid 1960s, and for all nations a clear peak in the mid 1970s and a steady increase again during the 1980s to a large rise in 1987. The importance of short-term migration within total arrivals (that is, all three categories combined) from the same Island nations can be seen in Figure 2.2. Certainly until the mid 1970s short-term visitors generally comprised 70-90% of all arrivals from Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa - proportions which were well above those for arrivals from all nations in New Zealand. For Tonga and Fiji, these proportions have remained above the latter in more recent years also.

One anomaly that appears in these figures is the decline in the percentage of arrivals who are visitors, for Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa since the mid 1970s, in spite of increasing numbers of visitors from those nations arriving in New Zealand. This can be explained by the fact that larger proportions of arrivals from these countries have been long-term or permanent migrants, or New Zealand residents (Bedford and Lloyd, 1982; Population Monitoring Group, 1986). This is especially so for flows from Western Samoa. Since 1977, Samoans who entered New Zealand under the

---

\(^1\) Arrival figures for the smallest flow among the six previously cited - that from Tokelau - are incomplete for the time series presented, and are therefore absent from the data presented and the following discussion.
Figure 2.1 Short-term Visitor Arrivals in New Zealand: 1960 - 1987.
1 1971 figures unavailable.
1973-1985 work/working holiday figures include Island-born New Zealand residents returning after a short-term absence.
1986-1987 work/working holiday figures unavailable. Therefore, "other visitors" figures for those years refer to all short-term visitors.

Source: Department of Statistics, various years, Migration statistics; Unpublished tables produced by the Department of Statistics.
Figure 2.2 Short-term Visitor Arrivals as a Percentage of all Migrant Flows from those Countries: 1960 - 1987.  

Source: As for Figure 2.1.
permanent residence quota were recorded as being permanent arrivals, while previously their arrival on initial six month temporary permits meant they were recorded in published statistics as being temporary migrants (DL, 1978b). Further, there have been significant increases in the number of Samoan migrants who have resident status in New Zealand and are therefore not short-term visitors by definition. A similar situation exists for arrivals from the Cook Islands and Niue. Here resident status and permanent residence intentions have been even more a feature of flows, resulting in a relatively low proportion of those countries' migrants being recorded as short-term visitors.

In terms of absolute arrival figures of short-term non-New Zealand resident migrants, it is important to note the dominance of Fiji-born flows during the past 25 or so years. This can be seen from Table 2.2, which shows that only between 1982 and 1986 and marginally for 1972-1976, have arrival numbers from Western Samoa been higher than those from Fiji. The importance of this arises from the fact that short-term visitor arrivals in New Zealand from Pacific Island nations are normally held to originate in Western Samoa and Tonga, but generally not Fiji. Part of the reason for this lies in the widespread concern which has been expressed in New Zealand in the 1970s and the 1980s regarding the net migration gains of Polynesia-born people. These and corresponding figures for Fiji migrants are given here alongside arrival figures for the years 1972-1986, and clearly show that net balances are considerably less, both in absolute and relative terms, for Fiji flows (Table 2.2).

The net gain figures refer principally to migrants who have either changed their migration status (for example, in the case of Western Samoans noted above) or who have overstayed their visits to New Zealand. In the case of overstaying this has largely come about through informal labour migration. This is detailed below, but small net visitor gains to New Zealand of Fiji-born visitors should not be taken to mean that labour migration has been less significant from that country than from Polynesian nations. In fact the contrary will be shown.
Table 2.2 Arrivals and Net Migration Gains of Short-term Visitors to New Zealand: 1961 - 1986

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Fiji</th>
<th>W. Samoa</th>
<th>Tonga</th>
<th>Cook Is./Niue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961-1965</td>
<td>12249</td>
<td>6266</td>
<td>1253</td>
<td>1649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966-1970</td>
<td>21242</td>
<td>11134</td>
<td>2350</td>
<td>2399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972-1976</td>
<td>28846</td>
<td>30128(12394)</td>
<td>17577(5341)</td>
<td>5427(932)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977-1981</td>
<td>22231(120)</td>
<td>22118(3426)</td>
<td>16301</td>
<td>7793(1018)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-1986</td>
<td>25173(1184)</td>
<td>32542(6293)</td>
<td>20627(2270)</td>
<td>12704(954)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>109741(1536)</td>
<td>102188(22113)</td>
<td>58108(9933)</td>
<td>29942(2904)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 1971 figures unavailable.
   Figures in parentheses are net short-term visitor gains.
2 Figures in parentheses are for the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau.

Source: As for Figure 2.1.

"Work (Full-time) and Working Holiday"

If from the viewpoint of Fiji, Tonga, and to a lesser extent Western Samoa, short-term visitors comprise an unusually high percentage of their migrant flows to New Zealand, then from the viewpoint of immigration to New Zealand one feature within these arrivals in turn has been significant. This aspect is the prevalence of a work-intending migrant stream between these nations and New Zealand, which is officially recorded within statistics as "work (full-time) and working holiday" when short-term visitor arrivals record their intended purpose of visit. Such flows were especially significant for Fiji-born migrants in the years 1965-1967 and to a lesser extent during the early-mid 1970s, for Samoans between 1960 and the mid 1970s, and for Tongans between 1967 and the mid 1970s (Figure 2.1).

The contribution of Island countries to all short-term labour migration to New Zealand since 1960 is shown in Figure 2.3. Thus Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa born populations made 21-49% of work visits from all nations.
**Figure 2.3** Migrant Flows to New Zealand as a Percentage of all Inflows: 1960 - 1985¹.

1.1 **Fiji**

1.2 **Tonga**

1.3 **Samoa**

¹ 1971 figures unavailable.

Source: As for Figure 2.1.
to New Zealand for all but one of the years between 1960 and 1975. Over the same period only 2-5% of all arrivals in New Zealand were derived from the same populations.

Despite the existence of labour flows which were as high as 6900 in 1967 for Fiji-born migrants and over 3000 for both Tonga and Western Samoa in the mid 1970s, the recording of work and working holidays as the purpose of visit for Islanders has fallen to much lower levels since 1975. Such a decline would seem to indicate an equally significant lessening in the importance of work visits to New Zealand for citizens of these countries. However, it is both well established in the literature and intimated in migration statistics that this has not been the case through the 1970s and 1980s. In the face of declining numbers of migrants citing work as the intention of their visit to New Zealand, large flows of work-intending migrants have nevertheless been maintained through the use of visitors' (officially, non-working) permits.

**Business and Tourist Flows**

These permits have been used primarily by people stating their purpose of visit to be "business (private or official)" or "holiday or vacation" and "stay with friends or relatives", the latter two categories together being recorded as "tourists". Increases in these flows are shown in Figure 2.4. While percentages of all arrivals in New Zealand who stated business to be their purpose of visit increased from 6% in 1970 to 12% in 1985, the increase in business flows from Fiji for example, shown in Figure 2.4a, represents a rise from 2% to 15% of Fiji-born migrants for the same years. While business contacts between the Island nations and New Zealand undoubtedly became more commonplace from the early 1970s - they were noted in the case of Fiji to be "increasing gradually" in 1971 (DL, F135-4) - it is unlikely that they rose to the extent indicated in arrival statistics.

Together with much larger numbers of tourist arrivals - flows which increased rapidly between 1970 and 1975 and again since 1980 (Figure 2.4b) - many supposedly business-intending migrants from Island nations are believed to have arrived in New Zealand with intentions of seeking work.
**Figure 2.4** Business and Tourist Flows to New Zealand: 1960 - 1985.

1. 1971 figures unavailable.
2. 1973-1985 figures include island-born New Zealand residents returning after a short-term absence.

Source: As for Figure 2.1.
In so doing they gave rise to what has been termed in one reference a "holiday work scheme" (DL, F135-4). The existence of this phenomenon is outlined in some detail in literature which abounds on these movements.

**Evidence from the Literature**

Within this literature there is widespread acceptance that since the mid 1960s and especially 1970, the large rise in the number of short-term visitors from the Islands ostensibly in New Zealand as tourists or on business, and in either case without work permits, has been accompanied by a large proportion of these arriving with the intention of seeking work. One of the first references to this 'concealed' work flow was in a study of off-farm employment among Fiji Indians in Fiji (Anderson, 1968). Here, the newly established but rapidly growing practice of work visits being made to New Zealand by migrants on three month visitors' permits was documented. A study of Tongan labour migration to New Zealand (de Bres et al, 1974) similarly observed that the vast majority of Tongans entering New Zealand on visitors' permits were doing so with the purpose of finding work. A comment made by a Tongan and cited in the study probably did not overstate the case: "[The New Zealand immigration authorities] know the Tongans aren't visitors. They come here to work. There aren't 20 Tongans a year who could afford to come to New Zealand just as visitors" (de Bres et al, 1974, Part 3A, 2). Supporting this assertion the authors claimed that "official" figures for short-term labour migration to New Zealand from the South Pacific since at least 1965 (that is, figures of stated intentions to work, as outlined earlier) were insufficient to describe the actual number of Pacific Islanders coming to New Zealand for temporary work. Stressing that the above figures were "very much a minimum statement", the authors instead used numbers of people entering New Zealand as "tourists", "on business", or "on working holiday" to provide a more accurate assessment (de Bres et al, 1974, Part 2, 20).

Hegarty (1977) and Bedford (1982) have noted the mechanism whereby Tongans obtained the support of friends or relatives in New Zealand to sponsor them for such visits, while Macpherson (1981) has detailed a similar
The primary intention of many Pacific Island workers who came to New Zealand was to earn sufficient money to cover airfares, housing, food and clothing costs before showing a net financial return. For most, however, increasing travel costs to New Zealand and rising accommodation and living expenses encountered there especially in the early 1970s, and also difficulties in obtaining work and overtime, made this a virtually unattainable goal. Many migrants therefore overstayed their three month permits, in order to make work visits more worthwhile economically (DL, 1978a; Douglas, 1985). In the early 1970s, the practice was particularly prevalent among Tongans:

Between 1969 and 1973 large numbers of visitors from that country were being admitted to New Zealand. Because there was no great
unemployment in New Zealand at that time, the control measures adopted by the Labour Department were not very effective. The idea was generated in Tonga, says a Labour Department spokesperson, that migrants could come to New Zealand and stay (NZCTD, 1982, 42).

From 1973, however, the economic situation in New Zealand worsened, and rising unemployment was a major stimulus for action which was taken to control migration and overstaying by Pacific Islanders. The events of the "overstayers debacle" (NZCTD, 1982, 41) are well documented in the literature and are not considered in depth here. It is sufficient to note that the most controversial emphasis in the actions of New Zealand governments at this time was aimed primarily at Tongan migrants. This emphasis concerned the use of 'dawn-raids' on houses of suspected overstayers between early 1974 and 1976, and the subsequent issuing of deportation orders or temporary amnesties for Tongans and to a lesser extent Samoans. While numbers of Fiji-born short-term arrivals generally remained at least as high as those from Tonga or Western Samoa during those years (Figure 2.1, Table 2.2), their lesser visibility in the New Zealand labour market, because of the nature and locality of their work and a tendency not to overstay permits, meant that these migrants were initially spared much of the attention focussed on immigration from the South Pacific.

An additional reason for this relative lack of concern regarding labour migration from Fiji lay in the fact that for each of the years from 1970 to 1975, between 450 and 950 workers from Fiji entered New Zealand under the provisions of the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme. These provisions imposed tight controls on formal labour migration between the two countries, by matching workers with job offers through the use of contracts and ensuring that the overstaying of work permits was made difficult. Between 1974 and 1976 a second stage of control was applied to labour flows between South Pacific nations and New Zealand. Following the action taken against overstayers, this involved the introduction of similar work permit schemes for Tonga and Western Samoa and a widening of provisions for Fiji workers.

In all instances these moves were accompanied by a reduction from three months to one month in the period granted for visitors' permits.

Despite the introduction of these schemes, the continuing use of the holiday work scheme since the 1970s is illustrated by numbers of 'tourist' and 'business' arrivals (Figure 2.4) well in excess of those using the official work schemes. The latter never exceeded 900 for Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa combined after 1975, demonstrating in part that only limited control of South Pacific labour migration to New Zealand was achieved through the use of the schemes. A more detailed consideration of the schemes is found in Chapter Three. In a following section, it will be argued that the forces which were behind these attempts to regulate labour migration from certain Pacific Island countries to New Zealand have parallels in other parts of the world. Before this can be done, however, it is necessary to introduce two of the major foci of international labour migration in recent years.

**Western Europe and the Middle East**

The migration of 30 million or so workers and their dependents into the countries of Western Europe since the Second World War was a result of the need for labour in the reconstruction of Europe's industries. Until the late 1960s this migration was the fortuitous result of a coincidence of needs: excess labour demand in one part of the area coupled with excess labour supply in the other. In the early 1970s [however], labour markets began to deteriorate, and around 1973 industrialised European nations took the unilateral decision to restrict the further inflow of foreign labour (OECD, 1978, 7).

Two main sources of recruitment existed for these flows (Miles, 1986). Initially migrants were drawn from colonies or former colonies of Western European countries and later from the Mediterranean periphery of Western Europe. In the early years of this movement both the stay of the migrants and the necessity for labour migration itself were thought of as being temporary, and so various states introduced measures to maintain the mobility of migrants, in
particular those from the second source. A system of restricted-period labour permits was used for these latter workers, who were often bound by contract to specific employers. The system that developed became widely known as the "guest worker system" (Castles et al, 1984) or *konjunkturpuffer* - the import of foreign labour when it is needed during a boom and its repatriation during a recession (Bohning, 1972).

Recent overviews of labour migration to Europe have been couched predominantly within a historical-structural framework of Marxist political economy (see for example, Castells, 1979; Castles and Kosack, 1973; Castles et al, 1984; Miles, 1984, 1986). Miles (1986) explains this labour migration as the result of structural processes rather than as a consequence of individual migrants' decisions. Thus, the increase in demand for labour which accompanied Europe's post-war expansion could not be met by the internal movement of agricultural workers and married women into industrial wage labour. The response was to turn to migrants from colonies or former colonies, and later to contract migrants.

The means and conditions of recruitment as well as the role of the state varied for these two sources of migrants. For Britain, France and the Netherlands, the legal position of citizens in their colonies and ex-colonies (basically one of a form of dual citizenship) facilitated migration and left the migrant-receiving countries with little scope for intervention to organise the flows. In the case of Britain and France in the 1960s, however, governments moved to limit the right of entry for many of these migrants. In contrast to these relatively reserved actions was the role which governments subsequently took in controlling the migration of contract labour. Here agreements were often negotiated with the governments of nations willing to allow emigration.

The system of contract labour migration had a clear rationale: Migrant workers were admitted...in order that they might sell their labour power on a temporary basis. Consequently, when the contract expired, it was envisaged that the migrant would return to the country of origin, from where he or she would be replaced by another individual...The crucial feature of this system was, therefore, that the state and employers would regulate the flow of
migrant workers in and out of the country according to the demand for labour... (Miles, 1986, 57).

This expectation was not greatly different from that held by the overwhelming majority of workers recruited through the guest worker system and a fair proportion of workers coming from the colonies, both of whom "intended to stay for a few years only. Their aim was to save enough money to buy land and livestock, to build a house, or to set up a business in the country of origin" (Castles et al, 1984, 12).

However, many migrant workers found it was impossible to earn and save sufficient sums to achieve their economic aims, particularly with the onset of stagnation and crisis in Europe in the mid 1970s. As the prospect of going home receded, many migrants brought in their families, despite the official cessation of the guest worker system which immediately followed the economic downturn. Another reason for this practice which contradicted the original intent of the system was the need of employers for a stable workforce, rather than having to continually recruit and train new workers. This was especially so as many migrant workers were recruited into jobs vacated by indigenous workers which, although involving semi- or unskilled manual work, were often in essential industries.

The same rise in oil prices which led to the economic downturn in Western Europe and hastened the demise of the guest worker system there, has been the catalyst for the importation of a vast workforce of Asian migrants into the Middle East since the mid 1970s (Robinson, 1986; Smart, 1986). The degree of control exercised over these flows is generally tighter than that which was evident in the European case, and has evolved to its highest form in the "packaged labour" migration from Korea, the Philippines and Thailand (Smart, 1986). Here contracting firms have brought the "work camp" approach to labour migration, whereby government agencies in sending countries undertake to provide not only workers, but their housing, utilities, health services and sometimes food for the duration of project-specific contracts (Gibson and Graham, 1986). Whilst the specific details of this approach are
absent from South Pacific-New Zealand labour flows, the wider issue of migrant-source countries providing some of the costs associated with migration is clearly evident in these movements. This issue provides a starting point for a discussion of parallels existing between and criticisms of these latter flows and other international labour migrations.

**Parallels and Criticisms**

Two features of short-term labour migration, which benefit capitalists and provide incentive for their encouragement of the phenomenon, are also major sources of criticism of such flows. The first has been outlined by Miles (1986, 62), writing on the recruitment of young, single people from outside the boundaries of Western Europe:

...capital and the state in Western Europe were importing 'ready made' workers and were therefore not required to meet their costs of [re]production. The costs of rearing, feeding and educating the migrant worker were met within the political framework of the sending nation-state and, when the migrant's labour power was no longer required, the costs of sustaining that person were also to be met...[there]. This constituted a major net saving...

Related to this was the second benefit, whereby contract workers (more so than colonial migrants) were allowed temporary residence in a way that was designed to be compatible with the needs of the host economy. Thus, one effect of the repatriation of workers from Europe and restrictions on new inflows after 1973, was to "redistribute the burden of current unemployment to those [lesser developed] countries least able to cope with the problem" (OECD, 1978, 8).

Criticisms of these aspects of contract and informal migrations have been argued strongly in literature addressing South Pacific-New Zealand flows. A central theme in the mid 1970s and subsequently, was the view that cheap Pacific Island labour was being exploited in the interests of economic growth in New Zealand (Bedford and Pool, 1985), and that the "vicissitudes of the international economy (and specifically that of New Zealand)" were the major
determining features of the scale of international migration in the South Pacific (Connell, 1982b, 3). Writing in 1978, Douglas claimed that countries such as New Zealand were by and large not interested in promoting the better welfare of guest workers, their families, or countries of origin: "Guest-workers in New Zealand [under the work permit schemes] are encouraged as unencumbered, unattached, temporary, expendable, and replaceable, labour inputs into the profit-generating process (Douglas, 1985, 425). Similarly, de Bres et al (1974) held that the use by informal guest workers of visitors' permits had served New Zealand industry well in the boom years. However, it had benefitted the Island nations only to the extent that workers broke the law and overstayed their permits in order to send or take home some money. Thus, the permits were "the clearest instance of New Zealand's exploitation of labour from the Pacific Islands" (de Bres et al, 1974, Part 4,17), and a work permit scheme which had recently been announced for Tonga represented "merely an ordered form of the same exploitation" (p. 2).

Colonial and Contract Workers

A second series of parallels between the South Pacific and the Western European settings concerns the reliance on colonial and then contract workers. New Zealand's earliest sources of short-term workers (many of whom subsequently became permanent or long-term migrants) from the Pacific were the Cook Islands and Niue (Douglas, 1985). Whilst action was never taken to limit the rights of entry or citizenship of these workers (unlike the actions taken by British and French governments, for example), "administrative understandings" regarding the stemming of these flows were agreed to between the governments of the Island states and New Zealand by the mid 1970s (DL, F264:1). The need to control the 'second wave' of migrants from Fiji, Tonga and also Western Samoa, however, led to the introduction of contract work permit schemes which were more closely controlled than those found in Europe. This need was made more urgent by the onset of recession in New Zealand around 1973. One obvious difference between the New Zealand and European situations is that work permit schemes (with the
exception of one scheme for Fiji workers) were introduced in New Zealand after the arrival of the recession, and guest worker schemes in Europe were ended at that time.

One reason for this difference is that while the necessity for workers in some European industries resulted in acceptance of a degree of long-term or permanent migration (Castles et al., 1984; Miles, 1986), the same necessity among some New Zealand industries was accompanied by a government policy preference for unskilled labour migration to be primarily one of short-term workers (de Bres et al., 1974). This introduces the point that as in Western Europe, rural (predominantly Maori) workers in New Zealand were the first source of semi- and unskilled manual wage labour for New Zealand industry, until the realisation in the mid-1960s that this source was insufficient in quantity (Gibson, 1983; Miles, 1984; Miles and Spoonley, 1985). Pacific Island migrants have therefore generally been employed in these lower paid and lower skilled jobs, as equivalent migrants were in Western Europe (Gibson, 1983, Miles, 1986). There is, however, evidence of a degree of occupational 'leap-frogging' by some Pacific Island migrant groups over Maori workers, at least among those who have been able to stay in New Zealand for any length of time (Hill and Brosnan, 1984).

The 'Benefits' of Labour Migration

As was noted in Chapter One, two 'benefits' of labour migration have at times been argued as justifications for short-term worker movements, at least in the European and South Pacific cases, and are addressed in the context of South Pacific-New Zealand work permit schemes later in this study. These aspects are those of skill transfers and the exchange of capital accruing from periods of work in developed countries. Castles et al. (1984, 36) have noted that before 1973, Western European governments "had claimed, generally, that labour migration was beneficial to the countries of origin, helping to stimulate

---

1 These situations contrast somewhat with the Asia-Middle East flow, in which the character of industrial and infrastructural development in the Middle East has resulted in the flow of unskilled workers being counterbalanced by high percentages of workers at semi-skilled, clerical, technical, administrative and professional levels (Smart, 1986).
their economic development. [After 1973, however,]...officials discovered that this was not the case". From the mid 1970s, Western European governments made an effort to provide an ideological justification for the new policy of inducing migrants to leave and halting new inflows. The authors cited the record of a regional conference of the International Labour Office held in 1974, which stated: "It was widely felt that there should be a new concept of co-operative development, giving more consideration to increasing employment in developing countries...improving arrangements for the transfer of capital as a way of obviating emigration...was felt to be necessary".

These reversals in policy justification, which will be shown in this study to have occurred similarly for New Zealand governments from about the same time, were not imitated by the states of the Western European periphery. Thus for Turkish governments, the aims of labour export were the alleviation of unemployment, the gaining of skills which would assist industrialisation when migrants returned, and the provision of a source of foreign exchange and capital formation through migrant remittances and savings (Miles, 1986). The same objectives have generally been held for labour migration from Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa to New Zealand under the work permit schemes. Indeed in one respect these schemes went a step further than the European concept of guest worker systems: Zubrzycki (1981, 174) saw a difference in that in the long term, an official intention was to supplement the South Pacific schemes with "increased training and employment opportunities aimed at improving the reserve of skills in the countries concerned".

There is general acceptance within literature on international labour migration that the objectives cited above have not been realised for migrant-source countries. An OECD-sponsored project report in 1977 observed that each of the three aims noted above in the case of Turkey, which were supposed advantages offered for migration from many countries, were not met, at least not in a way that led to an automatic transition to long-term economic growth (van Gendt, 1977, 14). Short-term migration was at best only a palliative for unemployment or underemployment and few migrants returned with better skills or training than they had previously - acquiring only the skill of
becoming accustomed to a regular, industrial life. Further, much of the capital investment was unproductive and inflationary.

Similar conclusions have been drawn in other studies. It has been argued that remittances sent from Kuwait, for example, have tended to fuel inflation, go towards consumption expenditure, and disturb village economies and traditional values in the countries to which they are channelled (Al-Moosa and McLachlan, 1985). With respect to skill transfers, Piore (1979, 116) has argued that migrants returning from Western Europe and the Middle East fail to bring back critical industrial skills, an observation he considers not surprising given the functions the migrants serve abroad: "[They]...are not recruited for jobs in which they can acquire skills". Moreover many jobs for which they are recruited involve work which is regarded as unpleasant or 'lowly' in the host country. Having had these attitudes imparted to them many migrants are reluctant to engage in similar work on their return home. Finally Piore observes that the way in which skills are acquired in industrial societies means that practically only second generations of migrants who have been able to settle can attain them, by which time the natural propensity to return to origin countries has declined. Many of these points regarding migration-led transfers have been considered to some extent in literature on informal labour flows between South Pacific nations and New Zealand, generally resulting in conclusions which are equally disconsolate1.

Demographic Aspects

Two final points by way of comparison between the short-term migrations examined here, relate to demographic aspects of flows. Turning again to the proposition put forward in the introduction to this chapter, it is evident from a consideration of these points that flows of Fiji-born migrants closely resemble the classic pattern of guest worker migration. The first of

---

1 See, for example, Connell, 1980, 1981, 1984; de Bres and Campbell, 1975; de Bres et al, 1974; Douglas, 1985; Hegarty, 1977; Macpherson, 1981, 1984; Shankman, 1976. The few cursory references to the South Pacific work permit schemes are found within some of these works, and are reviewed in Chapter Six. Their conclusions are little different from those made of wider international flows.
these is the observation that many migrant-source countries have in common a high proportion of their population engaged in agriculture. Thus, while many workers from underdeveloped European nations were employed in skilled manual and even non-manual work before their migration to Western Europe, the majority of migrants left agricultural work to seek employment opportunities in other countries (Miles, 1986). This has also been noted for Asian workers (Smart, 1986), and has been singled out as a feature of Fiji work flows to New Zealand which is more prominent than in Polynesian-source flows (Connell, 1985).

The second point can be demonstrated to a degree from an age-sex breakdown of short-term visitor arrivals from Pacific Island nations, and follows from the observation that age-sex selectivity exists in many short-term labour flows. The majority of contract workers in the early phase at least of European migration were young and male (Miles, 1986), a pattern which has been repeated in migrant labour flows to the Middle East. Robinson (1986) cites such findings for Pakistani and Indian workers, and a recent study in Kuwait shows 77% of the total foreign labour force there to be male, and concentrated in the 25-40 year age group (Al-Moosa and McLachlan, 1985).

This selectivity has been largely inherent in the South Pacific work permit schemes. Workers employed under these are required to be between 20 and 45 and in exceptional circumstances up to 50 years of age, and have been almost exclusively male. Age-sex selectivity is also evident among informal short-term arrivals from Pacific nations, and provides a distinction between the flows of people born in Fiji and Tonga in terms of their adherence to a guest worker scenario. Aspects of these flows which have been examined earlier in the chapter, such as the predominance of short-term migration and high use of work holidays and later visitors' permits and 'business' visits for work purposes, do little to separate the two flows. However, while breakdowns of age distributions of arrivals for 1979 to 1986 show the percentage in the employment-active 25-44 year age group to be higher in the case of Tongans, than for Samoans, Cook Islanders, Niueans and Tokelauans, this percentage is even higher for Fiji migrants (Figure 2.5).
Figure 2.5  Age Distributions of Short-term Visitor Arrivals in New Zealand:

Source: Unpublished tables produced by the Department of Statistics.
Figure 2.6  Sex Ratios of Short-term Visitor Arrivals in New Zealand: 1979 - 1986.

Source: As for Figure 2.5.
Total and disaggregated (by age group) sex ratios of arrivals show a similar hierarchy (Figure 2.6). Thus for total flows, and those of the 25-34 and 35-44 year age groups in particular, Fiji and Tonga born migrations are significantly more male-dominated. Again, Fiji flows are even more concentrated in this aspect. Finally an indicator which is related to age distribution reinforces the point demonstrated here. Table 2.3 shows total dependency ratios - the percentage of short-term visitor arrivals in the 0-14 and 60+ age categories divided by those aged 15-59 - to be generally lowest in the case of Fiji migrants, indicating a concentration of arrivals in the relatively middle-aged groups.

**Table 2.3** Total Dependency Ratios\(^1\) among Short-term Visitor Arrivals: 1979 - 1986.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fiji</th>
<th>Tonga</th>
<th>W. Samoa</th>
<th>Cook Is./Niue/Tokelau</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>36.5</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>45.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>44.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>37.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>34.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) Total dependency ratio = \[ \left( \frac{P_{0-14} + P_{60+}}{P_{15-59}} \right) \times 100, \] where \( P \) = percentage of short-term visitor arrivals.

Source: Unpublished statistics produced by the Department of Statistics.

The significance of establishing the primacy of a work-intending migration flow among Fiji migrants in particular, which has been shown in this chapter, is demonstrated in Chapter Three where the work permit schemes, which were a significant response to these flows, are examined.
Summary

In Chapter Two a primary aim has been to demonstrate the existence of a short-term labour migrant flow between South Pacific Island nations, particularly Fiji, and New Zealand, and to establish the importance of this within wider population flows between those countries. This has been achieved through an analysis of migration statistics and also through a review of relevant literature. Both sources of information point to the widespread use of informal work arrangements by Pacific Island migrants in New Zealand. Perhaps ironically then, work permit schemes which were introduced in partial response to this misuse of entry provisions comprise only a small element of total Island work flows to New Zealand.

There are close parallels between temporary labour migration from the South Pacific to New Zealand and the larger transfers in Europe and the Middle East. Many of the features of these flows are strongly criticised in the literature dealing with international labour migration. One parallel which is especially indicative of a guest worker flow between Fiji and New Zealand is the age-sex selectivity among the migrant population.
CHAPTER THREE

SOUTH PACIFIC WORK PERMIT SCHEMES: THE PRACTICE

"It would not be in our interest or theirs to turn the immigration tap on and off every time the economic temperature changed in New Zealand" (New Zealand's Prime Minister, August 5 1975 press statement, in MFA, F1/5:3).

This chapter details the initiation, evolution and operation of the work permit schemes negotiated between New Zealand and Fiji, from 1966 to the early 1980s. Reference will also be made in places to the work permit schemes negotiated for Tonga and Western Samoa, as these latter arrangements help to explain aspects of the Fiji schemes in terms of both the circumstances surrounding their introduction and the schemes' provisions. The variety of schemes ranged from those agreed to between New Zealand employer groups (with the consent of the New Zealand government) and an Island government, to schemes instituted following direct government to government discussions.

As was introduced in the preceding chapter, labour migration under these schemes accounted for only a small part of total short-term labour transfers to New Zealand from Island nations. The significance of the schemes is that they embodied attempts by successive New Zealand governments to regulate more firmly labour flows from these nations to New Zealand - attempts which necessitated precisely the turning off and on of immigration flows which the Prime Minister spoke against in the quotation above. Nine schemes are referred to in the discussion; Figure 3.1 summarises and clarifies their progression through time.
Figure 3.1

1966 - 1977

Fiji Urban Work Permit Scheme

South Pacific Work Permit Scheme

Western Samoa Work Permit Scheme

Tonga Work Permit Scheme

South Pacific Work Permit Scheme

Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme

Fiji Urban Work Permit Scheme

Western Samoa Work Permit Scheme

Tonga Work Permit Scheme

Employment Certificates

Fiji

Tonga

Western Samoa

45
Origins of the Schemes

It was noted in Chapter Two that during the 1960s the numbers of Fiji citizens using three month visitors' permits as a means of gaining entry to New Zealand for employment, expanded rapidly. The practice undoubtedly had at least the tacit acceptance of the New Zealand government: in a press statement in 1966 the Minister of Immigration noted that "this present custom of a large number of Fiji residents coming to New Zealand to engage in seasonal work [is one] from which practice the New Zealand economy, the Fiji economy, and the persons concerned have benefitted considerably" (DL, F403-4). The Minister of Labour in 1969 similarly noted (DL, F135-2:1) that "...this practice was considered, in general, to be advantageous to the economy of both countries...", and in the same letter used the term "procedure" to describe the phenomenon. Certainly for several years before 1967, this movement was allowed to go unhindered (DL, F135-6).

During 1966, however, the numbers in Fiji seeking permits for short-term entry into New Zealand rose sharply. More than 13,800 permit applications were dealt with in 1967 (DL, F135-4), and a record number of short-term visitors from Fiji entered New Zealand in the March year 1967-6869 for working holidays of less than 12 months and 1756 as "other visitors". Problems were being experienced in New Zealand with this arrangement for visitors: many were overstaying permits, and the potential for this situation to be aggravated was evident in the increasing number who were having difficulty in finding work. Overstaying in particular gave cause for concern to the governments of Fiji and New Zealand (DL, F403-7:1), which acted to rectify this in December 1966.

Following inter-government consultation it was agreed that two types of entry authority for Fiji visitors to New Zealand would be issued. The first was a temporary entry (employment) certificate, a condition of which was that holders were to accept and remain in employment with the employer named

1 Presumably the December 1967 year.
on the certificate. The second was a temporary entry (general) certificate, under which the holder agreed not to work while in New Zealand. Working visitors also required a work voucher issued by the Fiji Labour Department, who matched applicants with vacancies notified to it by New Zealand employers through the New Zealand Department of Labour (DL, F403-7:1).

A combination of the greater degree of control over work entry which was inherent in these changes, the onset of economic recession in New Zealand, and the seasonal factor in Fiji-New Zealand labour exchanges (considered later in this chapter), was responsible for the fall in the number of work permits granted between February and May 1967 to less than 1000 (DL, F135-4). Further to this, however, was the temporary suspension of the issuing of employment certificates in June 1967, largely as a consequence of the sudden and further downturn in the New Zealand economy (DL, F135-6). The Department of Labour anticipated at the time that New Zealanders would be available over following months to fill vacancies in employment normally filled by Fiji workers (DL, F403-7:1), thus pointing to the expectation that the unemployment situation would worsen. That this turned out to be the case is shown by the dramatic rise in the number of unemployed persons registered with the Department during 1967 (Figure 3.2). This rise in unemployment, particularly in early to mid 1967 when the number of registered unemployed increased from less than 1000 in April, to 2303 in May and again to 5228 in June, corresponded closely to the action taken in June. It will be shown below that many Fiji workers engaged in rural work in New Zealand. Thus, although figures for numbers of unemployed farm workers are unavailable before April 1968, it is likely that their relatively high level at that time points to this occupational group being hit hard by the recession (Figure 3.3) - a further incentive for the arrangement to be suspended.

Given the effect which this rise in total unemployment had on working 'visitor' entry to New Zealand from Fiji¹, however, the restriction may have been a hasty move at that time. Visitor flows for the March 1968

¹ The majority of those on temporary entry (general) certificates were likely to have been working or seeking work while in New Zealand, contrary to the conditions of their entry.
Figure 3.2 Numbers of Registered Unemployed in New Zealand: 1964 - 1977.

Source: Department of Statistics, various years, Labour statistics.
Figure 3.3 Numbers of Farm; Factory and Process Workers Registered Unemployed in New Zealand: 1968 - 1977.

Source: As for Figure 3.2.
year experienced the beginning of what was to become a long-term worsening of the employment situation in New Zealand over an 18 month period, and the fall in total Fiji visitor arrivals from 8625 in 1967 to 2258 in 1968 was later considered to represent a "lagged response to a depressed employment market" (DL, 1975). Had the work entry arrangement not been suspended in mid 1967, it is probable that numbers arriving in New Zealand on employment certificates would have diminished similarly.

The impressions of senior district officers of the Department of Labour in Wanganui, Gisborne and Christchurch (the major areas for employment of Fiji workers during the 1960s) suggest that the vast majority of the work undertaken at this time was hill country scrub cutting in the lower and central North Island, and to a lesser extent, *Nassella* tussock grubbing in North Canterbury. Government subsidies for land clearing, the relatively low award wages and poorer conditions then available for most farm work as opposed to urban work and thus the difficulty of obtaining local labour, made the importation of Fiji workers very attractive to rural employers. The lack of enthusiasm and commitment demonstrated by local workers towards this type of employment (Donaldson, 1987, pers. comm.; Douglas, 1985) provided a further incentive for employers to request the continuance of the labour flow, especially following its suspension.

Particularly vocal in this respect was the Wanganui Provincial District of Federated Farmers, whose repeated requests to the New Zealand Government for Fiji scrub cutters and demonstration that only a few locals were prepared to undertake such work, led to permission being granted for it to approach the Fiji Government (Donaldson, 1987, pers. comm.). Following this, agreement was reached in February 1968 between Wanganui Federated Farmers, the North Canterbury Nassella Tussock Board, and the Fiji and New Zealand labour departments, for the resumption of scrub cutting and *Nassella* tussock grubbing, using Fiji labour (DL, F135-6). Thus, the first official work

---

1 See for example, Morris and Cant (1967, 32-33).
permit scheme between Fiji and New Zealand - the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme - was introduced.

The Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme

The admission of workers into New Zealand under this scheme from early 1969, is cited in various official documents of the 1970s as representing a 'reintroduction' or a 'resumption' of the 'scheme' which existed previously. The view is taken here, however, that the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme was the first official work permit scheme between the two countries. While the stated provision for "the employment of male Fiji workers in agricultural industries in rural areas [of New Zealand]" (MOU, 1975, 3) in effect represented a continuation of the situation which had developed previously, the important point in considering the scheme is that it introduced relatively tight and certainly unprecedented controls over many facets of labour migration between Fiji and New Zealand. These controls are outlined below.

Contracts

A significant addition to labour flows between Fiji and New Zealand which was introduced under the scheme, was the requirement that effectively, workers were to be contracted to their employer. While the specific details and contract forms bearing evidence of this are unavailable it seems that the contract was an 'indirect' one, involving two related sets of agreements. The practice became that employer groups (the two outlined above, and later the New Zealand Tobacco Growers' Federation and a few smaller employers) requested yearly intakes of labour from Fiji through district offices of the Department of Labour. Having checked that employers' proposed accommodation and employment conditions were acceptable, the offices advised the Fiji Labour Department of the request. The Fiji Labour Department in turn negotiated (possibly on a seasonal basis) agreements with each employer group; under the scheme these had to include ruling rates of
pay in New Zealand (DL, F135-6). Workers were then selected by the Fiji Labour Department to become contracted to it for their work visit to New Zealand.

**Other Arrangements**

Confinement of the scheme's scope to employment in rural areas only, was imposed at the request of the Fiji Government (DL, 1975). It was apparent that accommodation was more readily available in such areas and that they generally presented fewer opportunities for migrants to spend their earnings or to acquire what were seen as undesirable aspects of an urban lifestyle (MFA, F31/1:2). The Fiji Government requested that permits be made valid for four month periods (the New Zealand Government had offered six months), apparently to ensure a greater turnaround of workers (DL, F135-9:1). Further, workers could not return to New Zealand within 12 months of leaving the country at the expiry of their work permit.

Provision was made for insurance and satisfactory accommodation and conditions to be provided for workers. These provisions worked, in part, to prevent the recurrence of "earlier abuses" (DL, 1975). This latter comment referred to difficulties experienced with the short-lived arrangement of 1967, when accommodation offered by some employers was found to be either sub-standard or non-existent (DL, F403-7:1). In addition, media headlines of the same period, such as "Fijians toil in camps of squalor" (Truth, April 4 1967), more than likely had an influence when the terms of the new scheme were set.

The requirements that employers were to advance airfares free of interest (subsequently deducting these from workers' wages) and that the Fiji Labour Department was to have the sole right to select workers, can be seen as a partial response to a further problem with the earlier arrangements (DL, F403-7:1). This concerned at least one employment agency operating by 1967 to recruit Fiji labour for New Zealand employers and to obtain suitable vacancies in New Zealand. Department of Labour policy was not to approve of such operations, and concern was evidently felt regarding the potential for agents to
cash in on the movement of Fiji workers to New Zealand - money lending agencies in Fiji were known to often advance airfares to migrants (Anderson, 1968, 20). Organisations such as Federated Farmers were required to administer the new scheme locally, and were the nominal employers. Individual employers were not able to nominate specific workers themselves (MOU, 1975), but employed workers through the local organisation, though individual contractors could employ workers subject to certain "safeguards" (DL, F135-6).

Resumption of labour migrant flows during the 1968-1969 summer season was carried out on a limited scale: 141 permits were granted between January and March 1969 for scrub cutting in the Wanganui district and for *Nassella* tussock grubbing in North Canterbury. These were viewed as two pilot schemes as was stated in a June 1969 letter by the New Zealand Minister of Labour, who also outlined the expectation that larger numbers would be allowed to enter New Zealand during the following summer (DL, F135-2:1). This early restriction on the scheme's operation may have had more to do with the New Zealand Government's sensitivity to the unemployment situation in New Zealand (unemployment was generally declining from its mid 1968 peak, but was still well above pre 1967 levels - Figure 3.2) than with any need to 'test' the scheme, given that its basic features were little removed, in effect, from those which had existed earlier.

**The Scope Extended**

Following the success - according to the Associate Minister of Immigration in 1970 (DL, F135-8) - of the 1969 pilot schemes, the Rural Work Permit Scheme was extended late in 1969 to areas other than North Canterbury and Wanganui, and to employment in other land clearing and agricultural industries such as fruit picking and market gardening (DL, F135-6). These changes can again be viewed in the light of the employment situation in New Zealand. Figure 3.2 shows the general continuation in 1969 of the decline in the total number of registered unemployed; Figure 3.3 the low number of
unemployed farm workers: the link between the fortunes of the scheme's operation and the political pressure of unemployment in New Zealand seems clear.

Some 450 work permits were granted between September 1969 and March 1970. A breakdown of 284 of these indicates that 262 workers were nominally employed by Federated Farmers, and that one-half were to work in the Wanganui Provincial District, the remainder going to Wairarapa, Gisborne, and Hawkes Bay\(^1\) (DL, F135-2:1). All gave their occupation to be "labourer". Fifty-three percent of the workers were Fijian, and if the ethnic mix of these groups can be taken to be representative of workers from Fiji arriving in New Zealand from this time, then the picture is quite different from that of earlier years. A comment in the 1966 ministerial press statement and the observations made by officials aware of the situation which existed in the 1960s (both of which were cited earlier), and a reference to early Fiji labour migrations to New Zealand (Anderson, 1968), all attest that the flow of short-term labour migrants was predominantly Fiji Indian at that time.

In mid 1970, the scope for employment under the scheme was again extended (DL, F135-6). Employment could now be on farms and stations, in tobacco growing, and in general forestry work including land clearing, forest establishment and silviculture. Extension of the scheme to urban employment was declined, due to difficulties anticipated in tracing workers who may have left their employment and/or overstay work permits, in accommodating such workers, and regarding the potential for workers to save adequately in an urban setting. A further reason given was to avoid criticism which, it was suggested, had previously been levelled at aspects of the urban employment of Fiji workers. Presumably this was a reference to Fijian and Fiji Indian workers in New Zealand on visitors' permits, who are known to have turned increasingly to employment in factories, abattoirs and on construction sites in urban areas in the late 1960s (Anderson, 1968; Douglas, 1977). It was

---

\(^1\)This is not intended to imply that the only work undertaken at about this time was scrub cutting. For example, in April 1970, 70 workers (61% of them Fijian) arrived for *Nassella* tussock grubbing in North Canterbury (DL, F135-2:1).
also later put forward in a 1971 brief by the Department of Labour (DL, F135-6) that it could be desirable to reserve such work for Tongan migrants, who had been employed extensively in urban areas since at least the early 1970s (de Bres and Campbell, 1975).

The response to this widening of scope can again be shown from the records of permits granted by the New Zealand High Commission in Suva, for entry to New Zealand under the scheme. In July 1970, one month after the extensions, 101 permits were issued. The balance (736) of the total permits issued for the March 1971 year was concentrated into the six months between October and March (Table 3.1). The latter included 142 workers employed by the New Zealand Tobacco Growers' Federation in the Motueka region, to assist primarily in the summer and autumn harvesting of tobacco (DL, F135-6).

**Table 3.1** Seasonal Concentration of Arrivals under the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme: 1969 - 1974.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Months of Concentration</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>January - March</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>September - March</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>October - March</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>September - January</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>December - March</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974³</td>
<td>December - January</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Months of continuous concentrations of arrivals.

2 Percentage of that year's arrivals during the period of concentration cited.

3 Monthly breakdown available only for December and January.

Early Criticism

Harvesting of tobacco by Fiji workers in 1970-1971 was considered a pilot scheme by the Department of Labour (DL, F135-6), as this was the first season during which tobacco growers had requested such assistance under the Rural Work Permit Scheme. The request came about because growers in the region "had become increasingly concerned at the high rate of labour turnover" among their "unreliable" labour force (de Bres et al, 1974, Part 4,12).

Further explaining growers' use of the scheme, the chairman of the labour committee of the Federation noted that

The possibility of [employing] Fijian labour before this had been suggested. Some growers were employing small groups [presumably under informal arrangements] and reports had been satisfactory. A Government scheme allowed Fijians to be brought into New Zealand...for a maximum period of 4 months, under assurances concerning health, character and ability. The Tobacco Federation decided to proceed with the scheme (Nelson Evening Mail, May 12 1971).

The New Zealand Tobacco Growers' Federation considered their use of the scheme to be a great success (de Bres et al, 1974, Part 4,13), but at least one author criticised the operation. A local in the area claimed that the standard of accommodation allocated to the Fiji workers was "appalling", and that many toilet facilities made "a mockery of the Kiwis' health policies" (Kelekolio, 1974). He considered that the Fijians, who were bound by their contracts to remain with particular growers for the whole of the season, deserved better treatment than the payment of $1.30 per hour for a 48 hour week. Such a rate may have been justified for a worker who stayed for only a week, but was certainly not enough in this case. He believed it fair to say that

the majority of Fijians are not happy with the arrangements. But because of the emphasis placed on good behaviour required during their stay in New Zealand, and the fear that voicing their dissatisfaction could jeopardise their chances of returning to New Zealand under similar contracts, the Fijians have no alternative but to accept the humiliating treatment.

Criticism was also forthcoming in the early 1970s regarding the conditions under which Fijian scrub cutters worked in the Napier area. On
this occasion, however, comments made by some of the workers themselves, were publicised:

They claim to have been "treated as slaves" and used as cheap labourers, not expected by their employers to question pay rates.

Though lured to the country by wages far in excess of what they earned in Fiji and returning home with about $300 each in their pockets, they suffered poor working conditions and earned wages that were pathetic in comparison with New Zealand labourers, they say.

The 30 scrubcutters worked 10 hours a day, six days a week, for 70c an hour. Sometimes they had to walk up to five miles, in their own time, to the work area and often returned to their quarters as late as 8.30pm...When it rained, there was no work and no pay.

[One worker] said he was sure he was speaking for all the Fijians when he said they regretted coming to work here. He said if the scheme was to continue, there was a drastic need for re-negotiating the conditions of work. He said the Fijians had found the offer to work in the country for four months "very attractive" at the outset. They could earn about double their wage in Fiji, fly in jet aircraft and see what New Zealand life was really like.

...they had no idea how tough the work was. The Fijian equivalent to scrubcutting was cane cutting, Tavutavu said, but the labour involved in it paled beside New Zealand scrubcutting. After a month in the country most realised they were just being "used". Because of the seemingly attractive offers to work in New Zealand, they were not expected to question the wages and conditions and were afraid to do so.

Tavutavu said they were all "very unhappy" over their working conditions despite having more money than they could expect to see in Fiji. He said that none would return to work in the country, and they intended warning other Fijians about making the trip...

The Fijians...found themselves acting as "slaves" to their employers, doing numerous other farm tasks, he said. Taking into consideration the wages of other labourers and freezing workers, he felt the scrubcutters should have been paid at least $1.20 to $1.50 an hour. He said he earned about 35c an hour driving buses in Fiji and that was considered a good wage in his country. But to come to New Zealand for a rate of pay so poor in this country was disappointing (Napier Daily Telegraph, February 14 1971).

De Bres et al, writing on an employment opportunity for Fiji scrub cutters in the Gisborne area being lost in 1974 because of disagreement over the terms of employment, claimed that the reason was "because the farmers obstinately refused to guarantee that the Fijians would obtain conditions equal to those of New Zealand workers. They were clearly quite prepared to ditch
the scheme if it did not involve cheaper labour than they could obtain locally" (de Bres et al., 1974, Part 4,12). Despite assertions such as this and the comments attributed to Fiji workers, it seems that generally in these operations, conditions and pay rates as outlined in the relevant awards for New Zealand workers were provided by employer groups. As noted earlier, a condition of the scheme was that ruling pay rates and satisfactory accommodation be provided for workers. It has also been noted, however, that pay rates under farm work awards were low when compared with many other standard awards in New Zealand.

**Patterns of Movement**

Monthly administration returns filed from the New Zealand High Commission in Suva during the early 1970s, provide many references to the Rural Scheme's operation from the Fiji end. Various returns noted reasons for the summer seasonal nature of labour movement between Fiji and New Zealand, a phenomenon which generally characterised such flows¹. Table 3.1 shows that for the March years 1970 (the first full year of the scheme's operation) to 1973, entry permits under the scheme were granted largely between the months of October and March; Anderson (1968) similarly observed the largest movements during the mid 1960s to be between the months of August and February. The marked increase in applications between these months was cited in 1971 as being due to the commencement of the off-season for farmers and/or cultivators in Fiji, and in particular to the end of the sugar cane season in the early New Year. At the New Zealand end, the climate during these months was generally more bearable to Fiji workers, and seasonal (farm) work was in full swing (DL, F135-6). The importance of the sugar cane season to the timing of labour migrant flows was again suggested by the expectation in early 1971 that application numbers would fall off considerably in May, with the commencement of the harvesting season in Fiji (DL, F135-4).

¹ The case of *Nassella* tussock grubbing was an exception, being normally carried out between the months of April and December (McLellan, 1988, pers. comm.).
An issue which will be returned to later in the study is the question of the ethnic mix of Fiji workers selected by the Fiji Labour Department or, as in later years, nominated by New Zealand employers, to work in New Zealand under the scheme. It is sufficient to note at this point that the High Commission observed in early 1973 that Fiji authorities appeared to be favouring Fijians over Fiji Indians in their selection. However, as this was an issue for the Fiji Labour Department under the conditions agreed to for the scheme, no comment was made to them (DL, F135-4).

Arguments for and against an extension to include factory work were again considered in briefing notes prepared by the Department of Labour in 1974 (MFA, F31/1:2). As had been argued in 1970 and 1971, considerations such as the greater opportunities to save wages in rural areas and the fewer social problems encountered there were cited. Further, it was noted that an even more significant stumbling block in the way of such a move was the effort then underway to extend arrangements for Tongan workers to areas other than the Hutt Valley. Any extension of the Fiji scheme was seen as a move which could bring about competition for accommodation with these latter migrants. It seems probable, however, that there was no significant demand for such an extension of the scheme: the exercise of noting these considerations was undertaken primarily to provide New Zealand's Prime Minister with an outline of future possibilities for the work permit schemes then existing between New Zealand and the two Island nations. Options for labour migration from the second of these, Tonga, were at that time being investigated with some urgency - the rise in work permit and visitor entries and in particular overstaying by Tongans during the early 1970s (seen in Chapter Two), resulted in various responses being made by New Zealand governments from that time. Some of these were to have consequences for Fiji labour flows.
The Tongan Schemes

Early Years

Douglas (1985) has observed that work schemes for Tongans wishing to gain employment in New Zealand began operation in 1971. This refers to a scheme which operated in the Hutt Valley area from May of that year under the supervision of the local Chamber of Commerce. The arrangement was conceived following approaches made to the Department of Labour by the Chamber, concerning labour shortages which were being experienced in local manufacturing industries (Hegarty, 1977). In making these approaches the Chamber played an initiating role in bringing about work schemes for Tongans in New Zealand, in the same way as Wanganui Federated Farmers had done for workers from Fiji. Thus, the Associated Chambers of Commerce (the parent body) was cited by the Department of Labour in 1974 as being one of the two "responsible organisations" (the other being Federated Farmers) who acted as a safeguard against the potential abuse by employers of work permit schemes for workers from the South Pacific (MFA, F31/1:2).

At least two further schemes operated for Tongan workers during the early 1970s. De Bres et al (1974, Part 4,14) refer to the New Zealand Roman Catholic Church operating a "well worked-out scheme in conjunction with its sister church in Tonga", and it is known that the Methodist Church in Christchurch (and possibly in other centres also) was involved in sponsoring Tongans for unskilled temporary employment from 1974 (The Press, August 24 and November 13 1974). The arrangements for these schemes were generally similar to those for the Hutt Valley work (Hegarty, 1977).

Work permits were issued for six months, though it is possible that a shorter time was granted to workers in New Zealand on the church schemes (de Bres et al, 1974). The increased length of stay over that allowed for Fiji workers was to allow Tongans to recoup the higher cost of their airfares (MFA, F31/1:2). New Zealand employers, acting through the nominal employers - the Hutt Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Catholic Church, for example -
advanced these fares and also settling-in allowances to the workers, recovering both from workers' wages. Prospective employers had to be able to provide accommodation of a suitable standard and to guarantee six months employment, first demonstrating that local labour supplies were inadequate (by this was meant that local unemployed workers were too few in number, or were unable or unwilling to engage in the work offered them). This latter requirement would have met few difficulties at the time, given that at least in the case of the Hutt Valley scheme, most employers who turned to the scheme had previously suffered a high annual labour turnover, a problem which was significantly reduced by the use of Tongan migrants (Douglas, 1977).

At least two references to the Hutt Valley scheme note favourably the success of its operation. First, Hegarty (1977, 53) concludes that it was "a resounding success" - a success which could be judged partly by the absence of any unfavourable reports regarding the scheme. A second reference to the scheme's merits was made in an October 1974 press statement by the Tongan Deputy Prime Minister and the New Zealand Minister of Immigration. They noted it to have been "an outstanding success" (DL, F403-4), incorporating "many of the features they would like to see included later in an employment and training scheme of more general application". The immediate purpose of their statement, however, was to announce agreement over a new Tongan work permit scheme. This scheme was to incorporate many of the features of the Hutt Valley scheme, and yet was far from the employment and training scheme ostensibly envisaged for the future by the two ministers. Before examining this scheme, however, it is necessary to note some of the events of 1974: a year which proved to be a turning point for South Pacific labour migration to New Zealand, because of the initiation of what was to become a series of work permit schemes. It was also the time of yet another, but from the outset, transitional, work permit scheme for Tongans wishing to work in New Zealand.
The 1974 Transition

Briefing notes of 1974 (MFA, F31/1:2) reveal the Department of Labour's opinion that both the Tongan and the Fiji schemes had been "very successful", and further, that the Department's disposition was to "continue and expand" their operation. It was felt that such expansion would provide more employment opportunities under controlled conditions, thus making 'visitor' entries more genuine. Despite the Department's inclinations, however, the concern of the New Zealand Labour Government to achieve the latter objective quickly, led to the announcement on April 1 1974 of an immediate suspension of the issue of all entry permits for Tongans (de Bres et al., 1974). The rationale in suspending short-term entry from Tonga can perhaps be appreciated from the Prime Minister's estimation at that time that there may have been as many as 2000 Tongan migrants then overstaying their permits in New Zealand (The Dominion, April 2 1974).

The desire to control more tightly visitor flows, particularly at that time of Tongans, culminated in the Minister of Immigration's announcement of June 1 that three month visitors' permits were again being issued for Tongans, "although strict vetting procedures were to apply" (de Bres et al, 1974, Part 3A,14). At the same time an interim three month work permit scheme had also come into effect, which would remain in force until a new scheme was finalised. The interim scheme may have been transitional, both in name and in purpose, yet it allowed the most intense flow of labour migrants experienced under a New Zealand-South Pacific Island nation work entry arrangement. One official estimate was that 2000 Tongans arrived in New Zealand between June and December 1974, 1750 of these between September and December (DL, 1975). The large influx had been spurred on by the knowledge that the arrangement was to be terminated with the introduction of the new work scheme on January 1 1975, under which the Tongan Government alone would select workers, and that in addition, this scheme would introduce controls over many elements of the flow of labour migrants from Tonga to New Zealand (Evening Post, late 1974).
The Tongan Work Permit Scheme

In discussions held before the release of their October 1974 statement, the Deputy Prime Minister of Tonga and the New Zealand Minister of Immigration undertook

a full review of the arrangements which should be made for citizens of Tonga who are to come to work in New Zealand on a temporary basis...[agreeing]...that the interests of all concerned will be best served by the introduction of a work permit scheme, which will lead progressively to improved arrangements for welfare and training (DL, F403-4).

The closing reference to possible future arrangements forms part of the wider policy issues which will be considered in Chapter Five, and need not be detailed here. What is important to note, however, is that it was held that the new work permit scheme "should overcome the difficulties which arose earlier under the uncontrolled visitor situation, when visitors' permits of three months were used by those who intended to undertake employment while in New Zealand" (DL, F403-4). The role intended for the new scheme, then, was clear: it was to put an end to uncontrolled labour migrant flows between Tonga and New Zealand, replacing them with regularised flows which would be firmly under governmental control.

Introduced on January 1 1975, the New Zealand and Tonga Government Work Scheme (hereafter termed the Tongan Work Permit Scheme) was outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding concerning migration from Tonga to New Zealand, which was negotiated between the two governments in October 1974. Under the procedures to be followed by the participators in the scheme, employers in New Zealand were to apply to the Department of Labour for Tongan workers, giving particulars of the conditions of employment. With the application, the employer was to submit an employment agreement for completion by each worker. Thus, compared to the practice under the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme, a more direct form of work contract between employer and worker was introduced to labour migration between Tonga and New Zealand1 (DL, 1986).

1 A copy of a contract virtually identical to these (reprinted for use under a later scheme) is found in Appendix Two.
The most significant feature of the scheme, in terms of the numerical regulation of officially sanctioned labour migration, was that workers could undertake employment in New Zealand only in response to specific offers of employment by New Zealand employers. The operation of the scheme is designed to be self-regulating to the number of job opportunities in New Zealand at any given time (DL, 1976, 1).

Employers were to obtain Tongan workers through the Department of Labour. Once satisfied that accommodation was adequate and that no suitable unemployed New Zealand workers were able to undertake the work, district offices passed requests to the Tongan Government, which selected the required number of workers from a list of potential labour migrants. Permits were issued for periods of four months under the scheme, though this could be extended by a further two months if a worker's application for such an extension was supported by an employer. Six month work permits continued to be issued for the Hutt Valley work scheme during the transition period (June - December 1974), but between January 1975 and December 1975 when it ceased to function, that scheme operated under the terms and conditions of the Tongan Work Scheme (Hegarty, 1977).

As a mechanism of numerical control over the short-term migration of Tongan workers to New Zealand, the Tongan Work Permit Scheme appears, from the entry figures given in Table 3.2, to have had considerable success. Given that manufacturing work generally undertaken by Tongans was less seasonal in nature than work undertaken by Fiji workers in New Zealand, arrival numbers of 289 for the first three months of 1975 and only 355 for the whole of the March year 1976, represent a significant and continuing decline from the levels of the December 1974 year. This appears even more so when it is considered that these figures include 163 workers who utilised the Hutt Valley work scheme between January and December 1975 (Hegarty, 1977). Numbers arriving in years subsequent to 1976 have continued to decrease steadily (with the exception of an upturn during 1978), and give the impression that, certainly if short-term migration from Tonga has been confined to the Tongan Work Permit Scheme, such migration has become
Table 3.2  Entry to New Zealand under Fiji, Tongan and Western Samoan Work Permit Schemes1: 1967 - 1987.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fiji</th>
<th>Tonga</th>
<th>Western Samoa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19672</td>
<td>499</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>495</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>141</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>453</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>837</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>720</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>560</td>
<td>6563</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>938</td>
<td>181</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>652</td>
<td>22894</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>355</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Including all other arrangements summarised in Figure 3.1.
2 February-March 1967 only.
3 Estimated figure (maximum) for May 1971-March 1973. Based on Hegarty (1977) and Department of Labour (F135-4) figures.
4 Includes 2000 under the interim work permit arrangement (June-December 1974).

virtually non-existent. In Chapter Two, however, it was seen that the virtual demise of Tongan labour migration suggested from Table 3.2, has not in fact been the reality, and that Tongans have utilised with some success, other means of entry to New Zealand.

Numbers of Tongans, however, were able to take advantage of provisions in the Tongan scheme which were absent from the Fiji Rural Scheme. Tongans who wished to work in urban or rural employment in New Zealand had been able to do so for periods of up to 11 months since late 1976\(^1\) (DL, F311:1). The North Canterbury Nassella Tussock Board was one employer to utilize this situation to its advantage. It replaced its intakes from Fiji with Tongan workers in 1977, thus avoiding the need for two four month intakes of Fiji workers for the approximately nine month season, and also some problems (especially involving alcohol) which had been experienced with the behaviour of some Fiji workers (DL, F135-9:1; McLellan, 1988, pers. comm.). The number of Tongan workers involved was about 80, and it seems likely that similar action was taken by other rural employers. These actions, when combined with the introduction of a provision by 1978 allowing workers to be nominated and sponsored by Tongans in New Zealand\(^2\), largely account for the rise in entry under the Tongan scheme for the 1978 year in contrast to the fall in numbers arriving from Fiji (Table 3.2). The conferring of this advantage on Tongan workers did not prove significant in the long-term, however, and represented only one irregularity in South Pacific work permit schemes negotiated in the mid 1970s. An account of the principal changes in the work permit schemes concluded from this time and onwards, occupies the remainder of this chapter.

\(^1\) This is explained later in the chapter.

\(^2\) This provision was requested by the Tongan Government in 1976, to increase use of the scheme. It had previously had been allowed in the Western Samoan Work Permit Scheme, which had been agreed to in January 1976 and introduced five months later. Other differences from the Tongan scheme included stays of up to eight months in order to cover the higher fare costs, and a greater period in which to repay those fares to the employer (DL, 1976).
Mounting Pressure...

Fiji citizens ostensibly intending to visit but not work in New Zealand had, since the introduction of the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme in 1969, been issued three month permits with work-prohibited endorsements in their passports. Added to these was a note to the effect that a breach of this condition would result in entry to New Zealand at a later date being prohibited (DL, 1975): a restriction requested by the Fiji Government in order to protect the official scheme. This requirement for Fiji visitors was unique for short-term visitors to New Zealand, as until 1978 New Zealand's Immigration Act did not specifically prohibit visitors from taking up employment (MFA, F1/5:1; NZCTD, 1982). Despite this move for Fiji visitors, however, difficulties had continually been experienced with applications for visitor permits to New Zealand, and what has somewhat facetiously been described as the "holiday work scheme" developed (DL, F135-4, F135-6).

The term refers to the situation described at the outset of this chapter and in Chapter Two, whereby three month visitors' (that is, non-working) permits were used by many Fiji (and other South Pacific) migrants to gain entry to New Zealand for the purpose of employment, a situation which remained virtually unchanged through the 1970s. Often several applicants for such permits indicated an intention to stay at the same address in New Zealand and the impression gained by the New Zealand High Commission in Suva was that the real intention of the applicants was to seek work in New Zealand. This was reinforced when, in some of these cases, the High Commission requested evidence of hotel bookings for proposed visits to New Zealand and found that subsequent to these being presented as evidence of accommodation, the bookings were cancelled. Similarly it was known that travellers cheques, which served as evidence of an applicant's ability to support himself/herself while in New Zealand, and therefore, presumably, an intention not to work, were often cashed after being shown to New Zealand immigration authorities in Suva. A suggestion noted in 1975, when the
problem still remained, was that the required $300 was usually borrowed in Fiji, shown to the New Zealand Immigration Attache, and then repaid to the lender (MFA, F1/5:1). Few 'visitors' were believed to transfer this money to New Zealand or to arrive in the country with it. The High Commission was cited in 1971 (DL, F135-6) as having estimated that 80% of Fiji 'visitors' to New Zealand were, in fact, unable to afford a holiday to New Zealand, and that the sole purpose of such visits was to seek work.

As early as March 1971, an immigration return from the High Commission proposed solutions to this abuse of the visitors' permit system (DL, F135-6). These involved soliciting the support of the Fiji Government and extending the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme - presumably so that more prospective migrants could take advantage of the scheme. Both moves, in the High Commission's opinion, would facilitate greater control over Fiji visitor flows to New Zealand. If moves such as those outlined above or expressed by other sources during the early and mid 1970s and later, included in their objectives the desire to firmly control short-term labour migration from Fiji, then they needed to address considerable demands from several sources for that movement.

The Sources of Labour Demand

A demand for Fiji labour undoubtedly existed with New Zealand employers, particularly those in rural areas, a factor which has been largely implicit in the discussion to this point. The labour requirements of these employers were met in part through the Rural Work Scheme, and also through unofficial means (employing migrants in New Zealand who were on visitors' permits). Despite the existence of the official scheme, the New Zealand High Commission noted in November 1973 that some firms and farmers in New Zealand remained keen to obtain labour from visitors, and in January 1974 that it had made little progress in trying to control the situation. One inhibiting factor was that not only private enterprise but also, incredibly, government institutions in New Zealand, were employing such labour (DL, F135-4).
Most obviously, a demand for this migration existed with Fiji workers themselves: a 1971 estimate was that 4,000 males in Fiji were then awaiting permits for work in New Zealand (DL, F135-6). The experience of rapidly rising living costs in Fiji and the consequent desire to seek employment relief in the higher paying New Zealand job market, via 'visitor' or work permitted travel, were major factors initiating this demand (DL, F135-4). Irregular, extreme natural events also added to these. An example of this was the effect of a hurricane in Fiji in November 1972, which was expected by the High Commission to generate a flood of applications for entry on work (and presumably visitor) permits (DL, F135-4). It seems that this expectation was fulfilled at least with respect to the Rural Work Permit Scheme. Table 3.1 shows the March 1973 year arrival total under the scheme to be concentrated between December and March, a late concentration compared to earlier years, and therefore one likely boosted by hurricane-affected victims.

The fact that this 1973 total itself was substantially lower than arrivals for 1972 and 1974 (Table 3.2), again demonstrates the inconsistencies of the demand for, and supply of, work opportunities in New Zealand for Fiji workers. Rising unemployment in New Zealand in early 1972 (Figure 3.2) contributed to a relatively early cessation of the concentrated summer flow in January of that year. The return to Fiji of a number of 'visitors' who had been unable to find employment was noted in the April immigration report, and for the first time it was suggested that many endorsements for entry into New Zealand issued by the High Commission, were not being used. Difficulties for Fiji workers were compounded by the National Government's decision (on the Department of Labour's recommendation) to reject a request by the North Canterbury Nassella Tussock Board for an intake of workers in that year (DL, F135-4).

Despite such setbacks to the potential and actual operation of both formal and informal labour migrant flows from Fiji, the demand among Fiji residents for work in New Zealand (and also to some extent, the supply of some of that work) remained high during the early and mid 1970s. Numbers arriving under the Rural Work Permit Scheme reached nearly 940 during the
March 1974 year; in terms of workers employed this was the peak year of the scheme's operation (Table 3.2). In August of 1974 the New Zealand High Commission noted a high volume of immigration work in its workload, during what was normally a quiet time of the year in this area (DL, F135-4). Several reasons were cited for the pressure: high unemployment and also industrial unrest in Fiji, increased costs there which had lowered many farm incomes, and numbers were returning from Australia and immediately applying for entry into New Zealand.

...Leads to 1975

The generally rising demand for work entry to New Zealand from Fiji during the first half of the 1970s, culminated in the issuing of 2300 visitor permits between September and November 1974. The New Zealand Minister of Immigration responded to this in January 1975, directing that positive action be taken immediately by the New Zealand High Commission in Suva to decrease the flow. The Minister accepted that the situation would probably be self-righting as had been the case in 1967 (when rising unemployment in New Zealand effectively put paid to short term 'visitor' flows from Fiji), but was not prepared to await natural developments (MFA, F1/5:1). Administrative action in Suva came too late to impact significantly on visitor arrival numbers for the March 1975 year (Figure 2.1a), but contributed to a decline in flows under the work permit scheme (Table 3.2). The action took the form of a slowing down in the processing of visa applications and an arbitrary stepping up of the proportion of these applications which were refused.

As in 1967, however, it was the situation of rising unemployment in New Zealand (Figure 3.2) which had the greatest effect on the total number of work-seeking migrants who subsequently arrived in New Zealand. The Fiji Sun of February 4 1975 reported that hundreds of Fiji citizens in New Zealand on holiday visas were unable to get jobs. As was the case for Tongan migrants at that time also, large increases since December 1974 in the number of factory
and process workers registered as being unemployed (Figure 3.3), were primarily responsible for their plight. The New Zealand Minister of Immigration issued a press statement on February 5, outlining the difficulties that short-term visitors from the South Pacific could face in seeking employment in New Zealand (DL, 1975), a statement which was given wide publicity in Fiji. Having noted the difficulties for Fiji job seekers in New Zealand, however, it is interesting to observe that the Fiji Secretary of Labour was reported as saying in early February, on his return from a visit to New Zealand, that New Zealand farmers were still actively seeking Fiji workers (*Fiji Sun*, February 7 1975).

**Towards a New Scheme**

A paper prepared by the Department of Labour in 1975 noted the view that moves additional to the February 5 press statement were needed in the long term to control the number of work-seeking visitor arrivals from Fiji (DL, 1975). It also questioned the tenability of the Rural Work Permit Scheme, given that the scheme did not allow for urban work. Therefore, moves were being made to explore with the Fiji Government the possibility of introducing a new scheme of wider application, using the Tongan and Fiji schemes as the basis for negotiation. It is probable that some of the initiative for this came from the Fiji Government, which, following the announcement of the new Tongan scheme in late 1974, had sought to open discussions with the New Zealand Government on obtaining conditions which were no less favourable for Fiji workers (Douglas, 1977).

The introduction of an effective work permit scheme for the large number of Pacific Island 'visitors' who were coming to New Zealand intending to work, had been proposed to the Labour Government by its own Immigration Advisory Council prior to May 1974 (Immigration Advisory Council, 1975). On May 7 1974, New Zealand's Prime Minister noted that proposals were being developed for enlarged work permit schemes "which should solve the problems that have occurred" (Kirk, 1975, 22). This in turn led to headlines such as that which appeared on the front page of the *Fiji*
The development of these proposals was a slow process: the Secretary of New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs noted in November 1974 that officials were "still working on the question of temporary entry under some form of employment and training scheme which was envisaged as the basis for a more permanent arrangement for temporary entry in the case of Fiji, Tonga, and Western Samoa" (MFA, F1/5:1). By the end of 1974, however, New Zealand had hosted an informal meeting of key officials from the various governments likely to be involved in such a scheme.

The realisation that visitor entry from Fiji was out of hand by late 1974, provided the stimulus for more urgent action. The Minister of Immigration's directive to the New Zealand High Commission in January 1975 to limit this migration, was accompanied by notification that the Minister proposed to quickly pursue the development of an expanded work permit scheme to combat the problem. As a further incentive to action, a problem in the Minister's own electorate, Petone, cannot be ignored here. A February 1975 report (MFA, F1/5:1) recorded the Minister's concern at the number of Fiji Indian working 'visitors' in his electorate. Checks made by the Department of Labour revealed that firms there had employed a total of 92 Fiji Indian workers between December 1974 and February 1975, and that in the latter month 77 New Zealand males were registered as being unemployed in the same area. A similar situation had occurred in Wellington.

In February 1975, the High Commission in Suva put to Fiji's Deputy Prime Minister questions regarding the Fiji Government's likely view on the introduction of a second work permit scheme similar to the Tongan scheme, and also the reduction of the term for visitors' permits to one month (MFA, F1/5:1). These received a favourable response from him, and also from Fiji's Minister and Secretary of Labour (DL, F135-4). Despite the success of these approaches, however, progress remained slow, and the High Commission found itself in an embarrassing position in May 1975 (MFA, F1/5:1). An "administrative slowdown" in the processing of applications had been embarked on, in the hope that a more workable immigration policy would
soon be forthcoming; at the same time, Fiji Ministers of Government were becoming increasingly impatient about the implementation of the revised scheme - a scheme to which the New Zealand Government had shown some commitment, and at its own initiative. It had then been some six months since the Fiji Government had indicated its acceptance and welcoming of preliminary proposals for such a scheme, which had been put to it at the meeting of South Pacific government officials in New Zealand referred to earlier.

Despite the poor employment prospects facing Fiji labour migrants in 1975, an immigration return sent in August of that year observed that many 'visitors' were still prepared to take the chance of not finding work in New Zealand and were seeking visitors' permits regardless. The demand for such entry again grew significantly later in August, following the announcement of plans to expand the work permit system and to introduce visitors' permits which in most cases would allow stays in New Zealand for only one month (DL, F135-4). This announcement most likely followed discussions held when a delegation of Fiji Government officials visited New Zealand in that month to discuss entry for Fiji citizens (DL, F135-9:1). An account of their meeting with New Zealand Government officials records that a scheme for urban work was under negotiation. In response to concerns expressed by them, Fiji officials were assured that unskilled workers would continue to be able to come to New Zealand, both under the scheme which was being negotiated and under a further scheme which the Department of Labour saw as the long-term objective for temporary work entry into New Zealand from Island nations. Developments behind policy on this latter scheme (which was never introduced) are discussed in a later chapter; the arrangements agreed to in November 1975 for Fiji visitors and workers migrating to New Zealand are outlined below.
The Fiji Urban Work Permit Scheme

A Memorandum of Understanding signed between the governments of Fiji and New Zealand in November 1975 detailed agreements reached on the temporary entry of Fiji citizens. While the terms and conditions governing such entries were outlined in the Memorandum, they were "subject to the discretion of the Government of New Zealand and the laws in force in New Zealand" (MOU, 1975, 1). It was agreed that visitors' permits would not entitle Fiji citizens to work in New Zealand, and that on the introduction of an urban scheme, new visitors' permits would in most circumstances be issued for a period not exceeding one month. Two amendments were made to the Rural Work Permit Scheme at the request of the Fiji Government (DL, F135-9:1): female workers were included, and the four month permits could now be extended by up to two months at the request of the worker, as was the case under the Tongan Work Permit Scheme. The most significant of the new arrangements for Fiji labour migration to New Zealand, however, was the introduction of an urban work permit scheme.

The Fiji Urban Work Permit Scheme followed similar procedures to the Tongan Work Permit Scheme. Workers could undertake employment in New Zealand only in response to specific offers of employment and initially for four month periods, extendable to six months. Employers requested workers through the Department of Labour, specifying details such as the work to be performed, preferred sex of employees, pay and conditions, and that return (deductable) air fares and insurance would be provided. At the same time an employment agreement form was forwarded, with relevant sections completed by the employer. In the same way as for the Tongan scheme, while the provisions of the Fiji scheme were basically self-regulating to the number of job opportunities available in New Zealand, the New Zealand Government reserved the right "to impose a limit on the number of Fiji workers

---

1 A contract the same as these (though with its title changed for a later scheme) is found in Appendix Two.
accepted...in the light of factors such as the availability of work or accommodation in New Zealand" (MOU, 1975, 5).

**Extension to 11 Months**

The new scheme was introduced in February 1976 (DL, 1976), but the first workers from Fiji did not arrive until December of that year (DL, F135-4); it is possible, however, that these were technically under yet another scheme introduced near that time and that therefore the Fiji Urban Work Permit Scheme never functioned. One reason for this was that manufacturers found themselves with little incentive to use the scheme, or indeed the Tongan or the Western Samoan schemes (DL, 1976). In a series of meetings with Department of Labour officials and finally the Minister of Immigration in September 1976, manufacturer representatives contended that work periods under the schemes were too short for their purposes. Periods of four to six months (up to eight months in the case of Western Samoans) were too short for the majority of industries, which had to train workers before they could obtain a production return. They suggested a stay of up to 11 months to be more suitable (MFA, F1/5:2).

Action was quickly forthcoming; in a letter to the manufacturers dated October 1976 (DL, F311:1), the Minister outlined his decision to push ahead with the requested extension for the three schemes to up to 11 month stays. This would be implemented immediately, rather than waiting until consultation on all the matters raised had been completed with the affected South Pacific governments: the Minister was anxious that the schemes should be seen to be working. In the same letter the Minister requested assurances that manufacturers would be encouraged to sponsor workers under the schemes, and that they would at the same time check that other Pacific Island workers they took on had written evidence of their right to be in New Zealand. These assurances were duly given (DL, 1976).

This series of moves by the Minister of Immigration can best be seen in the light of events earlier in 1976 (MFA, F1/5:2). Between mid April and the end of June, the New Zealand Government had publicised a stay of
proceedings for overstayers who declared themselves by registering with the Department of Labour. The response was considerable (Table 3.3), leaving the Department and manufacturers with the potential for labour shortages in some industries should large numbers of overstayers be ordered to leave any one employer’s workplace over a short period of time. For this reason, the majority of those who were not to be allowed to stay in New Zealand permanently were given three to six month extensions to their permits. As an additional alleviating measure, manufacturers were informed that no deterrent was to be placed in the way of employers desiring to sponsor initial replacements for these workers under the work permit schemes. Employers were free, therefore, to choose between engaging local workers and engaging replacements under the schemes. If they chose the latter course the Department of Labour would waive the normal requirement for applications under the schemes - that it test the local labour market for New Zealand workers able to undertake the work.

**Table 3.3** Overstayers Registered with the Department of Labour in Response to the April - June 1976 Stay of Proceedings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nation of Origin</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tonga</td>
<td>2338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Samoa</td>
<td>2060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>4746</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: MFA, F1/5:3.

A comment in a September press statement by the Minister of Labour further helps explain the National Government’s actions of October. The Minister observed that "The schemes have not, so far, really got off the ground
but it is hoped that they will do so with the replacement of overstayers by other people eager to come here from the Pacific countries" (DL, F311:1). Thus, the moves to extend the term of the work permits and to encourage employers to utilise the provisions of the schemes to the exclusion of informal labour migration, were further attempts to control and tighten labour migration between Fiji (and other Island nations) and New Zealand. Island governments were informed early in October 1976 of the liberalisation of the schemes' terms, and that the extension to 11 months was envisaged primarily in the manufacturing sector. It would not be possible to offer this to rural employment, it was argued, because such work was carried out on a seasonal basis (DL, 1976).

The same paper suggested that it was appropriate, when forms for the Fiji urban, the Tongan and the Western Samoan work permit schemes were reprinted to account for the change, that they be included in a single title of "South Pacific Work Schemes". Thus, following a visit to Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa by the New Zealand Minister of Immigration in November 1976, the three schemes were reviewed and amalgamated into a single scheme: the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme.

**The South Pacific Work Permit Scheme**

With the introduction of the Tonga, Fiji, and Western Samoa Work Permit Scheme (hereafter referred to as the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme) in late 1976 or early 1977, "The criteria and procedures which had previously applied to Western Samoa were extended to all three countries" (DL, 1978a, 2). These included the repayment of fare costs to employers being spread over 20 weeks (as opposed to 12 weeks for the Fiji urban and Tongan schemes), and provisions for employers to nominate particular workers for employment in New Zealand.
The changes were announced in March 1977 (MFA, F1/5:3), resulting in hundreds of enquiries being made to the Fiji Labour Department by prospective migrants during that month alone (DL, F311:2). Having been approached by officials from the New Zealand High Commission, who proposed that the above changes be incorporated into an amended memorandum of understanding, Fiji's Prime Minister notified his agreement to these changes in April (DL, F135-10:1). Despite this notification, however, it seems that the Fiji Government did not formally agree to the new scheme until October 1979 (DL, F135-9:1). Some eight months earlier Fiji's Minister of Labour had requested an assurance that adopting the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme would lead to an increase in the numbers going to New Zealand. New Zealand officials responded that the changes were intended to inject greater flexibility to the migration of labour from Fiji to New Zealand, and that the changes should, in time, and given the high numbers of people then unemployed or on special work in New Zealand, lead to a greater flow (MFA, F15/3).

The Fiji Government's agreement to the scheme was accompanied by a request that only 50% of workers be allowed to be individually nominated by New Zealand employers. This was to ensure that the same workers who were experienced and in demand from New Zealand employers, were not always the ones to go to New Zealand. The New Zealand High Commission considered that a situation whereby the same workers returned yearly would be unacceptable in Fiji, in view of the 7000-8000 Fiji workers believed to have applied yearly to come to New Zealand. Furthermore, such a move would curb the flexibility which existed for dealing with the needs of special interest groups in Fiji, such as hurricane victims needing employment. The Fiji Labour Department had been able to send such a group to New Zealand in the previous year (DL, F135-9:1).
Nomination

As was the case for the Tongan Government in 1976, the limited use during that year of the Fiji schemes led to the Fiji Government requesting that individual workers be allowed to be nominated for work in New Zealand. This was seen as a way of promoting use of the schemes by employers who in some instances were wary of taking on workers they did not know. For the South Pacific Scheme also, nomination was cited in a 1977 immigration return from Fiji as being an issue which, if favourably resolved, would probably lead to a greater use by New Zealand employers of Fiji workers in urban work (DL, F135-4). As was also shown above, the issue of worker nomination was, in effect, closely tied to the condition under the schemes that a worker could not return to New Zealand within 12 months of completing a work contract. Certainly for Fiji governments, a review of their involvement in the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme and especially the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme, demonstrates that a delicate balancing act often proved necessary in encouraging the greatest possible use of the schemes through allowing individual nomination, and yet allowing large numbers of different workers to benefit from them. This dilemma allowed irregularities and even confusion to creep into the conditions surrounding their operation.

The Fiji Government informed New Zealand’s Minister of Immigration in late 1976 that it wanted employers to be allowed to sponsor workers under the Rural Scheme (DL, F311:1). Consequently, by 1978 the one year stand-down period was being relaxed for workers claimed by employers to be necessary for the smooth continuation of work programmes. An example of this was the case of an employer who successfully requested the return of named, experienced scrub cutters to help settle a new intake into its work (MFA, F15/3). The same file contains a June 1979 request by Wanganui Federated Farmers for it to be allowed to nominate up to 50% of the previous summer season's intake of scrub cutters. This was envisaged to continue for several seasons until a pool of experienced Fiji gang leaders, who could in later years assist others, had been established. An understanding was subsequently reached with the Department of Labour which allowed 20% of the 1979-1980
intake (37 of 183) to be comprised of workers from the previous season, the Department's opinion was that there was no need for the arrangement to continue beyond that season; that is, the return of nominated workers was to stop (DL, F135-9:1).

By mid 1980, however, the Fiji Labour Department made it known that up to 50% of the Rural Scheme's workers could be nominated, thus making the scheme similar in that respect to the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme. The provision was for workers who had previously worked for the nominating employer or in a similar capacity for other employers, and had been out of New Zealand for at least 12 months (DL, F75:1). Only a year later, however, frustrating difficulties were encountered by the managers of the largest scrub cutting operation, in their negotiations with the Fiji Government over nomination for the 1981-1982 season (DL, F135-9:2). The operation in question, which had been able to build an experienced nucleus of workers returning in various summer seasons during the late 1970s, found itself in deadlock with the Fiji Labour Department over employing some of these same workers again.

One of the reasons for this was that a new Fiji Minister of Labour opposed the practice of worker nomination (DL, F135-9:2). While employer enthusiasm for the Rural Work Permit Scheme had started to wane since the mid 1970s, permission for nominated workers to return to New Zealand had been given. However, now that a much greater use of the scheme was being made by this enterprise in particular, Fiji maintained a stronger bargaining position. Finally, it was agreed that 30% of the 180 scrub cutters requested for the 1981-1982 season (possibly a total for several operators) could be employer nominated and include workers who had been in New Zealand the previous season; the remaining 70% would be selected by the Fiji authorities. However, according to a paper prepared later in 1981 by the Fiji Labour Department, even this arrangement was viewed as a temporary one: the Fiji Ministry aimed eventually to select all agricultural and scrub cutting workers (DL, F135-10:1).
The Rural Scheme Continues

At the same time as the Fiji urban, Tongan and Western Samoan work permit schemes were being amalgamated in late 1976, the future of the Fiji Rural Scheme was under review (DL, F311:1). Somewhat conflicting views exist as to why the scheme was not amalgamated then with the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme, and also as to why it was not merged with the Fiji Urban Work Permit Scheme at the time of the signing of the 1975 memorandum.

In a letter in 1977 from the Secretary of Labour to the Minister of Immigration (DL, F135-9:1), it was suggested that at the time of the 1975 memorandum's negotiation, Tongans and Western Samoans who were interested in work in New Zealand were thought to be interested only in urban work. Therefore, the more favourable terms of the 'urban' schemes then in existence or under consideration need not be extended to the Fiji Rural Scheme. The assumption that rural work would be undertaken solely by Fiji workers did not prove to be the case, however, as was shown by the North Canterbury Nassella Tussock Board's replacement of Fiji workers with Tongans in 1977. The same letter advanced the Department's view that the Rural Scheme and the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme be combined. One problem cited was that some rural employers had seasons of limited duration, and were unable to provide employment for the minimum period (six months) required under the latter scheme. A 1979 Department of Labour memo offered another explanation for the Rural Scheme's separate operation since 1975 (DL, F135-10:1). This was that the Employment Division of the Department considered that this scheme, unlike the 'urban' schemes, probably could not be self-regulating (presumably to the number of positions unable to be filled by New Zealand workers), and that it should continue to be under the Department's direct surveillance. This would seem to be the expression of a concern that nomination would lead to suitable New Zealanders being passed over by some of the scheme's major rural employers, in favour of Fiji workers.

The reason for the Rural Scheme being left out of the 1976 amalgamation is more clear. The most significant addition to arrangements
for Pacific Island workers just before the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme was introduced, was the allowance for work permits to be extended to up to 11 months. The pressure for this move had come from manufacturers and not from rural employers who seemed to have comparatively little need for the extension. Pressure was only later exerted by rural employers for liberalisation in aspects of their scheme. In particular, employers wanted to be able to nominate a greater percentage of workers, and also the Fiji Labour Department to display more consistency in this regard. Further, they wanted the interval of 12 months between working visits to New Zealand to be reduced.

The response to this was noted in Department of Labour briefing papers from 1981 onwards (for example, DL, 1986). These stated that discussions had taken place with the Fiji Labour Department on the proposed changes, and that it was likely that the two schemes for Fiji workers would be amalgamated with special provision for rural worker recruitment. In addition the Department of Labour held meetings in 1982 with employer and union groups on the possibility of amalgamation (DL, F135-10:3), and arising from these and the discussions with Fiji officials, several drafts of a new memorandum of understanding were prepared.

This exercise, and also that of reaffirming a commitment to the schemes' amalgamation, may have been overshadowed by events in 1983. Early in that year, it was noted within the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs that the memoranda which had introduced the schemes for Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa, were simply declarations of policies from the New Zealand Government's viewpoint. Thus, a letter to the Fiji Government in April 1983 recorded New Zealand's intention to amalgamate unilaterally the two schemes (MFA, F1/5:5). The South Pacific Work Permit Scheme and the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme continued to operate officially as separate schemes for Fiji workers in the 1980s, however, though not without some confusion over the terms under which they operated.
Summary

The origins of arrangements for issuing work permits to Fiji migrants in 1967, lay in the concern at the large number of 'visitors' undertaking work in New Zealand at a time when the New Zealand economy appeared unable to absorb such labour. The Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme later developed from these arrangements, and introduced tighter controls over formal labour flows. Extensions in scope followed from the easing of unemployment in New Zealand.

The focusing of New Zealand Government attention on Tongan labour migration led to the introduction of the Tongan Work Permit Scheme in 1975, following from the earlier and successful use of relatively informal arrangements, and a large influx of workers under a transitional scheme. The Tongan scheme, in its provision for the effective regulation of a South Pacific labour migration, served as a forerunner to subsequent schemes for Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa.

Demand for work in New Zealand remained high among Fiji citizens, and this was often matched, for those who arrived, by New Zealand employers. Steps were again taken by the New Zealand Government to check this migration in early 1975, followed some time later by the introduction of an urban work permit scheme. The demands of manufacturers were instrumental in significant extensions being provided to this scheme and schemes for Tongan and Western Samoan workers in 1976; the amalgamation of the three schemes followed.

As the Fiji schemes started to wane and the 'balance of power' swung between the Fiji Labour Department and New Zealand employers, the issue of nomination proved a delicate and yet crucial one. This was particularly so for the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme, which remained a separate scheme during this time.
CHAPTER FOUR

FIJI WORKERS IN NEW ZEALAND:
CASE STUDIES

"More crucial for the policy maker, [than differing explanations of migration] however, are details of what is happening on the ground, before the gloss of an explanation that is conceptually defined and theoretically inspired" (Chapman, 1985, 404).

The focus of analysis shifts at this point in the study from the initiators of the work permit schemes, the governments, to the actors, the labour migrants. It will be recalled that one of the issues to be explored in this thesis is the extent to which labour migration between Fiji and New Zealand under the schemes results in a transfer of skills and capital to Fiji. The objective of this chapter is to examine the nature of work undertaken by Fijians and Fiji Indians in New Zealand, especially since 1983, with the above issue in mind. This is achieved through the use of case studies of three types of work involving Fiji labour migrants - halal slaughtering\(^1\), scrub cutting and forestry work, and farm work on market gardens.

Work permits issued to Fiji labour migrants in recent years have been largely for these three forms of employment, at least since the March year 1983. Detailed records of the nature of employment undertaken are available only as far back as that time; they show that between April 1982 and March 1987, 1515 of the 1557 positions (97%) filled by Fiji arrivals under the work permit schemes were in these three areas of work (Table 4.1). Limitations in the data available from the Department of Labour on the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme and the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme for earlier years, make an

\(^1\) An Islamic method of sheep and cattle killing, practised widely in New Zealand freezing works, primarily to satisfy the large Iranian sheep market.
accurate knowledge of work opportunities before April 1982 difficult to attain. However, it is possible to make some general comments on the employment engaged in by Fiji migrants as early as 1969, and this is provided as a background to the contemporary scene.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Halal slaughtering</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scrub cutting</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market gardening</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>383</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>1557</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DL, F311:3.

**Employment in the 1970s and early 1980s: Historical Patterns**

In Chapter Three it was noted that most work undertaken in New Zealand by Fiji labour migrants during the 1960s was scrub cutting and *Nassella* tussock grubbing, and that nearly all workers who came were Fiji Indian. Certainly for work scheme migrants from Fiji, these remained major areas of work in the 1970s, though tobacco harvesting and market gardening also assumed significance as large sources of employment. However, the composition of the migrant flow changed in one important respect following the introduction of the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme in 1969, when the Fiji Labour Department took the sole responsibility for the selection of workers.
In the 1970s, the ethnic concentration of work permit holders shifted to favour Fijians\(^1\). Table 4.2 shows that while the number of Fiji Indian labour migrants remained relatively steady during this time, the number of Fijians grew overall so that by 1974, 69% of the scheme's permits were granted to Fijians. The percentage of Fijians among scheme flows increased further in the late 1970s and early 1980s (82% of arrivals in 1982 were Fijian). During this time, nomination of individual workers by employers was allowed to varying extents, both under the Rural Scheme and the South Pacific Scheme, suggesting that the increasing imbalance may have originated in selection at the New Zealand end also.

**Scrub Cutting**

Employers using the Rural Work Permit Scheme were able to exercise considerable pressure regarding the workers brought to New Zealand, despite the fact that worker selection was to be carried out by the Fiji Labour Department. A belief among many rural employers during the 1960s and 1970s was that Fiji Indians were more reliable and conscientious workers than Fijians, and the previous experience which many of the former had as cane cutters was deemed by employers another useful attribute for scrub cutting (Symon, 1987, pers. comm.). This situation changed somewhat from the late 1970s with the introduction by rural contractors of mechanised scrub cutting, a task which was found to be more suited to the physique of Fijians (Scott, 1987, pers. comm.). In view of this factor, the employers' understanding with the Fiji Labour Department regarding the ethnicity of the workers to be sent changed to favouring the selection of Fijians.

The employers using these workers changed from that time also. Before the late 1970s, scrub cutting operations had been carried almost exclusively by farmers, with Federated Farmers being the nominal employer. However, during that time several rural contracting operations experienced considerable growth - the largest expanding its intakes from 22 workers in

---

\(^1\) The selection procedures, and one reason for this imbalance, are outlined in Chapter Five.
### Table 4.2  Entry to New Zealand under Fiji Work Permit Schemes by Ethnic Origin: 1968 - 1987

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fijian</th>
<th>Fiji Indian</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Percentage Fijian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>344</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>646</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>48-54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>32-34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>29-33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16-29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Figures are unavailable for 1975-1977, and are the author's estimates for 1983-1987.
2 As given in immigration returns from the Fiji Labour Department via the New Zealand High Commission in Suva. The figures for 1983 onward are based on Table 4.1, and a knowledge of the ethnic groups who generally undertook types of work since that time.
3 'Other' includes Europeans, Part Europeans, Chinese, and Other Pacific Islanders to 1983. From 1983, the figure includes workers who were probably Fijians or Fiji Indians, but for whom the procedure outlined in footnote 2 was too inaccurate.
4 Percentage Fijian of the total.
5 February-March only.

1976-1977 to 121 in 1979-1980 (DL, F135-9:2). Controversy surrounded the work practices of certain contracting operators: some sub-contracted their workers to farmers for scrub cutting, paying the workers at the lower farm award rate and not according to the contracting award, and were also thought to be making unnecessary deductions from already reduced wages. This led to the exclusion of contractors from Federated Farmers' handling of the Rural Scheme in 1980, and the Department of Labour stopping at least one of these contracting operations (Barlow, 1987, pers. comm.; Lock, 1987, pers. comm.). Federated Farmers and individual contractors remained significant employers of Fiji labour in the years to 1983. In early 1982, 243 Fiji workers - possibly as many as 240 of these Fijian - were employed in the Wanganui district, the major area for scrub cutting under the schemes (DL, F75:1).

Tussock Grubbing, Tobacco Harvesting and Market Gardening

The arrival of workers for *Nassella* tussock grubbing in North Canterbury began as early as 1964, and although numbers undertaking this never equalled those employed in scrub cutting in the North Island, tussock grubbing remained a steady source of work for Fiji labour until 1978. Certainly until the time of the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme, the majority of workers brought in by the North Canterbury Nassella Tussock Board were Fiji Indian, but with the introduction of worker selection by the Fiji Labour Department the numbers of Fijians and Fiji Indians soon became about equal. Numbers requested by the Board for each season varied between 50 and 80, and Fiji workers were used until the last year of recruitment in 1977, when Tongans replaced them. The cessation in 1978 of this particular labour migration of Island workers was probably more a reflection of the Department of Labour's ability to fill positions from its growing register of unemployed, coupled with the progressive decline of the Board's tussock grubbing operation, than of any direct pressure from the New Zealand Government (McLellan, 1988, pers. comm; Postlethwaite, 1988, pers. comm.).

The New Zealand Tobacco Growers' Federation was cited in 1978 as being one of the three major employers of Fiji labour under the Rural Work
Permit Scheme (DL, F135-9:1), and its employment of over 2000 workers in 11 seasons demonstrates this. Annual intakes averaged about 200 during the 1970s, before falling to 52 in 1980-1981. After 1981, however, the employment of Fiji workers in the tobacco industry ceased. The ratios of Fiji workers to New Zealand workers referred to growers by the Department of Labour, give an indication of why this occurred. As the number of registered growers declined through the decade - a decline brought about by a reduction in the crop grown in New Zealand - the number of New Zealand workers referred in response to growers' requests fell from 1515 in 1970-1971 to 404 in 1976-1977. During the same period, however, the numbers of workers from Fiji remained relatively constant, and pressure was brought to bear on the Federation by unions and the Department of Labour to reduce these (DL, F135-9:2). Consequently, numbers decreased from 1978 onwards, and in 1981 the Federation decided not to request assistance under the scheme, effectively ending the operation for Fiji workers.

The smallest of the major employment sources for Fiji workers in the 1970s and early 1980s was market gardening in the Pukekohe (South Auckland) area. Records of the South Auckland Vegetable and Produce Growers' Association show that in 1971 it undertook to import Fiji labour as a solution to shortages of suitable skilled and/or available local workers. The numbers brought to New Zealand remained relatively constant through much of the 1970s, possibly increasing between the latter part of that decade and the mid 1980s. Figures are available only for 1972 to 1976; these show that between 23 and 36 came yearly. Generally the same 10 to 12 or so employers took two or three workers every summer, though with expanding export markets for their produce a few took as many as 12 workers from the mid 1970s in particular. As was the case for scrub cutting employers, the Association was able to obtain an understanding with the Fiji Labour Department concerning the composition of the migrant workforce. In this case three quarters or more of the men brought to New Zealand were Fiji Indian, apparently because employers found it easier to get a commitment to the work in their gardens from these workers, though some regularly employed Fijians (O'Donnell, 1987, pers. comm.).
The De Facto Amalgamation of the Fiji Schemes

An important factor in the background to the recent operation of the Fiji work schemes is a tendency, especially since 1981, for employers to use the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme (or as it is generally considered and often called, the 'urban' scheme) over the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme, as the means of entry for workers. Table 4.3 shows an increase in the 'urban' figures from 26 in 1980 to 257 in 1981 and 360 in 1982, against a decline from 470 to 184 and 103 in the number of Rural Scheme permits issued during those years. One reason for this is that as early as 1980, scrub cutters, who should have come into New Zealand under the Rural Scheme, had in fact arrived under the South Pacific Scheme (DL, F135-9:2). It was noted that classification of workers into the two schemes was made by the Fiji Labour Department, and in some cases workers employed by rural contractors with resident addresses in towns and cities had been included under the South Pacific Scheme. However, even the addition of the number of scrub cutters thought to have come in those years is insufficient to account for the sudden large rise in numbers arriving under the latter scheme. Additional reasons must be sought for the anomaly.

Explaining the discrepancy is of some importance when it is recalled that there were significant differences between the two schemes. The Rural Work Permit Scheme allowed for four to six month work permits for rural work in New Zealand, while the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme allowed for 4-11 month periods for work not covered under the Rural Scheme. Further, for reasons which have not yet been fully considered, Fiji governments seemed more reluctant to allow nomination and the return each year of many of the same workers under the Rural Scheme, than it was for the South Pacific Scheme1. Thus, there were considerable advantages for

---

1 This return of the same workers to New Zealand, in many cases for say two out of every three years, was not allowed for in the original Fiji-New Zealand government agreements covering the schemes. Nevertheless, it increasingly became the practice under the South Pacific Scheme and to a lesser degree, under the Fiji Rural Scheme. Reasons for Fiji governments' reluctance to allow nomination under the Rural Scheme are given in Chapter Five.
Table 4.3 Entry to New Zealand under Fiji Work Permit Schemes: 1976 - 1987.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>March Year</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>'Urban'</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Permits</th>
<th>Months of Concentration</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>541</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>September - February</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>481</td>
<td></td>
<td>October - January</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>461</td>
<td></td>
<td>October - January</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>496</td>
<td></td>
<td>August - January</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>441</td>
<td></td>
<td>August - January</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>463</td>
<td></td>
<td>September - November</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>383</td>
<td></td>
<td>August - December</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>268</td>
<td></td>
<td>August - November</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>335</td>
<td></td>
<td>August - January</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>308</td>
<td></td>
<td>September - January</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>263</td>
<td></td>
<td>September - January</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-- Not available

1 Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme, Fiji Urban Work Permit Scheme, and South Pacific Work Permit Scheme.
2 The degree to which these figures correspond to the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme and the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme (the 'Urban' Scheme) after 1981 is very minimal. See text, pp.92-93.
3 Months of continuous concentrations of arrivals.
4 Percentage of that year's arrivals during the period of concentration cited.
5 Combined figure.


employers seeking to obtain labour for longer periods if they could use the latter scheme. Potential benefits existed also for those individuals in Fiji who were able to return frequently to New Zealand under the South Pacific Scheme, having built a work record with a particular employer in earlier seasons.

The anomaly in the figures noted above came about because of a practice which arose among rural employers from about 1980, of requesting workers under the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme. Technically, workers
for rural work in New Zealand should have been requested under the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme, and it seems that several related reasons underlay the 'blurring of the margins' of the two schemes, as one senior Department of Labour officer recalled it in 1988, which occurred from this period. First among these may have been an impression among employers that the move toward officially amalgamating the schemes meant that it was safe to pre-empt that move and derive the benefits which were outlined above. Aiding this was the fact that district offices of the Department of Labour were often only able to provide the forms for the more lucrative scheme. Requests for workers were handled at that level of the Department, and as districts exercised considerable discretion in the granting of applications, technically incorrect paperwork such as a request from an employer for workers under the wrong scheme, which was checked by and passed through a district office, was unlikely to be challenged subsequently (Scrivener, 1988, pers. comm.). Thus employers were able to use documentation originally intended for the South Pacific Scheme (Appendix Two) when requesting rural workers, and use the provisions of that scheme. The understanding among those who administered the schemes that they were now effectively one is conveyed by the fact that the Wanganui district office maintains a file relating to the "South Pacific Work Permit Scheme" (DL, F75:1) - a file which refers widely to Fiji workers in scrub cutting and forestry work, and which contains papers from at least 1980 - but no similar file on the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme.

From this discussion it can be concluded that the table headings of "rural" and "urban" workers in immigration returns sent from the Fiji Labour Department (via the New Zealand High Commission in Suva), cannot be interpreted as relating directly to the two schemes (Table 4.3). This conclusion is supported by the impressions of New Zealand High Commission staff in Suva in 1988 (Gavan, 1988, pers. comm.) and is true for the years after 1980. For these years, the figures must be treated as corresponding to, at most, only a description of the type (rural or urban) of work undertaken. Even this, however, is a categorisation of little use, because certainly in the arrival data after 1982, Fiji workers arriving in New Zealand for work which would
normally considered to be rural were at times listed in "urban" figures. For example, 292 of the 878 (33%) workers who arrived between 1983 and 1987 and who were cited in returns as being on the 'urban' scheme or as being involved in urban work, were known to be employed as scrub cutters or in market gardening - work which is normally considered to be rural.

The confusion which arises out of these realisations is real. In much of the discussion which follows, it would seem a simple solution to refer to "Fiji scheme workers" in cases where it is unclear whether the provisions of the Rural Scheme or the South Pacific Scheme are being referred to.

With the hindsight obtained through investigating the anomaly in the post-1980 data, it is also possible to correct an impression gained by others who have previously considered the work permit schemes. Bedford (1982) for example, saw the reduction in the "rural" employment figures between 1979 and 1982 as further evidence of a decline in rural employment opportunities for Fiji scheme workers in New Zealand. However, while the figures fell from 470 for the March 1980 year to 109 in the March 1983 year, it is unlikely that the actual number of rural jobs for the schemes fell by a similar proportion. Indeed, it is more likely that with the total number of permits issued remaining fairly steady through the late 1970s and the early 1980s (Table 4.3), the number of rural jobs remained similarly static. One reason for this is that the first truly urban work under the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme did not begin in earnest until the 1982-1983 year. This form of employment - halal slaughtering - is the object of the first case study of the contemporary period, and is considered below.

_The Contemporary Scene_

1. **Halal Slaughtering**

Recruitment of Fiji Indian slaughtermen by New Zealand Meat Industry Association representatives, who co-ordinated the employment
requirements of individual freezing works under the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme, commenced in the early 1980s. Although the first reference to the use of these workers as halal slaughtermen under the scheme is found for the 1980-1981 season, only four workers came to New Zealand at that time (DL, F135-9:2), and the figure for the 1981-1982 season is unknown¹. Between 1983 and 1987, however, the arrival of nearly 560 Fiji workers, virtually all of them Moslem Fiji Indian, made that type of employment the most significant in terms of numbers of Fiji workers during those years (Table 4.1).

Problems had been encountered in arranging suitable Iranian labour since the early 1980s, and the proximity to New Zealand of a sizeable supply of willing and acceptable Moslem workers made the employment of Fiji Indians a practical solution (Warrington, 1987, pers. comm.). One or two visits were made to Fiji each year, in order to find applicants who met the requirements of having suitable physical stature, fluency in English, abattoir experience where possible, and of being practising Moslems. The demand for positions among Fiji Indians was high. Some had worked previously as cane farmers or cutters, and were able to complement to some extent that form of seasonal work with slaughtering in New Zealand.

Sheep and lamb killing seasons in New Zealand generally ran between October/November and June/July, and work permits were normally extended to nine months to cover this. The variability in the seasons for individual plants, however, meant that workers were sometimes brought in at more unusual times. Thus, the arrival of groups in months such as February and especially April, accounts for the relatively low percentage of total flows of Fiji scheme workers during the normal summer months in the March years 1983, 1984 and 1987 (Table 4.3, cf Table 3.1). Another change which employment in halal slaughtering brought to the schemes was a reversal of the situation where the clear majority of workers arriving were Melanesian Fijians (Table 4.2). The contribution of market gardening was to add even more to this reversal in later years.

¹Given the small number of Fiji Indians who arrived under the schemes in that year, however, the number of halal slaughtermen must have been similarly small, if even existent (Table 4.2).
After their arrival in New Zealand, workers were often moved between individual plants, depending on work demands. Another typical practice was for a freezing company to employ three or more halal slaughtermen, and workers were distributed so that at least one worker in every two or three was a returnee from a previous season able to pass on acquired work skills. It took perhaps two to three weeks, which included one week of on-job training, to reach full production levels.

Like all slaughtermen in New Zealand, the Fiji Indians were paid a piece rate for their work; at full production a worker could earn (at 1986-1987 pay levels) a gross sum of $500-750 per week, and towards the beginning and end of the season, a minimum of $275 per week. In addition, freezing companies bore the cost of all airfares, providing a worker did not elect to return to Fiji early, and charged workers minimal accommodation costs. The payment of airfares by the employer (though balanced somewhat by the charging of accommodation costs) is perhaps ironical, given that the earning potential in New Zealand of the halal slaughtermen is much higher than for other Fiji scheme workers. A further benefit to those who came was that Meat Industry Association representatives were able to select entire intakes without restriction. Indeed, the Fiji Government proposed in 1981 that individual slaughtermen be allowed to return to New Zealand within 12 months of leaving, providing that stays did not exceed 11 months within a two year period (DL, F135-10:1). Thus the Association adopted a policy of employing a worker for two seasons if he proved suitable, followed by a one year stand-down. This proved appropriate for employers for another reason: some workers acquired standards of behaviour while in New Zealand that were incompatible with the religious requirements of their work (basically ones of 'clean-living'), and discipline became a problem for these (Warrington, 1987, pers. comm.).

Part of the understanding with unions in New Zealand which allowed this work to be done by migrants, was that little more than actual halal slaughtering was to be done. The most unique aspect of this is perhaps the silent prayer towards Mecca which accompanies each kill; beyond this, there is
little additional skill involved in the work. Apart from a basic knowledge of hygiene and other practices followed in New Zealand freezing works and of halal slaughtering among those who were previously unfamiliar with it, the Fiji Indians acquired few skills directly from their work in New Zealand (Mitchell, 1987, pers. comm.). Some are known to have returned to or begun work in halal abattoirs in Fiji on their return, and others to have become involved in or started small businesses, for example taxi firms (Warrington, 1987, pers. comm.).

Numbers of Fiji Indian slaughtermen arriving under the South Pacific Work Scheme peaked in 1985 at 143 (Table 4.1), declined to 69 in 1987, and were expected to fall further to perhaps 20-30 in the 1987-1988 season. This was due mainly to rationalisation in the industry and an insistence from the Iranian Government that Iranian Moslems should do much of the work in New Zealand. For Fiji workers, however, these considerations became largely immaterial as a result of the military coups d'état in Fiji in May and September 1987. Recruitment interviews were carried out in Fiji in August 1987, and although the New Zealand Meat Industry Association wished to employ again from this labour force - partly because it was the cheapest source in terms of airfares and partly through a sense of commitment to an established practice - the Association was unable to obtain assurances from the New Zealand Government that the recruitment would be allowed to go ahead. Consequently, its requirements for the 1987-1988 season were met through the importation of nearly 50 Iranian and 30 Malaysian halal slaughtermen (Mulcahy, 1987, pers. comm.).

2. Scrub Cutting and Forestry Contracting

The second major area of employment for Fiji work permit scheme workers in recent years can be subdivided into scrub cutting and forestry employment. The inclusion of forestry workers came about because some rural contractors who had previously been engaged in scrub cutting,
diversified their work operation into forestry from 1983. Subsequently, at least two contractors began to concentrate on various forms of forestry work.

Maintaining either form of work on a large scale in recent years has not been easy, however. One contractor was forced to send 11 of an intake of 19 workers back to Fiji in 1986 as a result of a lack of available work (Fiji High Commission, Work Permit Schemes file), later indicating that he was unlikely to recruit migrant labour in the future: the downturn in the farming sector made the practice too risky. Similarly, the Wanganui District of Federated Farmers has continued on a much reduced scale its scrub cutting operation involving Fiji workers. This work is considered first here, followed by a more detailed case study of one forestry contracting operation.

**Scrub Cutting**

In the past three years Federated Farmers in Wanganui has been the nominal employer of 20-30 Fiji workers a year, though the number may have fallen to as low as 10-15 in 1986-1987. As in earlier years, those employed were predominantly Fijian. This decline in numbers from the much larger intakes in earlier years, came about primarily because of the removal of government land clearing subsidies (Barlow, 1987, pers. comm.) and the deterioration in New Zealand's rural economy. As a result, little new development land clearing has been undertaken and farmers have confined their operations to 'chipping' (maintaining land cleared in earlier years).

Another difference from past employment has been that Federated Farmers has recommended to members that they offer at least five months' work to scheme workers, and seek extensions to the full 11 months under the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme. This was in contrast to the four to six month period allowed for under the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme, and came about because farmers, and to a lesser extent workers, found shorter periods to be only marginal economically. Workers still cut scrub for about six months only (centred over summer), leaving the extra period for other farm work such as fencing, carpentry and driving - skills which when acquired, made the same workers valuable again in following years. This was facilitated
by an understanding with the Fiji Labour Department that nearly all of the required workers could be individually nominated. The Department had accepted this change in policy for worker selection in order to keep the scheme viable, given the tight economic circumstances in New Zealand. Nevertheless, there was pressure from Fiji Government Ministers in 1987 to return to the previous position whereby only one third of the workers could be nominated. As was the case for all scheme workers in the same year, however, these issues became irrelevant with the political events of 1987.

One feature of Federated Farmers' employment of scrub cutters in recent seasons would appear to have made their arrangement with the Fiji Labour Department a unique one. This was the Department's specification that a payment from workers' wages be made direct to them, for use in a nominated development project in workers' home villages. This replaced to some extent the practice of workers automatically sending (or returning with) money for the same end use, and possibly represents a belief in the Department that this practice was no longer being followed. If this was indeed the motive, it would seem to be misplaced. The majority of workers who came during that time, as in earlier years, were from rural areas in Fiji, and on their return to those same areas a proportion of their wages went to funds such as for village building projects (Lock, 1987, pers. comm.). In addition, workers are known to have sent money from New Zealand also, for similar purposes. An examination of three wage sheets from 1985-1986 show that the workers advanced between $480 and $1200 to Fijil during their 11 month stays; in addition two of these sent $350 and $1100 respectively for village projects.

These wage sheets also pointed to the low wages paid to Fijians for scrub cutting work in New Zealand. Hourly award rates in 1986-1987 were $5.32 for experienced men, a figure which included a Federated Farmers-recommended 58 cent contribution by employers towards the cost of airfares.  

1 Uses for this money in the case of another group of workers are outlined below.  
2 In contrast, in 1896-1987 the basic hourly rate paid to scrub cutters employed by rural contractors was about $1.40 higher than that paid by farmers.
A gross wage of $11 000 in 11 months (during 1985-1986), and the deduction of taxes, stores, and the advances referred to above, left about $5000 with which to return to Fiji. The movement since 1983 of some rural contractors in the Wanganui area into forestry work provided additional employment opportunities for Fiji workers, and at higher rates of pay. One example of involvement by Fiji workers in the largest of these operations is described in subsequent sections.

Forestry Contracting: The Work Operation

The employment of Fijian labour in forestry work under the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme began in the Gisborne area in 1985. During that year, Hikurangi Forest Farms Limited (hereafter referred to as Hikurangi) contacted a Wanganui-based rural contractor and offered employment to the Fijian workforce which he was using under the scheme, as a solution to a labour shortage being experienced in Hikurangi's forestry operation. Hikurangi was then employing 70-80 New Zealanders as forestry workers and contractors\(^1\). However, the tree planting programme, which had commenced in 1980, necessitated an increase in the workforce to a level of 130-160 until at least 1990, if the desired management regime of tree pruning and thinning was to be maintained. Local labour proved to be unavailable in sufficient quantities, and the contractor was known to have used Fijian labour since 1980 for scrub cutting and later forestry work. Further, the Fijians were perceived to be hardworking, effective in larger gangs, and prepared to accept the often rough accommodation away from home which accompanied much of the work.

Some 30 Fijians were brought to New Zealand by the contractor for an eight to ten month period centering on the 1985-1986 summer. One of the contracts undertaken by this group was for Hikurangi, although the work they completed at this time was largely confined to scrub cutting. Fifty or so came during the 1986-1987 summer; of these, half worked full-time in Hikurangi's

\(^1\) Individual contractors generally employed groups of three to five workers as gangs.
operation. By now, the work was largely forest pruning and thinning: the pruning and thinning programme had involved approximately 8000 hectares in 1986, and was planned to involve 11 000 hectares by 1987 and 14 000 hectares by 1988 (DL, F135-10:3). Assured of sufficient work to employ such a number as adjuncts to the existing labour force during the summer period (The Gisborne Herald, September 25 1987), the contractor applied in mid 1987 to the Department of Labour to bring 73 Fijians into New Zealand under the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme.

As was required under the scheme's conditions, the Gisborne district office of the Department sought local people who were able to do the work, and in addition requested the applicant to advertise on his own behalf for New Zealand workers. These efforts proved largely unsuccessful, and so approval was given for the issuing of work permits to the workers. Before all of these arrived in New Zealand, however, political action, arising out of a Member of Parliament's concern that jobs were being taken from locals (The Gisborne Herald, September 25 1987), intervened, with the result that 25 of the selected workers were stranded in Fiji. A total of 48 workers arrived in July and September, and in December it was possible to interview 39 of these Fijians on the job.

Working as two separate gangs in different forests, the Fijians were accommodated in hired shearing quarters and in lodgings built for Hikurangi at Mangatokerau and Huanui respectively (Figure 4.1, Plate 4a). The former accommodated a gang of 24 during their stay in New Zealand, while the latter accommodation (which was of a much improved standard) housed a gang of 15. Food and accommodation costs were met by the contractor, who, like all contractors working for Hikurangi, was paid an amount per day for each worker from which he subtracted these expenses and also wages and other overheads. In the case of this employer's gangs the workers were paid the award rate for experienced men ($6.17 per hour), although some other contractors paid according to productivity - a practice which left many New Zealanders in the operation relatively underpaid because of their generally lower productivity.
Figure 4.1 Location Map of Migrant Source and Destination Locations Specific to Forestry Case Study.

Scale 1:3 750 000
Plate 4a  Workers' Accommodation at Mangatokerau.

Plate 4b  Nature and Setting of Work.  Plate 4c  Supervision and Skill Transfer.
Forestry workers in Hikurangi's tree pruning and thinning operation were set minimum productivity targets, depending on the slope, ground cover, tree branch size and forest density of work areas. Plate 4b shows the difficult setting for and the nature of the work carried out. Although many of the Fijians observed in the field were in their first season of tree pruning, within a matter of weeks of starting work and with on-going supervision (Plate 4c), the majority had attained productivity targets which, for many New Zealanders, were not met for three to six months, and indeed were often never met. Only a very few experienced workers among the local workforce of 80-90 contracted by Hikurangi were able to exceed the Fijians' productivity. Maintaining such productivity allowed the Fijians to regularly work overtime hours, making possible a working week of up to 53 hours and a gross pay of $350-400 per week.

The Workers

The contractor was able to provide valuable information on his Fijian workforce, because of a close knowledge of the 'business end' operations of the work permit scheme, and also because he had made several visits to Suva related to the scheme and to worker-source villages in Fiji. This information provided a valuable context within which to place data obtained from the gangs' Fijian foremen and approximately 15 other workers questioned in some depth through individual and group conversations.

Over half of the 39 workers (22 or 56%) were from Galoa - a village located in one of Fiji's outer island groups (Figure 4.1). The majority of these formed the nucleus of the larger gang of 24 workers, while the smaller gang of 15 contained workers from six or so villages on Viti Levu. Although some were in their early 20s, the mean age of the case study group was approximately 27 years, and while it was not true for many of the group from Galoa, most of the men brought to New Zealand over recent years were married, often with children.

In their home villages, most of the men had a semi-subsistence, cash cropping lifestyle. This involved the growing of crops such as cassava, taro,
yam and sweet potato on individual plots of land, selling the produce when possible and consuming some of their own production also. In addition, some were able to fish, and sell their catches in Suva, though not without experiencing difficulties with the transportation of these to market. At least two in the gang of 24 had worked as carpenters in Fiji. However, one of these had been able to find work only irregularly, earning for a few weeks at a time wages which were about one-half of what was possible from working as he was now in New Zealand. The other had worked full-time and with regular overtime in Fiji, but for wages which were about one-fifth of those he was earning in New Zealand. The Fiji:New Zealand wage ratio in this case was a more typical one for those who could hope to find employment in Fiji. Only one other Fijian in the same group was found to have worked for regular wages (approximately $60 per week, working at nights) in his own country. This was as a taxi driver in Suva, although the individual regarded his home as being in Kadavu, and even in this case wages had been supplemented by some cash cropping.

The presence in New Zealand during 1987-1988 of the workers from Galoa continued a long association between that village and the work schemes. Each of the workers, as for most of the case study group, had been individually selected by foremen working for the contractor. In their case, selection had been made by a foreman who had come to New Zealand as part of his work for the contractor for each of the past seven or so seasons, and who was aware of the work habits of prospective migrants, from observations in the village and on any previous work visits to New Zealand. Several members of this gang had worked in New Zealand for a large scrub cutting operation which was a major source of employment for Fijians on work permits in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and some had also been employed by the New Zealand Tobacco Growers' Federation in even earlier years. The expectation of these workers and of the contractor himself, was that if work performance in New Zealand proved satisfactory, then potentially a worker could return every two years. This was in keeping with the requirement of the schemes that workers should not return to New Zealand within 12 months of completing a work contract.
and also fitted in with the contractor's desire to avoid excessive social disruption in workers' home villages.

Previous employment in New Zealand was common not only for the employer-selected workers. The contractor, in his use of Fiji labour since 1980, had abided by the Fiji Government's requests of 1979 and 1980 that New Zealand employers using Fiji work schemes should nominate only 50% of their Fiji labour requirements, with the Fiji Labour Department selecting the remainder. For the 1987-1988 season, however, most of the Fiji Government's selected number were in the group stranded in Fiji. Among these workers, many were known to have already worked in New Zealand under the same or a similar work operation - a situation which had existed for several seasons.

In common with many other employers who have used the Fiji schemes, the contractor's main reason for desiring nomination was to ensure that the workers for whom he was to provide work for at least four months, possessed satisfactory work habits. The Fiji Labour Department, aware of this need among New Zealand employers, had adopted the habit of informing him of the name of the village from which they intended to select their 50% quota. In response, he had on occasion informed Fiji that a nominated village was unacceptable, based on previous experience with workers from that village. Therefore, another village was selected; this in turn was sometimes rejected, and so on. Further, again because of a desire in Fiji to supply workers who would prove of value to employers, the Department often selected workers from the agreed village who had already experienced work in New Zealand under the schemes. While it may appear, then, that as many as 200 Fijian workers have made use of scrub cutting and more recently forestry work opportunities in New Zealand, provided through this one contractor since 1980, many of these workers are in fact the same individuals returning, generally for between two and four work visits to New Zealand.
Intended Uses For Earnings

The length of stay for Fijians working on this contracting operation has typically been eight to ten months - a period which arose through a combination of home sickness among workers towards the end of their stay in New Zealand, and the contractor's need to maintain an economically viable operation and thus a workforce for as long as practicable. With current pay rates and the assumption that the 1987-1988 group will be able to work in New Zealand for a similar duration\(^1\), an individual worker could be expected to earn a gross sum of between $12,000 and $15,000 during his time in New Zealand. The deduction of standard rates of income tax in New Zealand, and the repayment of return airfares previously advanced by the employer, would leave an approximate net income of $9,000 to $11,000.

Faced with earning sums of money which they were unable to earn in the village setting or in urban employment in Fiji, workers had established various priorities for the use of their earnings. The most readily advanced of these was to pay for the construction of a house in the village, which would withstand hurricanes and cyclones more effectively than a building of traditional construction. The cost for such a house - which apparently would be no larger than a Western style living room - was given as between $600 and $1500, though it is likely that the latter figure would include such furniture as a sofa, table and chairs delivered from Suva. Many of those who had previously worked in New Zealand already owned such a house: for those in this category a common priority was to add furniture to their home, or more commonly to build a concrete block house which, with an iron roof, could cost up to $5000.

A second priority for many was to buy a boat which could be used for fishing - both for personal consumption and for cash sale. A wooden dinghy would cost as much as $1400 and an outboard motor perhaps $1200. The high degree of importance attached to this commodity by those who were from

---

\(^1\) This assumption for the case study group (and for other Fiji workers in New Zealand under the work schemes in late 1987) is largely dependent, however, on the outcomes of political decisions in New Zealand. These are considered later in the study.
Galoa in particular, can be related to another demand which was placed on the earnings of migrants from this village. This was the expectation that each of the men who had been selected to work in New Zealand would contribute at least $300 to the cost of a cool store for the village. This cool store - which was being sought to return with the workers to Fiji in 1988 - was part of a long-term project to develop the village's fishing resource. The installation of an electric generator had been begun with extra funds provided by the scrub cutting operator who employed many from Galoa in earlier years, and was largely finished by the present employer as a result of his visits to the village. In tandem, the generator and the cool store would provide a freezing facility for locally caught fish, which would ensure safe storage before they were transported to Suva.

The third significant use of earnings was as gifts of money sent back to the village for wives and children and other members of workers' families. Typically this amounted to the sending every two to four months of $300-$400, and a gift of perhaps $100 for Christmas (the latter representing a sizeable gift). Their employer suggested a sum of $1000 remitted in an eight month period to be the norm. The figures cited would have been only slightly smaller for unmarried men, as they were also in the habit of sending money to their parents and extended family. Money returned to families in this way would be used to purchase basic food items such as sugar, salt, flour and tinned food (primarily fish), and also some clothing. A secondary school education in Fiji would not have been free for many of the workers' children, and so some of the money would be used to cover this expense as well.

Three further areas for the use of money earned in New Zealand were identified by the migrants. The first of these was spending on personal consumption and gifts bought in New Zealand and in Suva on the return journey. Foremost among the items mentioned in this regard were blankets and bush shirts bought in New Zealand, both for personal use and for gifts, and additional clothing and footwear which would be bought in Suva. Workers were also able to order such items as cigarettes through their
employer, for consumption while in New Zealand. A second area was savings, for which no immediate use was readily apparent.

The final use for money considered here was given as perhaps the first priority by those who mentioned it. This involved the productive investment of money in some sort of business enterprise on return to Fiji, and was identified by three individuals among the group of 24. One hoped to be able to combine his savings with assistance from the Fiji Development Bank and buy a taxi in Suva. A second was considering buying the tools and other items necessary to start a small carpentry firm, probably in Galoa. A third identified the high degree of competition which already existed in Fiji among carpentry and cabinet making firms, and proposed instead to establish a small pig farm for the local market on Kadavu, for which he had already acquired land with money saved on an earlier work visit to New Zealand.

Aspirations

Several conversations between the author and individual migrants established what could possibly be viewed as a contradiction in the workers' aspirations. A comparison between their stated intentions for money earned in New Zealand and the amounts known to be earned by them, clearly demonstrated that the goals of each worker could be met by savings from at the most two work visits to New Zealand. This was true even for those who had considered forms of productive investment.

Despite this, and virtually without exception, the workers expressed a desire to return to New Zealand to work in the future (their expectation was to return in another two years, as explained earlier). For most, the next trip would represent at least their third visit to New Zealand. Thus, even the anticipation by the individual cited above of saving $4000 over eight months (in addition to money sent home) which could be invested in a potentially viable livestock operation in Fiji, was not sufficient to overcome his preference to return to New Zealand and work there for far greater economic returns, despite having to leave his wife and children again. This 'contradiction' between the fact that their perceived foreseeable needs in Fiji
could now or soon be met, and their wish to return to New Zealand to earn more money, was heightened by another observation by many in the group. This was that though they had generally sought and in some cases been able to find limited wage labour in Fiji, they did not wish to return to this. In the first instance such work was hard to obtain, but second, and more importantly, considerably more money could be earned in New Zealand.

Some expressed a wish that they had not become involved in wage work at all - in New Zealand or in Fiji. In explaining this, many spoke of a satisfaction with their lifestyle in earlier years, when material needs were met by the proceeds from fishing and planting. However, now that they had worked in New Zealand and had the opportunity to build a house in the village and satisfy other material aspirations, they would return again to work if the chance was available. If relatively large amounts of money could not be earned in Fiji, it was better to simply return to the village and subsist. Such a philosophy had been adopted by many in Galoa following the political events of 1987, when the virtual halving of wages in Fiji's urban areas had been the main factor causing many of those with paid jobs to return to the village.

3. Market Gardening

In contrast to the fortunes of halal slaughtering and scrub cutting as sources of employment for Fiji scheme workers, the case of market gardening is one of a steady increase in the provision of work in recent years. Yearly intake figures of 20 - 40 during the 1970s increased from 52 in March 1984, to 83, 92 and 117 in the years 1985-1987 (Table 4.1). Thus, employment in market gardening accounted for only 19% of arrivals under the Fiji schemes in 1984 and rapidly increased its share of scheme arrivals to 44% by 1987. In essence, this pattern has followed the continuing expansion of, and diversification into, labour intensive cropping in the South Auckland area during the last 10 years or so. This has involved winter work as well as more traditional summer
work, and in addition there have been ongoing difficulties for growers in finding suitable local labour (O’Donnell, 1987, pers. comm.).

The Questionnaire

The perceptions of growers known to have been using Fiji labour under the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme and more recently, the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme, were used in this case study to gain information on their work operation and on the migrants themselves. It was known that many employers had established close personal ties with employees and that they had a knowledge of several aspects of the workers’ migration and home experiences (O’Donnell, 1987, pers. comm.). Typically, 50% of each employer’s yearly labour intake in recent years had consisted of returnees individually nominated by the employer.

Thus it was decided to send a questionnaire to the employers known to have employed Fiji labour in recent years. The questionnaire and accompanying letter are found in Appendix Three. Some of the questions required an answer to be made on the worker’s behalf, and so were asked in a way which was intended to be as unobtrusive as possible. Responses were received from seven of the 20 sent, and therefore the discussion which follows can represent only a limited coverage of the work operation and of the migrants’ experiences. However, the fact that many of the answers paralleled impressions obtained from the nominal employer’s work schemes coordinator (who had a lengthy association with many of the employers, through handling their Fiji labour requirements), gives greater confidence to treating them as being adequately representative.

1 The South Auckland Vegetable and Produce Growers’ Association.
2 It is acknowledged that many of the employers of only two or three workers, who may have used Fiji labour only in recent years, did not reply to the questionnaire. Those who did reply, however, generally had considerable experience in employing Fiji scheme workers.
Workers and their Work in New Zealand

At the time of the completion of the questionnaire in December 1987, 14 workers (nine Fiji Indian and five Fijian) were employed by the six respondents - a figure which represented over half of the number (about 25) then known to be employed in South Auckland under the South Pacific Scheme. The Fijians were from Kadavu Island, while Fiji Indians were from urban areas or major population settlements on Viti Levu. Five of the employers had used Fiji labour under the work permit schemes for between 10 and 17 years; the others for the past two or three years. Drawing on their knowledge of the nearly 500 Fiji workers whom they had collectively employed since the 1960s, employers cited the previous occupations of their current and past workers as ranging from general labouring, building and related work, or no work at all (in the case of Fijians), to principally market gardening and sugar cane farming (in the case of Fiji Indians). Workers were thought to return to the same employment in Fiji - a knowledge gained as a result of many of the workers returning to the same employer in New Zealand over the years. Apart from employing these workers for up to 11 months, the respondents each employed between 8 and 35 locals, generally New Zealanders but also Samoans and Tongans, mostly on a short-term seasonal basis.

The work undertaken in New Zealand by the migrants was similar in all cases: mostly weeding and harvesting, but also planting, gardening and general maintenance and cleaning for some. Four respondents stated that this work was no different to that given to other (non-Fiji) employees, although two noted that their Fiji Indian workforces were employed to do the more laborious and simple tasks. Another observed that the only difference between the work which he did and the work given to employees, was that the Fiji Indians did not do the more skilled tractor work or crop spraying. Although harvesting was cited as work completed by the Fiji workers in all cases, the wider picture of market gardeners' employment practices in South Auckland gives a different view. This is that gangs of locals are employed to complete a large proportion of the harvesting under contract. Consequently, it is the work
which the latter are not prepared to undertake, namely weeding and planting, that is one major reason for employing Fijians and Fiji Indians.

**Skills and Benefits**

In answer to a question that sought to identify the skills or abilities possessed by their Fiji workers which equipped them for their work in New Zealand, all seven respondents gave similar answers. These noted the high degree of keenness and reliability which the labour migrants brought to the work. Further, employers needed to spend only very little time training workers. One response expanded on the answers given by all that very little training was provided: "They [the workers] are intelligent and can relate to what they do back home in Fiji. Most come from farms - show them [harvesting and packing techniques] two or three times and they can do it". Three employers, however, either trained workers to a basic proficiency in tractor driving, or sought workers from Fiji who already had this skill, presumably as a result of their or another employer's provision of training in an earlier season.

Employers differed in opinion as to the degree to which any skills learned through the work in New Zealand would help the workers on their return to Fiji. One suggested that farming techniques in New Zealand were too advanced for realistic use in Fiji, and that some of the machinery necessary for these techniques was unavailable there. Three others referred to the workers learning "something about conditions that apply in New Zealand as against Fiji", "methods of farming", and the "use of fertilizers and insecticides and herbicides" respectively.

The major benefit derived by the Fij workers as a result of coming to New Zealand was seen to be a financial one - a benefit cited by all but one respondent. Workers earned a gross figure of between $250 and $320 per week, amounts that were certainly not below, but only rarely above, award wages for their work (O'Donnell, 1987, pers. comm.). It is known, however, that local workers involved in contract harvesting earned substantially higher amounts per week, for short periods. Only one employer had sent money to Fiji on
behalf of workers; in this case the percentage of wages remitted was 50-70%.

Three other employers offered the opinion that workers sent home (unknown) portions of their wages; one stated that this was to assist relatives in Fiji to purchase "basic necessities" including food. It is widely believed that many of the Fiji Indians sought money for their own advancement, rather than that of their community or (to a lesser extent) their family. Finally, in terms of benefits to employers, the use of Fiji labour under the schemes through the years had created very few problems. Rather, it enabled hard work at busy periods to be done by a stable and reliable workforce. The impression gained from the responses on this point was that it would be very difficult to get the work done without the migrants.

Money and Skill Transfers: Some Conclusions

The issues of work skills and money returned to Fiji as a result of scheme workers' employment experiences in New Zealand, were considered as part of the three case studies above. In the following chapter it will be shown that skill and money transfers were objectives intended for the work permit schemes as part of wider policy considerations. In this section, it is proposed to examine for the three contemporary case studies the degrees to and the ways in which these transfers have operated for migrants.

Money Transfers

The extent and allocation of money transfers have varied widely between those employed as halal slaughtermen, scrub cutters and forestry workers, and market gardeners. The variations between work groups have most obviously arisen from two factors: the amount of money paid to the workers in New Zealand and the ethnicity of the workers. It should be noted that variations within groups were either not able to be estimated or were observed for too few workers to be able to make much comment on this.
In the case of Fiji Indian halal slaughtermen, substantial amounts of money were likely to have been transferred to Fiji, or to return to Fiji with the workers. A gross sum in excess of $20,000 (at 1986-1987 pay levels) seems to have been a typical amount earned over nine or so months, with the only significant costs to be borne while in New Zealand being accommodation and food (airfares were paid by the employer). Some are known to have established small businesses on their return home, using the money earned in New Zealand, but the allocation to this and other uses for money is unknown.

More is known, however, in the case of the predominantly Fijian workers employed in scrub cutting and forestry work. Scrub cutters employed by Federated Farmers received the lowest wages of all the case study workers, and yet in known instances, between $1,000 and $1,500 was advanced to Fiji, a significant amount of which was for village development projects. Workers also took home perhaps $5,000 after an 11 month work visit. Forestry workers, who earned amounts which were second only to halal slaughtermen in the schemes, typically remitted $1,000 to their families while in New Zealand, and returned with perhaps another $7,000 to $9,000 in money and goods. A small amount of this was known to be used in a village project in the case of one group at least, and much of the remainder was apparently used in consumption spending, for the majority of those interviewed.

Market gardeners, who were mostly Fiji Indian, earned amounts which were between those received by scrub cutters and forestry workers. Amounts of money sent back or accompanying workers to Fiji were unknown. However, it is held that, as for halal slaughtermen, the money earned would be used for personal and family consumption and investment, but probably not for village or community development purposes.

**Skill Transfers**

Numerous conversations with employers and Department of Labour officers revealed what many acknowledged to be a cynicism regarding the potential for skill transfer to occur through the schemes. Here, it is intended to
note the extent to which individuals' beliefs that few skills are transferred, are true for the work undertaken in the case studies.

Employers and employer representatives in the meat industry are clearly of the opinion that few work skills are transferred to halal slaugthermen in New Zealand. This was confirmed by the fact that many of the Fiji Indians already had some experience of the work methods, via killing for their own families' needs on their farms. In New Zealand, the most important skill was the requirement that a satisfactory prayer be offered for each animal - the actual method for killing which could be learned "in five minutes" (Hughes, 1988, pers. comm.). Indeed, the view was expressed that, if anything, the migration of religiously suitable Moslem slaugthermen was a (religious) skill transfer to New Zealand. Perhaps the most potentially valuable work skill transfer to the migrants was a knowledge of general freezing work practices in New Zealand, including working on busy chains and methods of hygiene. However, these had only limited use in Fiji's few abattoirs.

In the case of scrub cutting and forestry work, a greater potential for useful skill transfer would appear to exist. One Fijian foreman suggested that bush cutting work had recently become more available in parts of Fiji. However, this work would be similar to that done in New Zealand only in terms of its work setting (that is, in rugged, hilly terrain). The work itself would mostly involve the use of slashers which would be familiar to many rural workers in Fiji, and not necessarily mechanised scrub cutting gear which Fiji workers used in New Zealand. Fencing and carpentry skills, and driving practice acquired through additional work undertaken for farmers in New Zealand, would probably have useful applications in Fiji.

Some of the bush clearing in Fiji, referred to above, had been undertaken so that production forests could be planted. Several Fijian workers in the second case study group were aware of the possibilities which might exist for obtaining work similar to New Zealand forestry work on their return to Fiji. Some had actually worked as tree planters previously. Certainly, the skills attained in forest pruning and thinning work had the potential to be
applied to forests in Fiji (Plate 4c). The problem arises nevertheless, that only limited opportunities exist to apply these skills in Fiji, as forest management techniques there allow for only minimal pruning and thinning inputs (Whyte, 1987, pers. comm.). A similar problem would appear to be evident in the case of work skills acquired from market gardening in New Zealand. While it seems that little more than a proficiency in driving tractors, and possibly an understanding of horticultural techniques was gained (the latter more through observation than practical experience), again the applicability of these in Fiji was thought to be low.

Employers and administrators of the schemes were also generally in agreement as to some of the more positive skill transfers which have occurred. These were largely the gaining by Fiji workers of such things as a work ethic, and a sense of reliability towards their work. For many Fijian (as opposed to Fiji Indian) workers, this appeared to be an attribute which was possibly lacking when they were first employed in New Zealand. However, the fact that the majority of workers who migrated to New Zealand either had a suitable work ethic previously, or acquired one as result of working in New Zealand (and were able to return to New Zealand because this was sought by employers when nominating their workers), indicates something again. This is that a significant transfer under the schemes was in fact one of work habits, generally transferred from Fiji to workplaces in New Zealand.

These observations help to explain the point made by many involved in the schemes, that very few work skills of use in Fiji were gained by the workers. As most of the work undertaken by scheme workers was unskilled, with the major work 'skill' applied being one of ethic rather than practical ability, employers generally saw no need to train workers to a level beyond that where they achieved full productivity very quickly.

One other but as yet unexamined explanation for the lack of skill training evident in the operation of the work permit schemes lies in the provisions of the schemes themselves. A consideration of the broader policy context within which the schemes developed, which is the substance of the
next chapter, may help in this regard. A final task in this chapter is to record the plight of scheme workers in New Zealand after an important recent policy development. This move was the New Zealand Government's termination in November 1987 of the work permit schemes for Fiji migrants, as part of its review of relations with Fiji under military rule.

The Fate of the Case Study Workers\(^1\)

It was noted earlier that in the cases of recruitment interviews for halal slaughtermen and in the nominating of individual scrub cutters for 1987-1988, attempts to bring Fiji workers to New Zealand under the work permit schemes after mid 1987 were complicated by political events in Fiji. The New Zealand Meat Industry Association, for example, decided not to pursue recruitment in the face of a fading commitment to the schemes from the New Zealand government following the military coups in May and September. Their decision was aided by pressure from the Iranian Government to employ more Iranian slaughtermen, and also by the difficulty of confirming workers' travel arrangements from Fiji in the confusion of events after May. It is virtually certain that all Fiji halal slaughtermen from the 1986-1987 season returned home by late 1987.

Similarly, extensions from four month to 11 month permits for about 40 scrub cutters - 20 employed by Wanganui Federated Farmers, and about an equal number by contractors - in New Zealand in July 1987, would have expired in late 1987. Despite pressure exerted on the New Zealand Government by South Auckland market gardeners, it seems probable that no Fiji Indian workers arrived under the schemes for this work much after mid 1987. Assuming the extensions to 11 month permits had been permitted, most of the 25 or so already in New Zealand in late 1987 can be expected to leave in the first half of 1988.

\(^1\) As of mid January 1988.
The case of Fijian forestry workers in the Gisborne area is an unusual one. In the first instance, if the employer's attempt to extend his workers' four month permits (which expire in late January 1988) to 11 months proves successful, the workers could return to Fiji as late as August 1988. For reasons apart from the New Zealand Government's November 1987 decision to suspend the Fiji work schemes, however, it was unlikely that this work would have been allowed to be undertaken by scheme workers in the future. The reason for this lay in the controversy which surrounded the employment of the Fijians in September 1987.

This centred on the possibility which some saw of jobs being taken from local New Zealand workers, in an area which at that time had New Zealand's second-highest rate of unemployment (The Press, September 23 1987). Arising from these concerns, the Minister of Employment allowed permit arrangements for the majority of the workers to go ahead, with the strong proviso that in future exhaustive measures must be undertaken to ensure that where the vacancies are for unskilled work and in areas where there is relatively high unemployment among unskilled people, effective efforts must be made to recruit New Zealanders (DL, F135-10:3).

The possible irony in this for the work permit schemes can be seen when it is recalled from earlier in this study that it was rising unemployment in New Zealand which was a major impetus in introducing the schemes. Another impetus - which will be considered in the following chapter - was also overturned by the local Member of Parliament. This was evidenced in his acceptance that the jobs scheme had provided valuable income for Fijian people and was seen as an adjunct to New Zealand's foreign aid. "My concern still was that East Coast people should have a priority," he said (The Press, September 23 1987).

Thus we see an example of New Zealand's immigration policy "constantly evolving in response to changing economic and political circumstances" (Bedford, 1982, 24) - a feature of those policies which was applied to the work permit schemes in the 1970s, as will be shown in Chapter Six.
Summary

The primary objective of this chapter has been to portray the involvement in the Fiji work permit schemes of the labour migrants. The use of case studies to describe this has allowed the compilation of a picture covering the three predominant employment sources for Fiji scheme labour in recent years: halal slaughtering, scrub cutting and forestry work, and market gardening. As background to this, changes in employment patterns for workers in the 1970s were noted. One observation from this period was the change in the ethnic mix of workers sent from Fiji, especially following the introduction of worker selection by the Fiji Labour Department, but also resulting from the changing requirements of New Zealand employers.

As the background period merged into the period from 1983 onwards, it was shown that the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme and the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme became effectively amalgamated in terms of their operation - an observation which nullifies the use of separate 'rural' and 'urban' figures published for the years after 1980. Thus, while tobacco harvesting and Nassella tussock grubbing work ceased in the late 1970s and the early 1980s, it is unlikely that rural employment under the schemes fell by the amount indicated in the figures. By using the provisions of the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme for rural work, employers gained the benefit of longer work periods from their workers, and possibly a greater acceptance of individual worker nomination by the Fiji Labour Department.

The case studies provided a valuable insight into aspects of the workers' migration and home experiences, particularly so for the forestry workers. Attitudes regarding work and materialistic aspirations were observed for some workers, and these will be incorporated into a wider discussion of the value of their migration, in Chapter Six, as will the findings regarding money and skill transfers. It was observed in this chapter that sizeable proportions of wages were returned to Fiji for uses apparently centred on consumption, at least for the one group where money allocation could be determined with any
degree of accuracy. Skill transfers were more clear cut: where potential would appear to exist for this (particularly in forestry work and in market gardening), the prospects for useful application in Fiji seemed limited. A general observation would be that few skills were imparted through employment in New Zealand, although a work ethic has undoubtedly been acquired by some. It may in fact be that under the Fiji work permit schemes, the balance of skill transfers, if these can be taken to include those of attitude and favourable work habits, is in New Zealand’s favour.
"...while the Island nations recognise work opportunities in New Zealand for their people are a valuable form of aid, they also look to us for assistance of various kinds in the development of their economies" (New Zealand's Minister of Immigration, Auckland Star, July 14 1976).

It was seen in Chapter Three that the work permit schemes were negotiated by New Zealand governments intent on allowing short-term labour migration from the South Pacific to be made to New Zealand only under controlled conditions. In several instances they were impelled to seek a scheme's introduction because other immigration arrangements were being subjected to considerable strain. In relieving the employment pressures which built up in New Zealand under these strains and in 'funnelling' to some small extent migration pressures in the Islands, the schemes performed a valuable role in New Zealand's immigration policy in the South Pacific.

This chapter augments these conclusions. It does so by examining the schemes outlined in Chapter Three and their intended and actual 'successors' (outlined in this chapter) as instruments of New Zealand's foreign policy in the South Pacific, and by explaining in more depth their place in immigration policy. Thus the objects of analysis are those of governments, and their policies, as in Chapter Three. While the very real correlation which existed between the schemes' fortunes and unemployment in New Zealand must be constantly borne in mind, the examination will go beyond this to other issues - of development and aid for example - in the 'mind' of New Zealand governments.
Three related themes will be implicit in the discussion. The first is that the motives behind New Zealand's involvement in South Pacific labour migration do much to explain the small degree of skill transfer inherent in the work permit schemes. Second, some of these motives and the actions which flowed from them were at best inconsistently adhered to through the 1970s and the 1980s. Arising from this, a third theme will be distilling the reasons for changes in the currents and directions of New Zealand's immigration and foreign policies for the South Pacific. Therefore, it will be necessary to note how these policies in the South Pacific first came to be linked by New Zealand governments in the early 1970s in particular. Having detailed the complexity of these links and noted the role of the schemes in them, it will become apparent in this chapter that the schemes' initial place as key agents of New Zealand's policy in the South Pacific was followed by a near-equally dramatic diminution of that role.

Towards the South Pacific

In a paper on immigration prepared by The Treasury in 1958, it was observed that
it is a cardinal point in our policy to maintain New Zealand's identity as a country of European settlement...we divert pressure to take larger numbers of less acceptable migrants [from less fortunate and particularly non-European stock regions - the example of Asia being cited] by pursuing an active policy of recruiting from the most desirable sources (MFA, F3/1:9).

This largely social consideration, was followed in the text by one which was more political in nature. A readiness by New Zealand to accept some migrants from other Commonwealth nations was held to be desirable: "to assist in the preservation of the Commonwealth relationship"; it was implied that such migration would include people of differing ethnicities, who would bring with them new skills and new ideas.

Despite these considerations, no specific mention was made of that group of nations which were New Zealand's closest 'less fortunate', non-
European, and ethnically different neighbours: the Island nations of the South Pacific. The paper seemed more concerned with the need to develop New Zealand's own economy, than with any sense of responsibility, or indeed concern, for the development of the Island economies. This reflected the fact that while these latter issues were to become manifestly more important in the policies of New Zealand governments from the late 1960s and onwards, before that time Island nations other than Western Samoa, the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau\(^1\), received little attention in New Zealand's immigration and foreign policies. Furthermore, few links between these two policy sets were drawn for South Pacific nations.

In fact, Roy (1966,34) has argued that with respect to all nations, New Zealand's policies in the immigration or foreign affairs areas had not taken sufficient note of the fact that these policies were "inextricably linked". The only aspect of immigration policy which related to foreign policy, according to Roy, was a restriction on immigration from Asia. In this instance, the policies were inconsistent and insensitive: while New Zealand expressed a commitment to defence for some countries in Asia, at the same time it excluded the immigration of their nationals.

Briefly, a consideration of two principal factors helps to explain this situation of relative neglect for the South Pacific region, and also the significant change which followed in the 1970s. First, there was the historical setting to policy making in the immigration and foreign affairs areas generally, in New Zealand. Roy (1966) saw the imposition of immigration controls (albeit in a more or less piecemeal fashion) as being made necessary by events as early as the 1880s, but an independent foreign policy being made necessary only in response to the events of the Second World War. Thus, New Zealand had a history of its immigration policy being framed without reference to its foreign policy requirements.

A second factor was the decline in New Zealand's near total dependence on Britain from the 1960s (Henderson, 1984; Laking, 1981), and its

\(^{1}\)Nations to which New Zealand was associated through its history of colonial rule in the South Pacific (Chapter Two).
concomitant and related widening of interest in the Pacific Rim and Basin (Holden, 1981). Subsumed within this re-focusing were factors such as the conscious effort made by the New Zealand Labour Government of 1972-1975, and especially its Prime Minister (Norman Kirk), to improve relations with South Pacific neighbours (Henderson, 1984). A central development in the South Pacific during the decade before this had been the growing reality of decolonisation and independence among Island nations. This was brought home to New Zealand particularly by Western Samoa's independence in 1962, the attainment of self-government by the Cook Islands in 1965, and the independence of Fiji in 1970: "New Zealand recognised that in these changes it had an opportunity to deal openly and directly with South Pacific leaders on a government to government basis" (Alley, 1984b, 141).

**Motives**

Despite these quite fundamental changes, Alley (1984a,xvii-xviii) has claimed that this coming to terms with the realities of a Pacific location has not involved New Zealand in any major transformation of either attitude or foreign policy. Indeed towards the Pacific, New Zealand has pursued the objectives it has followed elsewhere: namely how best to exploit those options and opportunities most likely to advantage the material and trading needs of New Zealand's increasingly parlous domestic economy.

Similar views have been expressed by other authors, for example Debrency (1984). It would seem then, that economic aspects - the primary reason for considering immigration according to the 1958 paper - were the most important in bringing about New Zealand's turn to the South Pacific during the 1960s and beyond.

While the focus of immigration policy remained with attracting skilled, permanent migrants, largely from Britain (DL, F135-8), the "potential contribution of Polynesian [and Melanesian] migration to desired development and foreign policy goals [in and for New Zealand] was not ignored" (Bedford, 1982, 7). Behind this was the need perceived in New Zealand in the early 1970s for increased immigration, to help meet the goals of
economic expansion. With regard to the foreign policy goals of this movement, a leading economist and contributor to a 1971 conference on immigration policy for New Zealand, held that temporary work schemes, a form of "international co-operation", should be extended (Rosenberg, 1971, 32). He argued that "In the South Pacific, New Zealand is a large country, wealthy and able to make a real contribution. There must be continuing - and growing - immigration from the Islands for political and moral reasons" (p.28, italics added).

This last comment shows that while economic factors were foremost behind the attention given by New Zealand towards the South Pacific from the late 1960s, it would be wrong to deny from that time the "altruism, enterprise and constructive endeavour manifest in New Zealand's total effort in the South Pacific - voluntary as well as governmental" (Alley, 1984a, xviii). One of the ways in which this was demonstrated was by New Zealand governments' acceptance, in the early 1970s, of requests by Fiji governments for work schemes which were orientated towards training, and the placing of these within an aid context.

**Early Training Schemes as Aid**

Perhaps the earliest example of altruism expressed by a New Zealand government towards an independent South Pacific nation, within the labour migration and time frames of this study, was the setting up of the Supervisory Training Scheme (also known as the Fiji National Training Council Scheme) in 1970. In the first instance, this scheme came about following a request by the Fiji Government for New Zealand to assist with the specialised training of Fiji workers, to help alleviate a shortage of qualified tradesmen and supervisors in Fiji (DL, F135-8). Under the scheme, which was co-ordinated by the Fiji National Training Council, Fiji employers were to negotiate directly with their counterparts in New Zealand for the training to a supervisory level of a worker who had previously been guaranteed a more senior job on his/her return to Fiji.
The Department of Labour's formal involvement in this scheme was minimal: work permits were issued for six months (with the possibility of extension, normally to a maximum of two years), and trainees were to remain with the nominated employer unless permission was granted to do otherwise (DL, F135-5). Figures for entry to New Zealand under the Training Scheme are known for only three March years - 1974 (46), 1980 (20), 1981 (6), and the calendar year 1981\(^1\) (9) (DL, F135-4) - but from these it can be seen that it was not used by large numbers. There was even less utilisation of three further training-orientated schemes for Fiji workers negotiated in the early part of the 1970s.

The first of these was a Forestry Training Scheme, again requested by the Fiji Government in 1970, and following discussions between a New Zealand company and the Fiji Minister of Labour (DL, F135-5). The scheme was to be separate from the general forestry work allowed for under an extension to the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme in June of that year, and was envisaged by the Fiji Government to equip workers for diversified employment in the private and public sectors of the Fiji forestry industry. In early 1972, the introduction of a pilot scheme to train up to 50 workers was agreed to by the New Zealand Government, though rising unemployment and the lukewarm response of the affected union in New Zealand at that time effectively suspended the scheme before it could begin (DL, F135-5). The Department of Labour's view was that the scheme could be regarded as a form of aid to help Fiji develop its important forestry industry, and a press statement which confirmed the existence of the scheme also noted that it was seen as part of New Zealand's foreign aid programme to Fiji (Evening Post, July 16 1974). This was further demonstrated by the New Zealand Government's decision to pay the return air fares for trainees from aid funds.

A second scheme, which was possibly included within the Supervisory Training Scheme, was for the training of tobacco workers. This occurred for new intakes of 12 supervisory trainees for each of the harvesting seasons of

\(^1\) Therefore, this figure may include some double counting with respect to the March 1981 year.
1972-1973 to 1975-1976, and again during three or more seasons since (DL, F135-5, F135-9:2, F311:10). The arrangement was used as recently as 1986-1987, and throughout was apparently considered to be separate from tobacco growers' intakes of harvest workers under the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme. Like the latter scheme, however, the arrangement was ended in late 1987 (DL, F311:10). A third scheme was implemented for six concrete brickmaking trainees in 1973. Having had their 12 month work permits extended by a further 12 months, the trainees' stay in New Zealand was ended amidst allegations that inadequate training had been provided by the employer (DL, F135-5).

A Complex Commitment

These early and tentative steps taken by New Zealand to associate aid with immigration in the South Pacific, were accompanied by a realisation that labour migrations involved a variety of complex considerations. An early reference to these considerations is found in an address to the New Zealand Foreign Affairs Committee in December 1971. New Zealand's Prime Minister wanted to

stress that this [migration from the Islands] too can be seen as a form of assistance. Most of the Islands have something of a population problem. The solution is by no means easy...[The Island nations]... need to maintain a labour force so that in due course they can set up, for example, light manufactures. Nevertheless, New Zealand offers many attractions to young people, and given that there are better opportunities down here it is inevitable that many of them will want to emigrate (MFA, F31/1:2).

Mention of the problem of overpopulation reflected the commonly held view of the 1960s that emigration from some Island nations was a prerequisite for their development1. However, the alleviation of population pressure and therefore (according to the conventional academic wisdom) the contribution to development, which could be provided by allowing more Island immigrants

1 A brief bibliography of works advancing this notion is found in Bedford (1984).
into New Zealand, was not likely to be significant for the relatively large population bases of Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa. Furthermore, the concept of allowing large numbers of Islanders into New Zealand to relieve population pressures in the source countries, was unlikely to be accepted by the New Zealand public. It is not surprising, therefore, that this aspect of assistance was not advanced publicly by New Zealand governments.

Perhaps the first formal endorsement of the view that immigration from the South Pacific was at least, in part, a foreign policy issue had been made in the introduction to the annual report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1971. Here the Prime Minister alluded to immigration as one of the many ways in which New Zealand was able to help in the Islands: "in the long run some of these may prove more important than the financial aid" (Holyoake, 1971, 4). The Ministry itself was more firmly of this view. In the same report, it foresaw Island nations seeking the relative freedom of migrant access to New Zealand which had been provided for Fiji and Tonga under the work schemes. The report viewed it as timely that steps were then being taken by the New Zealand Government to reconstitute the Immigration Advisory Council and that a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had been included in the Council's membership. A more immediate concern was evident in another document of 1971. Referring to proposed meetings between two of the principal employer groups using the Fiji Rural Scheme and the Fiji Minister of Labour, officials urged that "we [the Ministry of Foreign Affairs] should insist that an issue which is so important in the relations between the two governments cannot be left in the hands of Federated Farmers or the tobacco growers" (MFA, F31/1:2).

The connections between immigration and foreign policies were drawn more clearly following the coming to power of Prime Minister Kirk in 1972. A report to the National Development Council at about that time had acknowledged New Zealand's special responsibilities towards the South Pacific and that there were advantages in a continuing moderate inflow of migrants (MFA, F311:2). However, the provision of direct aid to the Pacific Islands in the form of finance and material aid was advocated, rather than a form of aid
implicit in allowing greater numbers of Islanders to work in New Zealand.
Commenting on the report, New Zealand's Prime Minister wrote in early 1973
that "The Government does not regard migration from the Pacific simply as a
form of economic aid, though plainly it does in some cases help to reduce
pressure on the economy", and reaffirmed that the New Zealand Government
felt a special responsibility to assist with the economic and social development
of its Pacific Island neighbours (MFA, F31/1:2). Clearly, it was to be a long-term
commitment: "It may well happen that as standards of living improve [in the
Islands, following assistance] fewer people will be interested in coming to New
Zealand, but I would expect that there will continue to be a movement, and I
think New Zealanders accept this". Furthermore, the region was to be New
Zealand's most important foreign commitment: "since coming to office the
[Labour] Government has made it clear that its relations with countries of the
South Pacific take priority in its policies. Priority has also been given to the
South Pacific in our aid activities" (Kirk, 1975).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Submission - "Seldom Stated" Requirements

Not only were the issues involved in labour migration complex, but
they had not always been openly stated. An admission of this fact was
provided in a paper on immigration from the South Pacific, which was
submitted to the Minister of Foreign Affairs by the Secretary of the Ministry in
December 1975 (MFA, F1/5:2). The premise advanced in the submission was
that "All immigration questions have foreign policy implications. In the case
of the South Pacific the links are particularly close...". Possibly the most
important aspect in examining the relationship between the policies, according
to the paper, was one of development - "All in all the remittances have thus
become a more crucial development factor than project aid or other forms of
assistance from New Zealand".

The paper revealed that from the point of view of pure self-interest,
New Zealand's immigration and foreign policies in the South Pacific could be
related to certain requirements which were "seldom stated". Four of these
were outlined. Firstly, New Zealand had a strategic interest in the South
Pacific. This included a need to avoid the situation of having a depopulated Island chain to the north, one consequence of which could be intrusion into the area by foreign powers or other political and commercial interests whose aims could be in conflict with those of New Zealand. Secondly, in the area of development aid, charity was seen as beginning close to home. New Zealand would be judged by its contribution to the South Pacific region, and migration had become a significant feature in that region's pattern and concept of aid. In the area of equity, the third requirement, New Zealand needed to be careful that it was not accused of operating an indentured labour scheme. To this end, the work permit schemes then operating (the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme and the Tongan Work Permit Scheme) were not necessarily to be seen in themselves as the final answer to accommodating labour migration from the South Pacific. The fourth requirement relating to policy was for the mobility of labour: "as at any point of history, migrant movements will ebb and flow with economic opportunity, and the availability of a reservoir of labour offers unique advantages to New Zealand".

The conclusion drawn in the paper was that, taken together, these four propositions suggested an appropriate measure of development for the South Pacific. This measure was the achievement of a "decent enough existence" in the Islands, such that communities (especially their younger members) would accept life there as offering satisfaction equal to life in New Zealand. It was considered that in certain cases the indications were that this goal was attainable. An overall consideration of the paper, then, leaves open the question of who was to benefit most from New Zealand's immigration and foreign policies in the South Pacific. This question will be evaluated in the concluding chapter of the study.

A Sensitive Subject

Alley (1984b, 141) has referred to a new orthodoxy of "partnership" as guiding New Zealand's approach in the Pacific, from the early 1970s. The development of a greater maturity in New Zealand-Island government relationships from this period is reflected in the views of this time held by
Department of Labour officers. One remembers impressions of informality and of "old friends meeting" when negotiations were held (Riches, 1987, pers. comm.). Despite this, the actions and pronouncements of New Zealand governments, in the mid 1970s in particular, testify to the fact that there was some unease in these ties.

The reason for this unease lay in the fact that immigration was a sensitive subject. The Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in a November 1974 letter to the New Zealand Prime Minister, observed it to be one of the most delicate areas in New Zealand's relations with South Pacific nations. The issue was not often discussed openly -

neither the [South Pacific] Forum nor the [South Pacific] Labour Minister's Conference have ever risked a wide ranging debate on the fundamental issues involved. The topic is closely linked to the pattern of economic development throughout the region, the more so at a time when remittances from workers in New Zealand have become a dominant element in many Island economies (MFA, Fl/5:1).

Some indication of the magnitude of this "dominant element" can be seen from Table 5.1, which relates remittances and transfers of money from migrants in New Zealand to their home countries, and New Zealand government aid expenditure in those same countries, for the years 1973-1976. From this can be seen that remittances and transfers generally well exceeded aid inputs for those years. Given that there is no reason to suspect that patterns of money transfers were very different in those years from the patterns shown in the previous chapter's case studies, it is likely that even greater amounts of money were returned to Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa when migrants left New Zealand after their work visits. While no account is offered of the uses to which both of these transfers were put, the sheer extent of money input to the Islands, resulting from work visits to New Zealand, would have allowed strong opinions to develop within Island governments regarding the desire for this to continue.
Table 5.1  Personal Remittances and Transfers, and New Zealand Government Aid to Fiji, Tonga, and Western Samoa: 1973 - 1976.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Remittances and Transfers</th>
<th>Tonga</th>
<th>W.Samoan Aid Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>855 (1032)</td>
<td>60 (220)</td>
<td>1870 (861)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>1209 (687)</td>
<td>509 (427)</td>
<td>2046 (1437)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>3549 (2407)</td>
<td>2407 (817)</td>
<td>4372 (2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>-- (3000)</td>
<td>1591 (1500)</td>
<td>5542 (2000)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-- Not available.

1 Personal remittances and transfers by temporary residents, through the banking system.
3 June years (remittances and transfers) and March years (aid expenditure).

Source: DL, F264:1; MFA, F1/5:1.

At the same time as the importance of migrants' remittances was coming to be appreciated, however, New Zealand officials were working on the formation of a more substantial employment and training scheme. This was to replace the work permit schemes, and as recalled from Chapter Three, "was envisaged as the basis for a more permanent arrangement for temporary entry in the case of Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa" (MFA, F1/5:1). One very likely effect of such a scheme and the accompanying reduction in the period for which visitors' permits would be granted, would have been a tightening up of total labour migrant flows from the Islands to New Zealand, and thus a fall in the sum of financial transfers obtained by this means. Island governments were conversant with the potential implications of more tightly controlled schemes - the Fiji Government's concern in mid 1975 that unskilled workers (the majority of those migrating) would be allowed to continue to migrate to New Zealand under the new scheme which was then under consideration, was noted in Chapter Three.
In requesting a meeting of Island and New Zealand government officials in 1974 to discuss the scheme, the New Zealand Secretary of Foreign Affairs, in his letter cited above, wrote:

The main problem, however, is that such measures are often not placed within a broader framework and as a result the concept of accommodating many inter-related factors is not completely accepted on all sides. At different times, New Zealand's own policies will in these circumstances be misunderstood and possibly criticised.

On the New Zealand side, one of these factors was the experience of relatively high levels of unemployment during the late 1960s and again between 1971 and late 1973 (Figure 3.2), and the criticism levelled at successive New Zealand governments for allowing large influxes of labour migrants into a country already unable to sustain full employment.

The dilemma facing the New Zealand Government was made known by the Prime Minister in early 1974, at the annual meeting of the South Pacific Forum - a grouping of independent states in the region which had been formed in 1971. He expressed to Island leaders a concern at the number of unskilled migrants coming to New Zealand, and that his country was unable to accept such a steady flow. However, he was understood to have made it clear that there would be no New Zealand-enforced cutbacks in the flow (Timaru Herald, March 23 1974). The predicament facing New Zealand in addressing the Islands' needs was also outlined: the Prime Minister acknowledged that it was hard to improve living standards in the Islands without the economic returns possible from those working in New Zealand. Against this, however, it was difficult to raise those same standards when the people with the necessary skills - acquired in New Zealand or elsewhere - to do so, were migrating to New Zealand for frequent work visits, and in many cases, permanently (Timaru Herald, March 25 1974).

A more immediate concern facing the Immigration Attache and staff of the New Zealand High Commission in Suva at this time, was bemoaned in an immigration return in early 1974 (DL, F135-4). The three month 'holiday work scheme' appeared to be out of control, despite the High Commission's attempts to screen applicants more closely. It was felt that any attempt to
control the issuing of permits even more closely would likely result in adverse comment being made in Fiji; yet, any relaxation of control, which would have been "contrary to policy", would lead to a "flood" of job-seeking 'visitors'. The conclusion was drawn that "In the meantime, therefore, it is left with us to warily tread a path that is thwart with difficulties".

**The View of the Fiji Government**

A major reason for the sensitivity felt by Island governments towards New Zealand's immigration policies in the mid 1970s, was that money inputs to the Island economies resulting from short-term labour migration to New Zealand were substantial. While Island governments were keen for migration flows larger than those allowed under the work permit schemes to continue, their view towards the work permit schemes themselves has been absent from the literature. Despite this, numerous isolated references to their views are found in files from this period, which, when considered together, and supplemented by interviews conducted in the course of this research, demonstrate the high value attached to the work permit schemes by Fiji governments in particular.

By early 1974, the Department of Labour had noted that Fiji placed great store by the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme, as the scheme was considered to assist development in Fiji, especially in more outlying villages (MFA, F31/1:2). This came about because with the introduction of worker selection by the Fiji Labour Department under the scheme in 1969, workers from certain villages who applied for access to work opportunities in New Zealand could be targeted for selection. Money earned by workers from short-term work visits to New Zealand could then be allocated to development projects in, and specified by, each village. The Fiji Labour Department generally considered village applications on the basis of the perceived value of the projects to Fiji's rural development programmes - programmes in which, Fiji officials were quick to remind New Zealand officials, the work schemes
played a very valuable role (for example, DL, F135-9:2). Selection had several priorities. In approximate order these were water supply projects, schools and community halls, churches and business ventures (Bolatagici, 1987, pers. comm.; DL, F135-9:2). While it was the village's task to determine what proportion of the wages earned by its workers in New Zealand should be allocated to the projects, in recent years the Fiji Labour Department may have played a more involved role in this (Chapter Four).

Further, it was earlier noted that groups of workers were often selected from outlying islands which had been devastated by natural events such as hurricanes, and which needed substantial amounts of financial assistance (see, also, for example, Bedford et al., 1978). While such considerations often overrode established waiting lists of Fiji citizens wanting to work in New Zealand under the work permit schemes, these lists of potential scheme workers remained very long: generally up to 7000-8000 applied each year for positions (DL, F135-9:1,2). Maintaining the schemes thus allowed work aspirations to be sustained among many in Fiji.

As many of the workers came from rural areas in Fiji, the initial reluctance demonstrated by Fiji governments towards individual worker nomination by New Zealand employers, which has been demonstrated on several occasions in previous chapters, can now be understood. If Fiji governments wanted the schemes to assist its regional development priorities - which was certainly the case - then they needed to maintain an element of control over the selection of workers (Satyanand, 1987, pers. comm.). When in later years, employer pressure in New Zealand overturned this somewhat, the Fiji Labour Department sought to at least direct employers' attentions to priority areas when they made their own selection, a move which brought some success (for example, DL, F75:1).

The selection procedures also help to explain the ethnic imbalance which arose in the number of workers selected in Fiji and sent to New Zealand in the 1970s, and which has been noted earlier in this thesis. Although there seems to have been no conscious effort on the Fiji Labour Department's behalf to discriminate against Fiji Indian workers - many of the civil servants who
made selection decisions were Fiji Indian - the decision to allocate many of the work opportunities to outer island villages, where few Fiji Indians were resident, accounted largely for the imbalance (Satyanand, 1987, pers. comm.; Scott, 1987, pers. comm.). The recruitment decisions of New Zealand employers, who tended to favour the use of Fijians, was the other contributing factor in this. Also, Fiji Indians, whose work in New Zealand in later years was predominantly in urban (halal slaughtering) work, were known to contribute little of their earnings directly to rural development projects. Therefore, nomination under the 'urban' work permit scheme was never an issue for the Fiji Government to the same extent as it was under the Rural Scheme.

Lastly, while following sections will detail New Zealand governments' stated intentions to introduce elements of skill training into the operation of the work permit schemes, it seems that Fiji governments were not greatly concerned with this aspect, at least within the schemes. Thus, an initial concern expressed in 1973, to the effect that the Fiji Government wanted to upgrade work skill levels through 'on-the-job' training in New Zealand (MFA, F31/1:2) was replaced by a belief in later years that this was very much a secondary objective for work permit schemes. The primary objective was to enable the earning of money which could be used to lift living standards (Satyanand, 1987, pers. comm.; Bolatagici, 1987, pers. comm.).

It will be evident to this point that a variety of conflicting demands were made on New Zealand's immigration and foreign policies in the South Pacific in the early 1970s, and that work permit schemes were a response to these. Added to the Fiji governments' view of the schemes and to the desires for labour migration among workers in the Islands and several employer groups in New Zealand, were various other demands. Principally economic self-interest, but also altruistic factors dominated these; the submission by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs pointed to other, less debated, requirements. It can also be advanced, however, that the pressures of a deteriorating unemployment situation in New Zealand in the early part of the decade and
the related growth of the overstayer problem were now firmly in the minds of policy makers.

In the context of these considerations, two significant policy initiatives, which linked immigration and foreign policy concerns, were advanced and then acted on by successive New Zealand governments from 1974. The policies were not without forewarning. The Minister of Immigration announced in June 1973 that the New Zealand Government was undertaking a complete review of immigration policy, a task of such magnitude that it was to be completed section by section (Colman, 1975). In announcing the new policy for permanent entry, some 11 months later, Norman Kirk (1975, 21-22) stated that

Aid programmes will help improve standards of living, provide better opportunities for purposeful employment in the South Pacific islands and lessen the need to emigrate, but it is necessary for these programmes to be co-ordinated with our immigration policy. We must, in particular, be careful not to adopt policies which will result in an exodus to New Zealand of people from the islands who can make a significant contribution to the development of their own countries. On the contrary we hope that, as the island economies develop, more and more people will find rewarding employment opportunities and a fuller and more satisfying life at home.

On the same date as this, the Immigration Advisory Council's guidelines for future immigration were released. One of these was that with respect to the South Pacific,

The objective should be to couple immigration policy with aid programmes so that as far as is practicable:

(i) In the longer term the territories and countries of the area may develop their economies and improve the standards of living of their people to provide better opportunities for purposeful employment at home 1975, 29).

One of the policy initiatives, alluded to earlier in this chapter and in Chapter Three, is expanded on below.
Longer-Term Employment and Training Schemes

Before the announcement in May 1974 of new guidelines for permanent entry to New Zealand, the New Zealand Government had requested the Immigration Advisory Council to consider the main issues affecting such entry. One of the recommendations proferred by the Council expressed concern regarding the temporary entry of large numbers of Pacific Islanders who were coming to New Zealand "nominally as visitors but actually to work, without having the benefit of necessary training or other preparation" (Immigration Advisory Council, 1975, 32). The Council stated "that this issue should be examined at an early date with the view to the introduction of an effective work permit scheme".

By June of that year, the Council had discussed the matter of "employment and training schemes" for workers from the South Pacific (MFA, F22/1). According to a draft "Outline of Employment and Training Schemes for the South Pacific", the schemes discussed were intended to provide an alternative to the situation of uncontrolled 'visitor' flows from the Islands. Some elements of the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme and the Tongan Work Permit Scheme were to be retained in the new schemes, but employers and the Department of Labour were envisaged as playing a greater role than they had previously. Permits were to be issued for six months, except to workers whose employers in New Zealand were prepared to arrange additional training to that already provided - these workers would have their permits extended by a further six months. The Island governments were to have the sole right to select the worker-trainees to match the sponsoring employers' requirements. However, no decisions were reached at that time by the Immigration Advisory Council on the details of the schemes, due to objections advanced by union and manufacturer representatives.
In the Tongan Memorandum

While the Prime Minister had stated on May 7 1974 that the New Zealand Government was "developing proposals for enlarged work permit schemes..." (Kirk, 1975, 22) for South Pacific temporary migrants, the next specific public reference to employment and training schemes seems not to have been until October 1974. Then, a joint press statement announcing the introduction of the Tongan Work Permit Scheme noted that in the longer term, an employment and training scheme was to be introduced, following further consultation between the Tongan and New Zealand governments. The work permit system provided a solid basis for the introduction of the latter scheme, which was to progressively promote the more purposeful employment and the more systematic training of Tongans in New Zealand...in conditions that would safeguard their welfare as individuals as well as the social fabric of both countries. This is an admirable form of mutual aid in which New Zealand and its Pacific neighbours can promote and share economic, social and cultural benefits (DL, F403-4).

The Memorandum of Understanding on temporary entry agreed to between the governments at the same time also recorded the New Zealand Government's intention to assist Island governments to "develop their economies and improve the standard of living of their people in order to provide better opportunities for purposeful employment at home" (DL, F311:1). To this end, and for the progressive upgrading of migrants' qualifications, it referred to the need for a further development of the four month Tongan Work Permit Scheme. One further reference to the desire for the scheme to be a stepping stone toward a work permit scheme which incorporated a greater training element, was made by the Assistant Secretary to the Tongan Government, at a meeting of the Immigration Advisory Council in October (MFA, F1/5:1). At the same meeting, the Council itself recorded its expectation that the four month scheme was to be temporary, in the sense that it would be replaced by a six month successor.
Chapter Three detailed New Zealand's negotiations with Fiji between late 1974 and November 1975, for the introduction of an urban work permit scheme. Statements made during the time of those negotiations indicated that in the case of Fiji also, the introduction of an employment and training scheme was seen as being desirable by the New Zealand Government, but that instead a simpler scheme was introduced. Ostensibly, the latter was to be an interim measure, with the proviso that it was to lead eventually to the implementation of the former, more desired scheme. Thus, a Fiji parliamentary delegation to New Zealand in May 1975 was informed by New Zealand Government officials that the proposed urban scheme was seen as a step towards the long-term objective of introducing schemes which were more training-orientated. These, in turn, were intended to give Fiji workers broad training to increase their skills and to enable them to make a positive contribution to local industry in Fiji on their return home (MFA, F1/5:1). This was reaffirmed by New Zealand at a meeting of Fiji and New Zealand officials on Fiji work permit schemes some three months later.

At this second exchange, Fiji officials were made aware that "the Labour Department felt it was essential for employers to accept an obligation to train Pacific Island workers and not to just reap the benefits of unskilled labour" (DL, F135-9:1). New Zealand's view was that in the long run, it would be better to train people through such schemes even though some training would be wasted on the workers' return home - often there would be no employment opportunities in Fiji appropriate to the skills attained - than not to provide such training at all. The Department of Labour claimed that employers had accepted a responsibility to provide on-the-job training to Fiji workers. When the state of the economy in New Zealand improved, the Department intended to approach manufacturers again, to develop details of the schemes.

The Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Fiji and New Zealand governments in November 1975 was similar to the Tongan
memorandum, stating that it would be necessary to improve workers' qualifications and to develop schemes such as the Fiji Urban Work Permit Scheme, if the entry of workers from the South Pacific was to contribute to the development of Island economies (MOU, 1975, 7). It also added that the Fiji Urban Scheme, and possibly the Rural Scheme, would be replaced by the longer-term employment and training scheme.

A significant point is that employment and training schemes as outlined above were never introduced for Fiji and Tongan workers wishing to migrate to New Zealand. Some of the reasons for this will become clear as a result of considering the second and concurrent policy advanced from 1974.

**Employment for Islanders, In the Islands**

The second policy initiative put forward by New Zealand was a more direct contribution to the need perceived by New Zealand governments for greater employment opportunities in the South Pacific. While in fact two schemes were announced, in 1974 and in 1976 (under different governments), these were essentially the expression of one policy. For the purpose of clarity, the schemes are considered separately in this section.

*Pacific Island Employment Opportunities Scheme*

The Pacific Islands Employment Opportunities Scheme was announced in the Labour Government's budget of 1974. The scheme undertook to provide assistance - relocation grants, training expenses, loan finance, market access - for New Zealand firms wishing to set up enterprises in the Islands designed to expand employment opportunities and to foster economic development in the region in a manner compatible with the Islands' own priorities (MFA, 1975, 1).

Guidelines for the scheme, which was to be confined initially to Fiji, Tonga, Western Samoa, the Cook Islands and Niue, were drawn up with the affected governments late in 1973, and included the wish that activities should have
the highest possible use of labour relative to capital, and an element of training for local workers. An initial interest expressed by some New Zealand firms in participating in the scheme was diminished by the subsequent downturn in New Zealand's economy, and no projects had received assistance by January 1976 (DL, F264:1).

Despite the delay in the scheme's implementation, it is revealing to note some of the points advanced by officials in support of the scheme. The first of these was that the objective of the Employment Opportunities Scheme was to assist the Islands to develop their own economic momentum, so that they could employ productively the bulk of their rapidly increasing labour forces. It was also advanced that the scheme was the only way in which New Zealand could assure healthy economic and political relations in the South Pacific. The scheme would be aiming over a period (10 years was given) to reduce significantly the importance to the Island economies of migration to, and private remittances subsequently sent from, New Zealand. Thus, the time frame was the longer term: steady progress was envisaged, rather than a sudden rush of firms and jobs to the Islands. As if to pre-empt an obvious criticism of the scheme, it was argued that cheap labour alone would not be the basis for any easy business success, as this factor was counterbalanced by high costs and problems in other areas of production and marketing. A large part of the solution to marketing, however, was thought to lie in the "considerable scope for New Zealand firms to export to third markets from the Islands, utilising the tariff preferences for developing countries" (DL, F264:1).

A ministerial brief of 1976\(^1\), having noted the stalled condition of the Employment Opportunities Scheme, and some of the aid and immigration policy goals which its successful operation could help to achieve, suggested the revival of the scheme, perhaps as part of a wider strategy\(^2\) (DL, F264:1). Following the return of the Minister of Immigration from the South Pacific in early 1976, the National Government moved to renew the scheme.

---

\(^1\) Prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in readiness for a visit by the Minister of Immigration to the South Pacific in early 1976.

\(^2\) These goals, and the strategy, are outlined later in this chapter.
**Pacific Islands Industrial Development Scheme**

One result of the Minister's visit was the formation of a Pacific Islands Industrial Development Committee, which was to work towards fostering employment expansion in South Pacific countries, "to meet those [Island] Governments' wish to retain the services of the skilled and productive members of their populations" (DL, F264:2). It would encourage export industries in those countries which were sources of immigration for New Zealand: "Development would lessen the dependence of those countries on New Zealand for employment opportunities".

Following the committee's groundwork, New Zealand's Minister of Trade and Industry announced the introduction of the Pacific Islands Industrial Development Scheme (PIIDS) in November 1976, describing the scheme (as the earlier Employment Opportunities Scheme had also been described) "as a major New Zealand initiative in the South Pacific", complementing the official aid programme (*The Dominion*, December 1 1976). Originally limited to the same five nations as for the earlier scheme, by 1981 all Island member countries of the South Pacific Forum had been included in the Scheme (Fairfax, 1981).

Various extensions were later added to the scheme's provisions, but the assistance given was basically for two aspects of eligible operations. Interest-free loans were provided toward the cost of factory plant, equipment and buildings; these could be converted to grants in most cases if the venture was still operating after five years. Secondly, expenses could be granted towards completing feasibility studies, transferring staff and plant from New Zealand, and training Island staff in the Islands or in New Zealand. The decision on whether a project was to go ahead and if assistance was to be provided, ultimately lay with the Island government. On the second aspect of assistance, it was held that "The transfer of technical, commercial, managerial and entrepreneurial skills and attitudes is one of the most important aspects of the Scheme" (Fairfax, 1981, 49).
Employers using the scheme were thus able to bring employees to New Zealand from the Islands for training. PIIDS trainees were usually granted entry initially for three months, although extensions could be granted to allow stays of six months or longer where the application was supported by the New Zealand Department of Trade and Industry, which administered the scheme (MFA, F1/5:6). Very few trainees came to New Zealand, however (DL, F264:2): a lone reference to their number among immigration returns from the New Zealand High Commission in Suva notes only seven trainees arriving between January and December 1981 (DL, F135-4).

Quite limited use of the scheme has been the general pattern also in terms of the numbers of ventures approved for assistance, funds granted to the same, and jobs directly created in the Island nations (Copeland and Ogle, 1987). A possible exception is the significance of employment growth generated through PIIDS assisted projects, relative to total employment growth, in Tonga and the Cook Islands. By 1984, the Development Committee, which seemed to represent an expression of New Zealand's political commitment to the attainment of the goals of the scheme, had not met since the late 1970s - the scheme's day to day administration was taken over by a PIID unit within the Department of Trade and Industry (DL, F264:2). A generally positive attitude, however, seems to have been held by Pacific governments regarding the scheme:

Generally, impressions from Island government officials indicate that the Scheme is well supported and that progress to date is pleasing. The Scheme is seen as a significant element in promoting industrial development and economic growth in the South Pacific region. PIIDS is also considered to be assisting, in a practical way, the partnership between New Zealand and the Island nations (DL, F264:2).

Three points should be clear from this discussion and from Chapter Three. First, a revival of the Employment Opportunities Scheme was suggested, as part of some 'wider strategy'; the resultant scheme (the PIIDS) enjoyed some success. Second, the 6-12 month employment and training schemes, cited on several occasions as being the long-term replacement for
New Zealand-Island nation work permit schemes, were never in fact introduced. Third, the use of the work permit schemes themselves declined from the mid 1970s (Table 3.1).

One way in which to account for the lack of success in the implementation of longer-term employment and training schemes and also in the work permit schemes introduced between 1967 and 1977, compared with the relative success of the PIIDS, is to consider the possibility that the three initiatives were not pursued with equal vigour. It will be seen in the following section that the emphasis on the latter initiative - that is, of 'employment (and also training) for Islanders, in the Islands' - led to the virtual exclusion of employment and training schemes in particular, from policy. Implicitly, the same will be suggested to be the case for the work permit schemes.

The Wider Strategy

The general direction of New Zealand government policy in the South Pacific followed from the early 1970s, required an attempt to be made to interrelate aid and other activities in the region. Clearly, one of these activities was migration. From the mid 1970s, a narrowing of focus occurred, involving the adoption of a strategy to stimulate economic activity in the Islands. This strategy was held by its foremost initiators - New Zealand governments - to be in the mutual interest of New Zealand and the Island nations. One major benefit from this was believed to be clear: although pressure for migration from the Islands to New Zealand would not be completely removed, the more prosperous the Islands became the less incentive there would be for migration.

A paper prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in January 1976 for the Minister of Immigration - the same paper in which the revival of the Employment Opportunities Scheme was suggested - emphasised the relationship between aid and migration, in the context of this strategy of stimulating economic activity in the Islands (DL, F264:1). Fostering
development in the South Pacific through New Zealand's aid programme, thereby increasing the opportunities for Islanders to lead rewarding lives at home, was seen as something of a counter to emigration to New Zealand. Capital, expert aid and training, and the ventures they would stimulate, could build social services and employment options in the Islands attractive enough to reduce the pull of the New Zealand labour market.

It was considered that immigration had a far greater impact than direct aid on Island development, through the remittances it facilitated - particularly for Tonga, Western Samoa and Fiji. This meant that aid could not be viewed as some sort of 'compensation' for desired tighter immigration controls on New Zealand's part. Nevertheless, it was thought that it was possible to slant aid more towards stimulating employment opportunities in the Islands. Additional opportunities for paid work in the Islands would do much to stimulate economic development there; a way of initiating this seemingly lay in giving assistance to New Zealand companies wishing to establish enterprises in South Pacific nations.

A possible danger to New Zealand existed in the threat which the development of industry in the Pacific Islands posed to some sections of New Zealand industry, notably those of clothing and fruit and vegetable production. However, it was felt that the impact in the Island region of even a few substantial industries which used local labour and possibly local materials, could be quite significant, whereas the numbers affected and the adjustments to be made in New Zealand would be marginal. Another idea put forward in the paper was that strategic as well as moral factors existed in encouraging development. Poverty and social dislocation would make fertile ground for various forms of subversion by foreign influences. Therefore, viewed in this light, the maintenance of reasonable living standards throughout the region was New Zealand's first line of defence.

1 The Minister of Immigration, however, does not seem to have been completely in agreement with this. His visit to the South Pacific (early in 1976) left him with the view that several plans might be pushed to compensate for an inevitable drop in remittances following the decline in migration (DL, F264:1).
Aspects of the more focused strategy were readily put forward by politicians in New Zealand. In early 1976, for example, the Prime Minister (Robert Muldoon) stated that the National Government was committed to increasing employment opportunities in the Pacific Islands by providing incentives for manufacturers to establish ventures there. Many Islanders came to New Zealand, but, he said, "in the long term the ultimate solution must be forms of development that will enable a majority of the people of those islands to lead useful, economically productive lives in their own homelands" (Evening Post, February 2 1976). While employment in New Zealand would continue to be attractive to those so far denied that opportunity in the Islands, the greatest benefit in the long term could be obtained only by those migrants returning home with the benefits of the skills they had acquired in New Zealand. However, no mention of any mechanism for facilitating skill acquisition in New Zealand was proposed in his reported comments. It seems that in the view of the New Zealand Government, the policy of development in the Islands was overtaking that of development being aided through skill training in New Zealand. This was a significant turnaround. Only six months before Prime Minister Muldoon's 1976 statement, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at a meeting of New Zealand and Fiji officials on work permit schemes, had expressed high hopes for the longer-term employment and training schemes. These included the desire that such training in New Zealand would create a pool of trained people, who, following their return to Fiji, would assist in attracting industries to the Islands (DL, F135-9:1).

The change of policy intent from work permit schemes to employment and training schemes, and ultimately to development in the Islands themselves, is clearly evident in the progression of a series of Department of Labour briefing papers entitled "Entry to New Zealand from the South Pacific: Work Permit Scheme". In the 1978 paper (DL, 1978a, 1), it was stated that

In the long term view, the [South Pacific] Work Permit Scheme is regarded as a first step towards a more extensive scheme incorporating greater training elements. The development of new industries in the South Pacific is receiving increasing attention in
New Zealand, and the training of personnel to operate them will be vital to their success.

Significantly, this statement was absent from papers in the series which were prepared subsequently. However, the sentence from the quote above referring to industrial development and personnel training again appeared in briefing papers in 1981 and 1982, but this time in papers which dealt with wider (that is, non-work permit scheme) avenues of migration from the South Pacific, in a section on the Pacific Islands Industrial Development Scheme (MFA, F1/5:5). Thus, again it would seem a valid assumption that the contribution to development which was made by job skill training, was increasingly being seen as being more appropriate in the Islands themselves, where the majority of the workers under the scheme were intended to be trained.

Island governments also apparently displayed a change in their policy stances from the mid 1970s. However, in their case, the changes were more forced than desired - an accommodation to the shifting emphasis in New Zealand’s policy. The Minister of Immigration reported that during his visit to the South Pacific in early 1976, Island leaders had stressed to him the reliance which they placed on a constructive New Zealand aid policy, and the added importance of this at a time when migration from the Islands to New Zealand was in decline (DL, F264:1). However, while certainly desiring that direct aid be infused into the Island economies, the stronger emphasis placed by Island governments on the migration of workers to New Zealand, in New Zealand-South Pacific relations, indicates more correctly where Island government preferences lay.

Island government support for New Zealand's swing in policy was claimed to an extent by New Zealand's Minister of Foreign Affairs. He wrote in September 1976 that increased assistance to the Islands (aimed at lessening the need for people to come to New Zealand for employment) was in accord with the approach of Island governments and the work of the New Zealand Government towards fostering development in the South Pacific (MFA, F1/5:2). Nevertheless, expansion in the Islands' economic infrastructure was proving to be a slow process, wrote the Minister, and therefore "access to
employment opportunities in New Zealand will continue to be important for some time to come".

A clear indication of where New Zealand government policies at the interface of immigration and foreign affairs considerations with respect to the South Pacific were now aiming, was given by the Pacific Affairs Co-ordinating Committee. This committee of government departmental officials had been appointed by the New Zealand Government in 1976 to act as a focal point for co-ordinating New Zealand's policies and to monitor and stimulate its activities in the fields of trade, economic co-operation, immigration and fields related to them (DL, F264:2). A report from the committee in 1976, on employment opportunities in the South Pacific, argued that it was important for the PIIDS to work successfully, if the pressures to migrate from the Islands to New Zealand were to be reduced. Moreover, it was suggested, expectations had by now been aroused in the South Pacific regarding the contribution such schemes could make, and it would be damaging not to fulfill these (DL, F264:2).

**Other Factors in the Schemes' Decline**

*The Schemes and Migration Control*

The decline in emphasis placed on work permit schemes has been considered implicitly in the discussion on policies of longer-term employment and training schemes and of employment being directed back into the South Pacific. This is because the work permit schemes were not so much neglected in policy as overshadowed by newer considerations - particularly the notion of development in the Islands. As the work permit schemes were portrayed earlier as envisaged contributors to this training, it could have been concluded that this change in policy added significantly to the schemes' decline.

However, it would be too simplistic to emphasise the role assigned to the work permit schemes as training schemes, in explaining that decline. While it was noted on several occasions during inter-government discussions that employment and training schemes were intended to have a significant
skill-training input, the same was only loosely suggested for the work permit schemes. A more valid way to account for their decline is to examine their role in controlling migration flows from the Islands.

Department of Labour briefing papers dealing specifically with the work permit schemes are invaluable in this respect, backgrounding the most important rationale behind their use -

...[The] attraction of earnings in New Zealand continued to draw large numbers, many of whom illegally overstayed their allotted time...The visitor system also became subject to abuse...Arising out of concern to remedy these problems, the New Zealand Government negotiated work permit schemes with Tonga, Fiji and Western Samoa (DL, 1978a, 2).

It would be unfair to deny the other advantages seen in the schemes - the use of remittances sent back to the Islands for private use and communal projects was also cited in the backgrounding section to the paper cited - but the primary motive was clear. This was the desire to control the flow of short-term visitors from the Islands seeking work in New Zealand.

While the introduction of the work permit schemes was intended to control the situation of unmanageable numbers of migrants on three month visitors' permits seeking work on arrival in New Zealand, it was also necessary to allow and manage the admission of genuine visitors. For this reason, one month, work-prohibited visitor permits were either introduced soon after, or accompanied the work permit schemes' introduction. It was hoped that the shorter time span of these permits would discourage informal work-seeking in New Zealand by Island migrants. Island governments, to a degree, apparently supported this notion, although in a sense they were obliged to do so if they were to protect those labour flows which were allowed, under the work schemes. The Fiji Government's request in 1969 for the imposition of an employment restriction on three month visitors' permits, to protect the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme, was one example of this somewhat laboured support. So too was the agreement by Tonga in 1976 to New Zealand's proposal that an improved work permit scheme (the envisaged employment and training scheme) was to be the main policy developed for work entry to New Zealand (DL, F264:1).
The Minister of Immigration's view that work permits, issued under the work permit schemes, would cater for the larger, non-visitor, category of Islanders who wished to enter New Zealand specifically to work (Auckland Star, July 14 1976), was not reflected in arrival statistics. Thus, in the Fiji case, even following the introduction of the new Fiji Urban Work Permit Scheme in 1976, numbers arriving under the Fiji schemes generally continued to fall and still comprised only a small proportion of total short-term migrant flows from that source. Despite this, there was a belief in New Zealand in the late 1970s, that short-term migration from South Pacific nations was largely under control. Contributing to this was a false impression of the net numbers of ethnic Fijian, Fiji Indian, Tongan and Western Samoan short-term migrants travelling to and from New Zealand, which was given in the arrival and departure records (Bedford and Lloyd, 1982). The introduction of two further moves to control these flows may have added to this impression.

The first of these was the implementation of changes to New Zealand's 1964 Immigration Act, in early 1978 (DL, 1978b). Under the amendments, it became an offence for people on temporary permits in New Zealand to take employment without the appropriate authority to do so, and for New Zealand employers to employ these same visitors. It was announced, however, that holders of temporary visitors' permits could now apply for an authority to work after their arrival (DL, F311:1). Nevertheless, the policy relating to the issuing of work permits remained closely tied to the employment situation in New Zealand: authority to work was to be granted only if no suitable local labour was available, and this criterion was to apply also to the work permit schemes. Hesitancy was still evident with respect to labour migration from the South Pacific. Fiji, Tongan and Western Samoan citizens were not allowed to apply for work in New Zealand under the new provisions until 1983, and the granting of three month visitors' permits, which many other countries had enjoyed since 1978, was not extended to these three countries until 1983 also (DL, F135-10:3; MFA, F1/5:5).

Unease due to the problem of overstaying had not been totally resolved by 1978, particularly in the case of temporary visitors from Tonga and Western
Samoa, and so the second move was the imposition of further controls on
temporary entry from these two countries. For citizens of these countries,
sponsorship of accommodation and maintenance, which was allowed for
citizens of all other countries, was to be permitted only with the approval of
the New Zealand authorities (DL, 1978b).

A Rejection of Formal Labour Mobility; An Alternative Proposed

While somewhat ambivalent in its support for, and encouragement of,
work permit schemes, the actions of New Zealand governments to 1978 cannot
be seen to have represented any real and significant rebuttal of the schemes.
The somewhat surprising rejection then in 1978 of the concept of a formal
labour mobility scheme for several countries in the South Pacific including
New Zealand, and a number of Island nations who sought such a scheme,
possibly gives a more perceptive insight into the New Zealand Government's
viewpoint on labour migration. At the same time, it helps also to explain
further the fortunes of work permit schemes - whether existing or proposed -
from the mid 1970s.

The rejection came in a paper presented to a 1978 conference of South
Pacific labour ministers by New Zealand's Minister of Labour, in which it was
stated that "New Zealand does not consider a formal and established labour
mobility scheme to be feasible" (MFA, 1978, 20). While New Zealand's
Government accepted that labour mobility among South Pacific countries was
not a new phenomenon, and that it was likely to be an important part of the
employment scene in the Islands in the future also, its position was that labour
mobility could not be considered as an end in itself. It was felt that such a view
might become prevalent if a formal scheme was established.

For the New Zealand Government, an alternative to a labour mobility
scheme in the South Pacific lay in the concept of an 'active employment
policy'. Basically, the adoption of this policy involved many different
measures being taken and co-ordinated by a government intent on attaining
objectives such as full employment or overcoming labour shortages. The
Minister of Labour believed that it was in the long-term interest of countries in
the region "to continue to develop their own policies in order to correct labour market imbalances rather than rely too heavily on any other measures such as outmigration" (p. 17). Such migration should be considered by each country as being but one component of this policy. To a certain extent, these policies were already being developed. For example, several South Pacific countries were planning labour-intensive agricultural projects as a means of reducing population pressure on urban areas unable to provide sufficient employment. New Zealand supported these through its bilateral aid programmes, 40-60% of the value of which went to rural/outer island projects attempting to provide revenue and employment opportunities there. Also, the programmes worked to create employment in urban areas, therefore aiming to further reduce pressures for emigration. Another way in which New Zealand's Government considered it was helping to create employment opportunities in the region was through the Pacific Islands Industrial Development Scheme - for which figures of 300 jobs directly created by the scheme and an equal number of jobs in supportive industries by the end of 1979 were predicted.

Several problems were referred to in the paper, resulting from the New Zealand Government's experience of what were "Probably the most extensive labour mobility schemes in the region..." (p. 2). One of these was the "inability of the schemes to completely satisfy the migrant sending countries in the area" (p. 6). This had come about because of the economic downturn in New Zealand and therefore the severe contraction in the number of job opportunities available. This situation severely limited opportunities for developing a full-scale labour mobility scheme involving New Zealand, either through an extension to the existing work permit schemes or through other bi- or multi-lateral programmes.

Despite this, New Zealand's Minister of Labour noted that once countries had considered their labour policy requirements, any structural adjustment deemed necessary in labour markets and which involved emigration, could be discussed on an ad hoc bilateral basis, as it had been to that time. Thus, New Zealand's commitment to encouraging new schemes, or even extending those which already existed, was clearly somewhat less than
that which was desired by many South Pacific labour ministers. The report of the conference expressed the Island nation governments' view more than New Zealand's when it stated that "The Conference...recognised that one of the solutions to the problem [of unemployment in the region] may lie in encouraging and providing arrangements for mobility of labour between the countries of the region." (Report of the Fifth South Pacific Labour Ministers' Conference, 1978, 3-4).

**Recent Years**

The intimation above, that future arrangements for labour migration between South Pacific nations and New Zealand were to continue to be negotiated on an *ad hoc* basis, demonstrates the fact that despite the introduction of a series of work permit schemes in the mid 1970s and their subsequent amalgamation, one element of policy had not changed. This was that policies were still being applied on a country to country basis, a situation which had existed at the beginning of that decade and indeed much earlier. In 1975 for example it had been observed that policies for the temporary entry of migrants had developed on an *ad hoc* basis over the past half century, ranging from a fairly relaxed system in the case of visa abolition agreements, to closely controlled work permit schemes (MFA, F1/5:1). *Ad hoc* policy application remained a feature of New Zealand government dealings with immigration from the South Pacific into the 1980s, with mixed results for the countries concerned. The final portion of this chapter details evidence of this, and also Fiji's experience of the work permit schemes at the policy level during this time, including the end of the schemes for Fiji labour migrants in late 1987.

**New Extensions to the Schemes**

The South Pacific Work Permit Scheme was extended in April 1977 to allow employment in New Zealand for 12 workers from Tuvalu on a trial
basis (DL, 1978b, 2). By mid 1978, following the successful operation of the trial, provision was made for the entry of up to 20 workers a year, and preparations were underway to conclude an agreement for this. At the same time, however, only a few months before the presentation of the paper detailed above, New Zealand was having to discourage interest among other emerging nations in the South Pacific for employment opportunities in New Zealand. Such enquiries had been received from the Gilbert Islands and from the New Hebrides.\(^1\)

Access to employment for workers from Kiribati was requested more formally in 1981. However, New Zealand's official position, as evidenced in Department of Labour-prepared briefing papers between 1981 and 1984, remained unmoved:

The New Zealand Government is favourably disposed towards the principle of instituting formal work permit schemes with the respective governments but has informed them that in the present economic climate, it is not feasible to do so. Nevertheless, New Zealand recognises the value of such employment opportunities to the developing nations of the South Pacific, and is prepared to consider specific proposals on an ad hoc basis (for example, DL, 1984, 6).

The following rider was added to the 1981 paper: "particularly if an element of training is involved" (DL, 1981, 1), and in that year approval was given for the entry of up to 20 workers a year from Kiribati.

No formal agreement on the conditions governing the entry of these workers or indeed the workers from Tuvalu, had been concluded a year later. Part of the reason for this in the case of Tuvalu was that an inability to obtain further job offers had left the scheme in a state of abeyance until May 1981, when a handful (four) of workers arrived. Several workers also came from Vanuatu during the early part of this decade, "for employment-orientated training" (DL, 1984, 6). The use of the arrangements by Kiribati and Tuvalu has been minimal, even following the introduction of a scheme agreed to between the governments of New Zealand and these two countries in 1986, for upto 20 workers a year (DL, 1986).

---

\(^1\) These nations were later renamed Kiribati and Vanuatu respectively.
The Fiji Schemes

A consideration of events which occurred after 1982 in the development and then suspension of the Fiji work schemes and in the 'longer-term employment and training schemes', provides an appropriate note on which to conclude this chapter. In the conclusion to Chapter Three it was noted that for various reasons, the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme had not been amalgamated with the Fiji Urban Work Permit Scheme or with the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme. Department of Labour briefing papers prepared in the 1980s noted that discussions had been held with Fiji, particularly in response to pressures imposed by New Zealand employer groups, and that it was likely that the Fiji schemes would be renegotiated with a view towards amalgamating them. However, work on the drafting of a new memorandum of understanding between the New Zealand and Fiji governments was halted in 1983.

In discussing details for the memoranda, the Fiji and New Zealand governments expressed a desire to see the work permit schemes remain in place (DL, F135-10:3). This was despite visitors' permits from Fiji being made valid for 3 months extendable to 12 months from May 1983, and holders being given permission from the same time to seek approval to work once they had arrived in New Zealand. The desires reflected a hope that more jobs would become available in New Zealand when the economic situation improved, and that the schemes should remain an avenue for meeting such a demand if it arose. New Zealand's commitment to the schemes, however, was not advanced without questions being asked in policy making circles. Among some officials, the very need for the schemes was questioned, now that visitors were to be able to seek work officially (although with little chance of success, given the criteria applied in granting work authorities). So too was the need to make reference to what were by now seen as defunct employment and training schemes. Thus, the final draft memorandum which was prepared deleted any reference to this latter concept.

It is revealing to note the reasons for which the largely New Zealand-initiated work on a new memorandum with Fiji was not completed. This
provides perhaps a final indication of the lack of urgency attached by this time to the work permit schemes in New Zealand's policy priorities with respect to the South Pacific generally and Fiji in particular, bearing in mind that the flow of migrants from Fiji was the largest of all the flows administered under the schemes. A Department of Labour officer who worked on the drafts has offered an opinion on why the work stopped. First, some established work opportunities in New Zealand for Fiji labour migrants (such as Wanganui Federated Farmers' scrub cutting operation) were drying up, and second, officers were now increasingly involved in new comprehensive immigration reviews (Wright, 1987, pers. comm.). It is a possibility that some Fiji politicians, although keen for work opportunities in New Zealand to remain for their citizens, were wary of being seen to be involved in negotiating a scheme which might 'exploit' portions of the Fiji workforce. To these considerations of course, must be added the explanation of pressures within New Zealand, regarding the perception that unemployed New Zealanders could have had jobs taken from them under a 'new scheme'.

It is also interesting to note that thinking on the work permit schemes came close to turning full circle by 1985. The Minister of Immigration of that time, in assessing the future of New Zealand's immigration relationship with some South Pacific countries, considered that one element could be an employment and training programme which would probably supersede the work permit schemes. Access to this programme would be provided for several Island nations, the important element being training in a practical sense, in addition to opportunities to earn money. Thus, it would be made clear at the outset that this would not be a migration scheme (DL, F135-9:2). While this programme was introduced, to some extent, for Kiribati and Tuvalu in the 1986 agreement referred to earlier, it was not to be so for Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa. For labour migrants from these countries, the official work permit schemes were clearly orientated towards employment only.
The 1987 Suspension

For Fiji labour migrants, however, opportunities to use even these schemes were withdrawn in October 1987. Notwithstanding questions raised about how such actions might square with wider objectives of the schemes, as part of the sanctions against Fiji in response to the military coups d'etat, the New Zealand Government decided to terminate the work schemes for Fiji (DL, F311:10). Presumably in response to a directive that government departments review the range of dealings they had with Fiji, with a view to Cabinet deciding on the future of those dealings, the Deputy Secretary of Labour wrote to the Minister of Immigration in September (DL, F311:10). The letter expressed the view that a suspension of the Fiji work permit schemes would be detrimental to the objectives of promoting economic development in the South Pacific, and improving living standards in order to provide better opportunities for work there. Further, New Zealand employers would feel the impact of such a suspension where they were unable to obtain local labour, and production losses could well develop in market gardening and land clearance operations.

If in this sense then, the suspension of the schemes can be seen as running counter to New Zealand Government policies of aiding development in the Islands, it also contradicted a view which the Government held when considering actions which would distance itself from the military regime in Fiji. This view was that links which affected the lives of ordinary Fiji citizens should remain:

New Zealanders had developed a wide range of contacts with the people of Fiji over the years, and the Government did not want to detract from the warmth of those relationships.

"Our quarrel is not with the people of Fiji," Mr Marshall [New Zealand's Minister of Foreign Affairs] said.

Similarly, the Government did not intend to place restrictions on commercial dealings with Fiji; to do so would hurt the ordinary people and not those who had seized power (The Press, October 23 1987).

Clearly, however, the observations made in the previous two chapters, when placed in the context of the decision to suspend the schemes, show that it was
some of those same ordinary Fiji citizens who were affected by the link that was the work permit schemes, and who stood to be hurt most by the suspension.

Two other views on the suspension can briefly be advanced here in linking this and the following chapter. First, it could be argued that the ending of the schemes came none too soon for Fiji if, leaving aside the implications of the coups, that country is to strive for effective development. A second and related argument is that the actions of New Zealand governments in this, and in many of the other policy initiatives described to this point, are reflections of what Kubat (1979, xvii) believes is a "process that has become known as 'muddling through'", in which policy responses "may be couched in the rhetoric of long term goals and planning, but are always accompanied by short term regulations". Each of these views is considered in the following chapter.

**Summary**

Several Island nations in the South Pacific attained an important position in New Zealand's immigration and foreign policy considerations only from the late 1960s and early 1970s. Economic considerations were at the forefront of incentives which caused New Zealand to focus on the South Pacific, although more altruistic motives were evident also. This altruism was demonstrated in the setting up of early training schemes, for example. The existence of complexities in the whole field of immigration and the South Pacific soon became evident; some of these were not openly stated.

With various demands being made on policy, two initiatives were forthcoming from New Zealand governments in the mid 1970s. Longer-term employment and training schemes were confidently proposed but never implemented; these were overtaken by the notion of training and employment opportunities being undertaken and created in the Islands themselves.
Despite this, a role in controlling migration flows was clearly envisaged for the work permit schemes negotiated in the mid 1970s. Apart from the overshadowing of policy inherent in development being 'shifted' to the Islands, the belief that short-term migration was under control or near to such a state, and that therefore the schemes did not fulfil such an important role, was a major factor in their decline in perceived value.

The introduction of work permit schemes for smaller South Pacific countries in recent years was not surprisingly (given the earlier content of this chapter and of Chapter Three) *ad hoc* in nature. The concept of longer-term employment resurfaced for Kiribati and Tuvalu, but not for the largest users of the work permit schemes - Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa. The suspension of the Fiji schemes in October 1987 went against New Zealand's policies both before and after the political events in Fiji during that year, and adds to several indications of the schemes decline in policy.
CHAPTER SIX

THEORY, INTENTION, AND REALITY: PERSPECTIVES FROM FIJI AND NEW ZEALAND

"...policy-makers continue to conceive migratory movements in a highly simplified way. Politicians still talk about the migration 'problem' and consequently initiate policy... 'to control it', or 'keep 'em on the farm'" (Lewis, 1982, 190).

In this concluding chapter which summarises the thesis findings, two themes are pursued: an evaluation of the Fiji work permit schemes as agents in Fiji’s development, and reflections on the nature of government policy initiatives which have surrounded the schemes. These are then followed by recommendations for further research. The themes relate directly to the two main rationales for the thesis which were outlined in Chapter One. These were the existence of a conventional wisdom concerning the benefits derived by migrant-source nations from short-term labour migration, and the prevalence and importance of such flows in contemporary international migration and relations.

Aspects of the two themes have been considered at various stages in the thesis, and it is necessary to draw together several threads in the discussion. Thus, conclusions in Chapter Four regarding the degree to which skill and money transfers have operated in the Fiji work schemes have yet to be linked directly to perspectives which Fiji governments have had on temporary labour migration, and to the wider theoretical debates about the costs and benefits of these population movements. Similarly, the need for a broader discussion of policy arises from the considerations in Chapter Five. While the two themes have been shown to be closely related, most clearly in the observation that limited skill transfers under the schemes arise partly because of the dictates of policy governing operation of the schemes, this
relationship warrants further discussion. This chapter synthesises the conclusions from previous chapters, while at the same time adding new perspectives on the process of temporary labour migration between Fiji and New Zealand.

Of clear importance to this chapter, as in Chapter Five, is the adoption of a political context 'pertaining to policy or government'. The concern with policy in these chapters stems from an observation made in Chapter One that use of only equilibrium and historical-structural approaches to international labour migration depoliticises the process whereby capital creates and maintains its labour supply. Supporting this concern are the observations made in the development of this thesis which have shown the significant and extensive influence of policy on aspects of labour migration between South Pacific Island nations and New Zealand. However, before elements of policy can be discussed, it is necessary to investigate the observed and potential contribution of work permit schemes to development in Fiji.

The Work Permit Schemes and Development

It was noted in Chapter Two that much of the literature dealing with development and South Pacific-New Zealand labour migration, has glossed over the South Pacific work permit schemes. Part of the extensive literature which offers critiques of labour flows in general (international and South Pacific) was cited, but an examination of the most relevant work reveals only a few references to work permit migration.

De Bres and Campbell (1975) detailed the provisions of the Tongan scheme which served as a forerunner to other schemes introduced in the mid 1970s. They noted that in terms of its potential for upgrading workers' qualifications, numerous overseas studies had "cast considerable doubt on the theoretical and practical value of such skill acquisition...[Even] The 12-month period [envisaged for the employment and training scheme]...would not enable a Tongan worker to obtain any trade qualification" (de Bres and
Campbell, 1975, 455). A more detailed study by Hegarty (1977) concluded that short-term labour migration (including that under the schemes) to New Zealand had made only a limited contribution to the Tongan economy and to Tongan individuals. Whilst mechanisms which would enable greater skill acquisition were evident in the inter-government Memorandum of Understanding which introduced the Tongan Work Permit Scheme, a greater emphasis needed to be placed on their use.

In a similar development vein, more recent work has focussed on larger, informal work flows between New Zealand and the Island nations of Western Samoa and Tonga in particular, mentioning the schemes only in passing. One reference to the schemes (both for Fiji and Tonga) simply noted that they had not proved very practical. Two reasons being, high unemployment in New Zealand and general employer resistance to increased involvement in workers' welfare at a time of labour oversupply (Macpherson, 1981). Finally, two of the most recent references have considered aspects of the schemes' potential to contribute to development in the Islands. Alley (1984b, 147) noted that:

For those migrants arriving on sponsored work schemes, it is an objective of the New Zealand Government that this experience will improve the training and skills needed to help foster Pacific Islands' manufacturing, processing and servicing industries. As yet, this remains a distant goal.

Connell (1985) suggested that if worker selection was carried out carefully, and by Fiji authorities, it was possible that the schemes could encourage rural development in Fiji. However, information on how the schemes worked led him to conclude that they may have benefited New Zealand more than Fiji. This was particularly so in view of what he saw as low-paid work carried out, and the frequent return of the same migrants whose migration, further, was not organised as a village project.

With the exception of Hegarty's (1977) study, none of the work on temporary labour migration of Pacific Islanders to New Zealand has made more than brief reference to data collected from employers or migrants involved in the work permit schemes. Two reasons for this are that first, data
collection is made difficult by the small numbers using the schemes and the
varied and often quite inaccessible location of their work sites in New Zealand,
and second, the wider theoretical or overview perspective adopted in some of
this work would consider such micro-level research to be inappropriate.
However, the results of fieldwork presented in Chapter Four provide a unique
opportunity to evaluate critically the development potential of the schemes.
This evaluation is made in the following sections by reference to three
different perspectives: those of dependency theory, opinions expressed by Fiji
Government officials, and case study material of Fiji workers in New Zealand.

Migration and Dependency

The theoretical concept of dependency - an historical-structural
perspective - is one which is employed frequently by authors examining the
process and extent of development (or underdevelopment) in the Third
World. One summary of the use of this perspective in the Pacific Island-New
Zealand setting suggests that "The migration of Pacific Island peoples to New
Zealand...needs to be understood in the context of the growing dependence of
Pacific Island countries on New Zealand..." (NZCTD, 1982, 9). The application
of dependency theory to short-term labour migration would suggest that
underdevelopment in South Pacific Island economies and development in
New Zealand's economy are two outcomes of the same basic process, with
New Zealand always the main benefactor (see for example, Shankman, 1976).
Thus, the work permit schemes are suited first and foremost to the
requirements of capitalism in New Zealand, which to a large extent determine
the availability of work opportunities for migrants. Pacific Islanders desiring
to be employed on the schemes are held to be vulnerable to changes in New
Zealand's economic fortunes: "For this reason alone the schemes have little
value and make economic planning in Pacific countries more dependent on
outside forces" (NZCTD, 1982, 101).

The discussion in this thesis of the evolution and organisation of the
South Pacific work permit schemes supports these assertions to an extent. It
will be recalled that the first scheme - the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme -
was introduced in part because of difficulties rural employers in New Zealand had in obtaining local labour. Subsequent schemes for Fiji, Tonga and Western Samoa were introduced as immigration from the Pacific reached levels which were unacceptable in the face of high unemployment in New Zealand. However many employers used these and more informal means of short-term labour recruitment from the Pacific for work that would not be taken by New Zealanders. Further, the extension of permits to 11 months duration came about as a result of pressure exerted by manufacturers. Practices such as nomination and the return of the same workers in successive seasons were often allowed in the face of employers' claims that restrictions on these would lead to them avoiding the schemes.

Provisions introduced at the initiative of New Zealand governments also rest uneasily with policy statements that they were intended to 'aid development of the Islands'. A government paper of 1976 provides one example of this (DL, F135-9:1). Here it was proposed that expenditure be allocated to advance one-way fares for workers to employers. This was agreed to, but such a decision was undoubtedly aided by the observation made in the same paper that more than 1000 unskilled workers were needed from the South Pacific in the following year to cover some labour shortages in New Zealand and the return of overstayers to the Islands. Finally, the inbuilt mechanism of the work permit schemes which allowed migrants into New Zealand only in response to specific job offers was in itself a clear indication of New Zealand's self-interest in the operation of the schemes.

However, these factors should not be overemphasised in a consideration of the schemes in terms of benefits for employers, migrants, and the migrant-source nation. Factors which were arguably of less benefit to New Zealand employers were also inherent in the schemes, and employers were "subject to a formidable catalogue of responsibilities and thus need[ed] to consider their options carefully" before resorting to the use of the schemes (Trlin, 1986, 7). These included provisions such as the requirement that airfares be advanced by employers, so as to counter the exploitation of workers by money lenders in the Islands, and guarantees of employment at award rates
and conditions in New Zealand, which were generally followed. These points
can be reversed and argued to be further incentives offered by employers to
attract migrants to the site of their 'exploitation', as part of an indentured
labour transfer. This has been claimed by authors such as de Bres et al (1974)
for example, but is, on balance, rejected here. This is because while the
schemes in these ways (and particularly with the use of contracts) may have
operated as a form of indentured labour migration, this was not the intention
held for them at their introduction or subsequently. Undoubtedly some
employers have abused their access to scheme workers - the sub-contracting of
workers by some rural contractors in the late 1970s was an obvious example -
but the majority have principally seen the work permit system as an
opportunity to obtain reliable, 'bonded' workers. To this end, many have gone
to some length to maintain their Fiji labour supply - providing free or low cost
accommodation and food, displaying a genuine interest in workers' welfare
(certainly in the case of the work operation examined closely in this study), and
for one group of employers, meeting the cost of airfares.

If the purpose of theory should be to "provide a framework of variables
and processes within which individual researchers can locate their findings"
(Lewis, 1982, 189), then in the context of observations made in this study,
dependency theory - to the extent that it suggests underdevelopment will be
maintained in Island economies through short-term labour migration and
implies New Zealand policies have been "formulated by fairy tale wolves or
Machiavellian plotters" (Walsh, 1984, 104) - is an inappropriate perspective for
the work permit schemes. This is supported by two further considerations.
The first of these is that the decline in the number of arrivals under the
schemes since their introduction does not reflect the much greater rise in
unemployment in New Zealand over the same period. Work opportunities
have generally remained, or expanded in the cases of market gardening and
forestry, in rural areas. Second, while both Department of Labour officials and
employers in New Zealand readily admit that employers in New Zealand
derive considerable benefit from the schemes' operation, benefits to Fiji and to
individual Fiji workers in particular are not insignificant by comparison. This
has most strongly been argued by Fiji government officials, whose views deserve elaboration.

**The Fiji View**

In 1981, the New Zealand High Commission in Suva expressed the view that Fiji governments had always regarded the work permit schemes as a component of rural development (DL, F135-9:2). This was demonstrated in Chapter Five, where it was noted that evaluation of development projects submitted by villages in support of applications for work opportunities in New Zealand, was the major basis for worker selection by the Fiji Labour Department. While this often put Fiji authorities at odds with New Zealand employers who wanted greater control over worker selection, the desire to see development needs met through the use of the schemes was an important element in the Fiji governments' acceptance of temporary contract labour migration. Statements such as that by Fiji's Minister of Labour in 1977, who claimed that the provision of job opportunities was "the greatest form of overseas aid any overseas government can offer" (*Fiji Times*, December 19 1977), have been stressed not only in the 1970s. As recently as 1985, minutes of talks between New Zealand and Fiji government officials noted the need for clear recognition that scheme workers selected at the Fiji end were from depressed areas (DL, F135-10:3). Similarly, the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs has observed that on recent official visits to the South Pacific, such as that by the Minister of Immigration in 1986, the particular value of the work permit schemes to Fiji has been noted. Both villagers and Fiji officials expressed strong desires to maintain the schemes (MFA, F1/5:11).

Similar views were expressed to this author in 1987 by Fiji Government officials in New Zealand. The attractiveness of gaining money and status through experience of life and work in New Zealand under the schemes has meant that there has been no shortage of applicants for work permits in Fiji (Satyanand, 1987, pers. comm.). It was important that workers were able to be seen to be working in New Zealand, not only for the money
that would be returned, but partly for the reason that 'role models' of success were created by this migration.

The same operating principle exists for a scheme recently established for Pacific Island workers resident in New Zealand. The Pacific Island Employment Opportunities Scheme, established by the New Zealand Government in 1985 to increase work opportunities for New Zealand's Pacific Island communities, uses the premise that the creation of role models of successfully trained and employed Islanders is vital for raising expectations and aspirations of Islanders living in New Zealand\(^1\) (Samasoni, 1987, pers. comm.).

The "great" importance of the work permit schemes to development in Fiji's outer islands especially, is stressed by Fiji officials. The importance is felt to lie particularly in the opportunities to earn substantial (certainly by Fiji standards) sums of money by people from islands where there are few sources of cash income, and in the 'educational' opportunities of acquiring punctual and productive work habits. The experience of actually earning money has also been cited as an education, while the acquisition of skills, while certainly not undesirable, has generally been in areas for which little use exists in rural Fiji (Boltagici, 1987, pers. comm.). These latter comments turn the discussion to lessons learned from the case studies of workers in New Zealand.

*The Case Studies Revisited*

The case studies of Fijian and Fiji Indian migrants on work permits in New Zealand in 1987 offer several insights into the development potential of the schemes. One of these concerns the use of money earned by Fiji workers in New Zealand - much of which appears to have been allocated to consumption expenditure in Fiji, either by workers or by families to whom sums had earlier been remitted. In this allocation, there seems to be few benefits to Fiji's long-term economic development, considering the importance attached by migrants

---

\(^1\) This scheme is unrelated to the scheme of the same name introduced in 1974 (Chapter Five).
to building new homes and acquiring furniture and clothes, and also in the development of a dependence on imported foods.

However, in several areas the uses of capital acquired in New Zealand suggest some long-term benefits. In one priority for expenditure - that of education for migrants' children - obvious benefits exist. Leaving aside the question of whether it is desirable for villagers to become incorporated into a materialist, money-centred society (a question which many migrants themselves were in two minds over), the intention by many of those interviewed in one work gang to purchase boats which could be used for fishing, and their village's involvement in the purchase of a cool store, are two additional pointers to this. While the extent to which migrants from this village are representative of others who have used the schemes is unknown, and it is acknowledged that intentions are not necessarily reflected in actions, several comments made by migrants lead to a degree of optimism regarding the path of development aided by the schemes. Thus, villagers had established that a priority reason for the installation of an electric generator was to provide power for a cool store which would allow increased revenue to be generated by the village. Further, while this may be held to be wishful thinking, many perceived a limit existing in the extent to which they were prepared to pursue development: life in the islands was easy and there was no need to complicate it unduly.

It may well be argued that the involvement of workers in repeated migration to New Zealand indicates that the process is captivating productive village labour. This is a valid point, but one which must be balanced by two others. The first of these is the requirement of the schemes that workers should not return to New Zealand every year, which has been generally fulfilled in contemporary work operations. The second is that workers held to an attitude which suggested that if, having experienced relatively high-paying wages in New Zealand, similar work was not available in Fiji, they would return to the village and there live out a subsistence orientated lifestyle, of which they were quite capable.
In the area of habits and skills acquired by migrants as a result of their work experience in New Zealand, it is concluded here that the greatest benefit gained by migrants has been that of work habits as opposed to work skills. Further, as those migrants selected by employers have generally been workers who already possessed work habits or ethics sought after by New Zealand (and presumably Fiji) employers, what has been taking place could be considered to be a skill transfer to New Zealand and a reinforcement of skills already possessed by migrants. Thus, one objective held by the architects of the schemes - an intention that "a spin-off...would be some skills transfer to the Islands" (Bedford et al, 1987, 62-63) - does not appear to have been fulfilled in their operation.

The mechanism by which such skill transfer is generally held to occur, also appears to be an invalid one in the case of the Fiji schemes. Piore (1979, 121) has suggested that the conventional view of this mechanism is that development involves a progression toward larger productive units and larger conglomerations of capital and labour. It is this idea that makes the aspirations of the migrants for self-employment, and their rejection of industrial job opportunities at home in favour of activities in which these ambitions can be realised, apparently so detrimental to the constructive contribution that had been expected of them.

This view of the development process would appear to have been paralleled in the South Pacific case. New Zealand's most recent official review of immigration policy stated of the work permit schemes that "there is often an element of training involved as the workers become familiar with particular equipment or processes" (Burke, 1986, 32). However, the intention that some pool of industrial skills would be built up in Fiji is belied by the fact that work in which Fiji labour migrants have been employed in New Zealand is generally not conducive to the operation of this mechanism.

The work undertaken by the Fiji migrants in New Zealand would appear, from an initial appraisal, to be much better suited to the acquisition of skills necessary for rural development in Fiji, a need which was briefly introduced in Chapter One. In the cases of rural work operations examined here however, - specifically forestry and market gardening - it has been
suggested that little potential exists in Fiji for the use of any work skills acquired in New Zealand. It is a disturbing aspect of the policy surrounding the schemes that no apparent attempt has been made to incorporate an effective skill training element into them. Senior Department of Labour officials have suggested that a major reason for this is that employers have adopted a pessimistic outlook on such a possibility, particularly given that they have to recruit new intakes of scheme workers each year. However, this latter scenario is not the pattern that has been demonstrated of the schemes here, and reflects the simplification and degree of tunnel vision applied to policy in regard to this migration. Elements of these policies are reflected on below.

The Nature of Policy and the Work Permit Schemes

The sensitivity which was shown in Chapter Five to have surrounded the issue of labour migration between South Pacific Island nations and New Zealand in the mid 1970s in particular, has remained in the 1980s. A 1984 paper on migration, prepared by the Department of Labour (DL, 1984), referred to an "undercurrent of unhappiness about aspects of New Zealand immigration" which was felt by Island leaders, and which could "break through at any time". The problem, as seen by Island leaders, was that New Zealand did not carry through into immigration the expression of close friendship and goodwill which is the dominant feature of its public posture towards the South Pacific region. They observe that New Zealand has special policies and procedures for South Pacific countries which are in many respects more restrictive than those applicable to more remote countries.

The other side of this problem, seen by New Zealand, was that there was a continuing pressure for illegal migration from the Islands, which left New Zealand "more or less obliged to continue with the imposition of controls and restrictions on the entry of those categories of visitors who, on past experience, have shown a high risk of overstaying or illegally entering the labour market". In these comments are expressed many of the features of policy which have
influenced and been influenced by short-term labour migration between Island nations and New Zealand, and which are outlined below in the context of the work permit schemes.

"Disturbingly Ad Hoc"

De Bres et al's (1974) study of the way in which the New Zealand economy used South Pacific labour migration observed a "disturbingly ad hoc reaction of governments [particularly New Zealand's]...to political-economic developments", and was prepared "in the spirit that policy should be formulated in anticipation of rather than response to developments in the region" (de Bres et al, 1974, 3). A similar summary could be written of this work some 14 years later, reflecting the fact that ad hoc and indeed, contradictory policy formulation, has remained a feature of New Zealand immigration policy in the South Pacific in the years since the mid 1970s.

Nowhere has this been more clearly demonstrated than in the introduction of the work permit schemes, followed soon after by their replacement in policy emphasis by the Pacific Islands Industrial Development Scheme. While the intentions of the latter scheme, which included that of countering to some extent the desire among Pacific Islanders for short-term work opportunities in New Zealand, were readily acknowledged in New Zealand government papers, the same was not admitted to Island governments. Rather, the impression was given (Auckland Star, July 14 1976) and conveyed (Douglas, 1977) that work permit schemes would remain a continuing and indeed the major element of New Zealand's labour and immigration policy in the South Pacific and that "future policy seeks only to rationalise temporary entry and solve the problems that have occurred" (Douglas, 1977, 149).

Policy since that time has altered to allow short-term visitor arrivals to apply for authority to work in New Zealand. Although most arrivals in New Zealand since 1978 have had this opportunity, such a provision was not granted to Island migrants until 1983. In two other recent developments also,
there exists evidence of the pursuit of expedient policies which run counter to expressed long-term policy intentions.

The first and most recent of these was the decision to suspend the Fiji schemes - it was noted earlier in the study that this ran counter to policies stated before and after the military coups d’etat in Fiji. The second development was the introduction of visa waiver agreements for visitors from Fiji, Tonga, Western Samoa, and other South Pacific nations in December 1986, and the subsequent removal of these for Fiji, Tonga, and Western Samoa in February 1987 following large influxes of visitors from those countries. It was expected that with the introduction of these arrangements, the work permit schemes for South Pacific nations would lapse. This was not to be by design, but by virtue of the fact that three month visitors would be able to apply for work authority on arrival in New Zealand, and subsequently possibly receive extensions until up to 12 months (MFA, F1/5:11). In this thinking, however, there would appear to have been a lack of recognition that Fiji workers in particular who stood to benefit from the work permit schemes, were unlikely to have been able to afford to visit New Zealand on the chance of obtaining a work offer and then a work authority.

In the light of considering these aspects of policy, it is appropriate to note the critical assessment of Trlin (1986, 18), who has claimed that:

While New Zealand's economic interests are protected...by gearing temporary work permits for Fijians, Tongans and Samoans to current employment opportunities, there are grounds for arguing that such provisions are not consistent with New Zealand's commitment to social and economic development in the South Pacific.

A Disservice to External Policy?

This argument can be widened further in the South Pacific context to develop an observation made of New Zealand's immigration and foreign policies by Roy in 1966. Thus, more than 20 years ago, Roy (1966, 39) asked in relation to New Zealand's exclusion of some Asian migrants, "whether or to what extent New Zealand's restrictive immigration policy does a disservice to her external relations, and diminishes the effectiveness of her foreign policy".
His conclusion was that it was only realistic that the affected nations should draw from the patent inconsistency in New Zealand's policies, the impression that New Zealand was at best an ambivalent ally whose interests did not merit serious consideration. At worst, the policies could be regarded as cancelling each other out. While this is an historical lesson which deserves to be borne in mind by contemporary policy-makers in the South Pacific, the more genuine intentions of New Zealand’s actions in the South Pacific would appear to offer some leeway in its policies there.

The Island nation for which this would least appear to be the case is Fiji, which has contributed by far the smallest proportion of Pacific Island overstayers in New Zealand since the 1960s. In the eyes of the New Zealand Government, however, the inconsistency in policy towards Fiji, which is evident in the termination of the work permit schemes, would now seem to serve a useful short-term purpose. Not only did the cancellation of the Fiji work permit schemes meet the requirement of some New Zealand politicians unhappy at the prospect of potential employment being withdrawn from unemployed New Zealanders, but it served as a notice of New Zealand's displeasure with political events in Fiji. It is in this 'use' of the schemes that New Zealand politicians and policy-makers have walked a tightrope, for with the easing of tension between the two nations in early 1988, it may be desirable to reintroduce the work permit schemes for Fiji. It is unlikely this would be achieved without some controversy in New Zealand.

Recommendations for Further Research

The development of the two major themes of this thesis has addressed two inadequacies of migration research. The first is that a consideration of benefits gained by individual migrants and migrant-source nations is virtually absent from studies which approach migration phenomena at the level of economic structure. While such perspectives are useful and valid in exploring the contribution of capitalist dynamics to aspects of migrant flows, and have
been touched on here, they fall short by failing to ask questions of migrants and policy makers in migrants' home nations, pertaining to the operation of these movements. It was in the light of this inadequacy that one of the original intentions of this thesis was to gain an understanding of the consequences of a specific labour migration, through fieldwork in a developing nation. To the extent that this was subsequently modified to only limited fieldwork, talking with migrants already or still in New Zealand, a recommendation of this thesis is that there is a need for detailed analysis of the situation of short-term migrants who have returned to their Pacific Island nations. A follow up of Fiji work permit scheme migrants in their home settings would be an example.

More successfully carried out in this thesis has been an examination of the pervading influence of policy - the 'cutting edge' of migration determinants - on short-term regulated labour migration. However, the political element in labour flows remains poorly situated in both equilibrium and historical-structural approaches to migration, and therefore warrants considerably more attention in both applied and theoretical research. There are many opportunities for this in the South Pacific, where for example both altruism and exploitation can be seen in existing policies.
REFERENCES

Primary Sources

Department of Labour (DL)

Files

F 75  22/1/75 : Part 1. (Wanganui District Office)
F 135-2 22/1/135-2 : Parts 1, 2.
F 135-4 22/1/135-4.
F 135-5 22/1/135-5.
F 135-6 22/1/135-6.
F 135-8 22/1/135-8.
F 135-9 22/1/135-9 : Parts 1, 2.
F 135-10 22/1/135-10 : Parts 1, 3.
F 264  7/8/264 : Parts 1, 2.
F 311  22/1/311 : Parts 1, 2, 3, 10.
F 403-4 22/1/403-4.
F 403-7 22/1/403-7 : Part 1.

Other (from above files)


(1976) Immigration - South Pacific work permit schemes. Brief for the Minister of Immigration's visit to the South Pacific in late 1976.

(1978a) Entry to New Zealand from the South Pacific: work permit scheme.


Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)


Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA)

Files

F 1/5 PM 301/1/5: Parts 1, 2, 3, 5.
F 15/3 304/15/3.
F 22/1 32/3/22/1.
F 31/1 PM 32/3/31/1: Part 2.

Other (from above files)


(1978) Mobility of labour among the South Pacific countries. New Zealand country paper for the Fifth South Pacific Labour Ministers' Conference.
Personal Communication

Names and positions held in 1987 or 1988 at the time of personal communication:

Barlow, G.F. Secretary, Wanganui Provincial District, Federated Farmers.

Bolatagici, P. Charge-d'affaires, Fiji High Commission, Wellington.

Donaldson, F. Past Secretary, Wanganui Provincial District, Federated Farmers.

Gavan, B. Second Secretary (Immigration), New Zealand High Commission, Suva.

Lock, A. Senior Inspector of Factories, Wanganui District, Department of Labour.


Mitchell, P. Personnel Officer, Waitaki International Limited.

Mulcahy, S. Executive Officer - Production, New Zealand Meat Industries' Association.


Postlethwaite, D. Assistant Deputy Superintendent, Christchurch District, Department of Labour.

Riches, M.C. Supervising Immigration Officer, Immigration Division, Department of Labour.


Satyanand, H.E. Fiji High Commissioner, Wellington.

Scott, D. Scrub cutting and Forestry Contractor.

Scrivener, M. Assistant Director, Immigration Division, Department of Labour.

Symon, A.E. District Superintendent, Wanganui District, Department of Labour.

Warrington, N. Executive Officer - Industry, New Zealand Meat Industries' Association.
Wright, F. Supervising Immigration Officer, Immigration Division, Department of Labour.

Secondary Sources

Books and Journal Articles


Department of Statistics (various years) Population and Migration, Part B. Department of Statistics, Wellington.

Department of Statistics (various years) Prices, Wages and Labour. Department of Statistics, Wellington.


**Newspapers**

*Auckland Star* July 14 1976.


*Fiji Sun* February 4 and February 7 1975.

*Fiji Times* May 9 1974.


*The Dominion* April 2 1974, December 1 1976.


*Truth* April 4 1967.
Appendix I: Arrival Statistics.

Figures of general (that is, non-work permit scheme) migrant flows presented in the thesis, are derived from responses given by international arrivals in New Zealand to a set of questions. Of questions seeking to identify migrants' birthplace, nationality, or country of last permanent residence, in the Island setting at least, the first of these provides the most useful information. In the first instance, this is because it is answered by the largest number of arrivals. Problems with the accuracy of this data, and also with the use of census data to investigate migration patterns, have been considered by Bedford and Gibson (1986).

Thus, the use of birthplace and not ethnicity of census respondents in Table 2.1, avoids inconsistencies in census data which use ethnic classifications. Whilst it is acknowledged that this will not record the growing number of 'Islanders' born in New Zealand, these cannot be considered as migrants in the sense of this study. Aggregation of arrival data means that the use here of birthplace data for the years since 1973, includes Island-born, New Zealand resident migrants returning to New Zealand after a short-term absence. For these migrants, arrival cards require that the purpose of their absence from New Zealand be recorded, rather than their reason for returning. However, in the case of work holiday visits, as in Figure 2.1, it is unlikely that having established residency in New Zealand, attendant with its benefits, many Islanders will leave New Zealand for overseas work (though flows to Australia may be one exception). For tourist flows (Figure 2.4b), this is not so much the case, as many Islanders in New Zealand return to their Island birthplace for family gatherings, for example. Countering this is the fact that it is a general impression of flows, using the same statistical basis, that is being sought.
TONGA, FIJI AND WESTERN SAMOA WORK PERMIT SCHEME

EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

A. OFFER

1. Employer's Offer

Employer to fill in.

Employer to fill in but note minimum period allowed is four months.

Employer to fill in.

The employer hereby offers one position of employment as at

The employment shall be for a continuous period of months but, subject to clause 4 of the Schedule of Terms, it may be extended for a further period to allow a total stay of not more than eleven months. The performance of the employment shall commence not later than five days after the date of the worker's arrival at the place of employment.

2. Conditions

The terms and conditions of employment are those contained in this Offer, and also those set out in the Schedule of Terms which shall be read with and form part of this Offer.

3. Definitions

"Worker" in this Offer and in the Schedule of Terms means the worker who accepts this Offer, and in the Schedule of Terms "employer" has the same meaning as in this Offer.

4. Workers Eligible

This Offer is made to a worker who has been nominated by the employer;
(a) to any worker;
(b) to any male worker;
(c) to any female worker;
who is capable of performing the work and who is of good health.
5. **Wages**

The worker’s remuneration and other conditions of employment shall be not less favourable than those applying to equivalent New Zealand workers in the same locality and, in any case, shall be not less favourable than those contained in the relevant award or collective agreement as the case may be. The remuneration at present being paid to equivalent New Zealand workers is \((NZ \$)\) per week for a \((h)\) hour week.

6. **Accommodation**

The employer shall arrange living accommodation approved by the Department of Labour for the worker for the duration of this Agreement. The weekly cost to each worker for the accommodation shall be \((NZ \$)\), which shall include the full cost of \((\text{state whether full board and lodgings, bed and breakfast, accommodation only etc.})\).

7. **Deductions**

The employer, with the consent of the worker, shall make equal deductions from wages payable to the worker at a rate per week to reimburse the employer, over a period not exceeding twenty weeks, the sum of \((NZ \$)\), subject to changes in transport charges, being monies paid or to be paid by him for the cost of fares for the worker’s transport from his point of embarkation from his home country to his place of work in New Zealand, and return.

8. **Mode of Acceptance**

Acceptance of this Offer, by proper completion of Section C of this agreement, by any worker who satisfies the requirement of clause 4 of this Offer at the time of acceptance, thereby completes an agreement with the employer, as and from the time of acceptance, upon and subject to the terms and conditions of this Offer and the Schedule of Terms.

**SIGNED by**

\(\text{Name of employer}\)

\(\text{(Town or city)}\)

\(\text{this }\) \(\text{day of }\) \(\text{19}\)
B. SCHEDULE OF TERMS

1. The Employer shall arrange transport for the Worker from his point of embarkation from his home country to his place of work in New Zealand to enable the Worker to take up his employment and the Employer shall also arrange transport for the Worker from that place in New Zealand to his home country at the expiry of this Agreement. The Employer shall pay for the transport and shall be entitled to be reimbursed by the Worker in the manner provided in Section A of this Agreement. Nothing in this Agreement shall render the Worker liable to pay to the Employer any interest on monies spent by the Employer on transport for the Worker.

2. The Employer or his representative shall meet the Worker at the airport at the point of disembarkation in New Zealand and shall arrange transport for the Worker from that airport to the locality in which he is to work.

3. (a) The Employer shall, at his expense, take out a policy of insurance to provide for the Worker the following benefits:
   (i) In the case of incapacity a daily allowance, payable from the eighth day of incapacity, at a rate to yield, on a weekly basis, not less than the Social Security sickness benefit for a single person.
   (ii) Reimbursement of medical expenses up to a limit of $1,000 for:
       Treatment by a registered medical practitioner;
       Hospitalisation;
       Drugs and medicines prescribed;
       Nursing.

   If payments under paragraph 3(a) (ii) above are received by the Employer he may make deductions, where applicable, under clause 7 of Section A of this Agreement. Nothing in this subclause shall apply in respect of personal injury by accident within the terms of the Accident Compensation Act, 1972.

   (b) The employer shall, at his expense, take out a policy of insurance to provide a lump sum payment of $500 to the worker’s next of kin in the event of the worker’s death.

   (c) If the Worker shall receive any earnings related compensation from the Accident Compensation Commission in respect of any period during which the Employer would have been entitled to make reimbursement deduction as provided in this Agreement, the Worker shall pay to the Employer the sums which would have been deducted.

4. If the Minister of Immigration on the application of the Worker shall extend the Worker’s temporary entry permit by any period AND the Employer supported the application for extension, then this Agreement shall be deemed to be extended by such period.

5. The Worker shall pay for and be expected to occupy for the duration of this Agreement the accommodation approved by the Department of Labour. The Worker shall remain in the employment for the duration of this Agreement.

6. If the Worker shall before completion of this Agreement leave the employment or the approved accommodation, the Employer shall, as soon as he learns of either event, give notification in writing of the event, to the nearest District Office of the Department of Labour.

7. If for any reason the Worker shall terminate the employment before its completion then:
(a) The Employer’s obligation to pay the cost of transport from the Worker’s place of work in New Zealand to his home country shall continue; and

(b) The worker shall be liable to pay forthwith to the Employer the balance then owing to him for the transport agreed to be provided by the Employer in this Agreement.

8. The worker shall pay to the employer the full amount of all air fares payable by the employer under clause 1 of this Section.

9. The Employer or the Worker may consult the local office of the Department of Labour on any matter arising out of this Agreement which calls for attention and for which no other procedure is prescribed or available.

10. The Employer shall give to the Worker all reasonable assistance in arranging the remission of his savings to his home country and the securing of any refund of New Zealand income tax to which he may be entitled.

11. The authoritative text of this Agreement shall be the text in the English language which shall prevail if there is any discrepancy between it and the text in the language of the workers home country.

12. This Agreement shall be governed by the law of New Zealand which shall be deemed to be the proper law of the contract.

C. ACCEPTANCE

Employer to fill
in.

TO: (Full name of employer)

Worker to fill
in full name.

Worker to fill
in full address.

Worker to fill
(Worker’s full address)

(Worker’s present occupation) hereby accept the above Offer.

SIGNED by (Full name of worker)

at (Locality where acceptance is signed)

this day of 19

Signature of Worker:
D. CONSENT TO DEDUCTION FROM WAGES

(19) Employer to fill in.

TO: (Full name of employer)

(17) Worker to fill in.

I, (Full name of worker), a worker employed by you in accordance with the foregoing Agreement, hereby give my consent for you to deduct from my wages the sum of (NZ $) per week until a total amount of (NZ $) has been deducted. These deductions are to be a reimbursement to you for the cost of my transport from my point of embarkation from my home country to my place of work in New Zealand and return, already paid or to be paid by you. This consent is given in terms of Section 7(1) of the Wages Protection Act, 1964 (New Zealand).

SIGNED by (Full name of worker)

at (Locality)

this (day) day of , 19

Signature of Worker:

E. CERTIFICATE OF WITNESS

I, (Full name of witness)
of (Witness’s full address)

(Witness’s occupation) hereby certify that I explained the foregoing Employment Agreement, including the Schedule of Terms, and the Consent to Deduction From Wages, to (Full name of worker) before he signed the Acceptance, and he appeared to understand fully the nature and content of the Agreement and the Consent. He then signed the Acceptance and the Consent in my presence in that order.

Signature of Witness:

Date:
Appendix III. Questionnaire and covering letter.

10 December 1987

Dear

I am a post-graduate student at the University of Canterbury currently completing a Master of Science thesis on labour migration between Fiji and New Zealand. I began this work in January of this year and I am due to submit my thesis in February of next year.

This letter comes about because I understand that you may be employing one or more workers from Fiji (or that you may have done in recent seasons), under the official work permit schemes. I would appreciate your assistance in my work, by asking you to complete the attached questions and to return them to me in the enclosed post-paid envelope.

Your name and the details you may enclose about any individual workers will remain confidential and will not appear in the study. In asking these questions of you and of other growers, I am trying to build up a picture of the work undertaken by Fijians and Fiji-Indians in the Pukekohe area. I have already met Mr. O'Donnell and Mr. Hunter earlier in the year, and also the Fiji High Commissioner and Department of Labour officials, in order to gain a general knowledge of the South Pacific Work Permit Scheme and the Fiji Rural Work Permit Scheme. Your answers will help me to understand more clearly some specific details of how these schemes work.

I realise that the question of these workers being in New Zealand is somewhat controversial at the moment, but please rest assured that when I began this work, I had no idea of the events which were to happen in Fiji! Also, as it may be necessary for you to ask some details of your employees, I should add that this thesis is in no way being completed for the Department of Labour’s benefit. Furthermore, I have no pre-conceived notions of whether this migration should be allowed to continue, although it has become apparent to me that there are many benefits in the schemes.

Lastly, I appreciate that you will probably be busy at this time of year. However, it would be very helpful for my writing schedule, if you could take the necessary time to complete the attached questions and return them to me before Christmas.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Wayne Levick
PLEASE MAKE YOUR ANSWERS AS DETAILED AS POSSIBLE

Please Note: I would appreciate your help in completing these questions, even if you are not currently employing Fijian labour but have done so in the past.

YOUR ANSWERS ARE ANONYMOUS AND WILL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL.

1. Firstly, what sort of market gardening, horticulture etc, are you involved in (list main crops etc)

2. Please indicate the number of Fijian or Fiji-Indian workers that you currently employ __________ Fijians __________ Fiji-Indians

   Where in Fiji do they come from (give city, area etc, for each worker)
   1. ____________________________  2. ____________________________
   3. ____________________________  4. ____________________________

   How many months will you be employing these workers for __________

   Have you employed similar workers in other years. If so, how many, and in which years ___________________________________________________________________

   How many other (non-Fijian) workers do you employ, at other times in the year ___________________________________________________________________

3. What sort of tasks do your Fijian or Fiji-Indian employees do here (please be specific, e.g. planting, weeding, harvesting, driving etc)

   ____________________________

   Is this different from the work which other employees or contractors do. If so, how ____________________________

   What sorts of skills or abilities do the workers from Fiji have that makes them suitable for their work ____________________________

   Does this work require you to train the Fiji workers. Also, what sort of training is necessary and for how long ____________________________

Please turn page
Please Note: Some of the answers to questions 4 and 5 will be on behalf of the workers themselves. Please answer them if you are able to. The answers will help me to understand their situation further.

4. What were each of your employees doing in Fiji before they came to New Zealand ____________________________

Will they return to the same work after leaving New Zealand. If not, what will they do __________________________

Do you think that any skills they have learnt here will help them back in Fiji. If so, how __________________________

5. What do the Fiji workers you employ, earn while here (say, a gross figure for an average week) __________________________

Do you send money back to Fiji on behalf of your workers, and if so, about what proportion is this of their earnings __________________________

6. Lastly, have you had difficulty trying to get locals to do the work that Fijians or Fiji-Indians do. If yes, please explain why __________________________

Do you think that the Fiji workers benefit from coming to New Zealand, and if so, how __________________________

Have you had any problems with these workers. If so, what __________________________

How do you, or how have you, benefitted from the schemes __________________________

Please make any additional comments that you may wish to on the schemes, e.g. improvements, their value etc __________________________

Please give your name and phone number, if you are prepared to talk to me further on these questions. __________________________

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR HELP WITH MY WORK