PACIFIC PEOPLE IN PARLIAMENT:

A CASE STUDY OF MINORITY

REPRESENTATION IN

NEW ZEALAND

HELENA COOK

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Abstract

Analysing the nature of political representation raises questions about the roles of political representatives: who it is they represent and what they do once in Parliament. However, the roles of MPs can be affected by several factors: institutions; political rules; identity; and the norms, values and expectations of the groups they advocate for. This thesis assumes that all of these factors play an important part in shaping the roles of political representatives and are particularly significant in understanding minority political representation.

This case study of political representation of the Pacific Island migrant community in New Zealand analyses the roles and perceptions of minority MPs through their own words. Despite a wealth of literature on the wider subject of political representation, very little takes into account the perspective of the MPs themselves, and this thesis uses in-depth interview data to place the narrative of Pacific political representation in New Zealand into a wider context of the roles of minority MPs in advanced liberal democracies. Arguments for the increased political representation of minority groups are often based on the assumption that achieving a 'politics of presence' is essential for democracies, because minority groups need people from within the group to speak on their behalf. Thus only people with a shared history or shared experiences can adequately represent the needs of a minority group. This thesis shows that Pacific political representation is viewed by the MPs as important, because it reflects the multicultural nature of New Zealand society, allows for issues that affect Pacific people to be addressed in a political forum and enables Pacific MPs to bring a more collective approach to New Zealand's Westminster Parliamentary democracy.

Political institutions and electoral reform have all affected Pacific representation in New Zealand, demonstrating that these factors should not be overlooked when considering the roles of minority MPs. New Zealand's experience of electoral reform has seen an increase of minority political representation, and the Maori seats in New Zealand's House of Representatives demonstrate how political representation for indigenous minorities can be implemented. This thesis is an exploratory work into the political journeys of New Zealand's Pacific MPs; an area that has previously been overlooked or neglected, but one that is vital to increase understanding of the roles of minority political representatives.

Acknowledgements

A thesis is never just the work of an individual…..

First and foremost, I must give my thanks and appreciation to my supervisor, Professor Elizabeth McLeay, who has supported and encouraged me throughout this process. She has been a constant source of useful tips and information, loaned me numerous articles and books, and always been willing to chat to a stressed thesis student. Thank you for everything; I was truly lucky to have you as my supervisor.

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And last, but by no means least: to the Pacific people of New Zealand. I hope that this work is only the beginning of a wealth of literature concerning Pacific people and politics in New Zealand. I hope that the next person who looks at Pacific Island political representation in New Zealand has many more Pacific Island MPs to interview. I hope new generations of leaders come forward to protect and speak for the Pacific voice in New Zealand.
When we believe that we can lead, we will.

Ua o gatasi le futia ma le umele. We must be of one mind in the undertaking.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

Political representation is a widely studied area and one which is both complex and controversial. Opinions differ as to the nature of the roles of MPs: who they ought to represent and what they ought to do when elected. This thesis explores the meaning of political representation for ethnic minority groups, using the Pacific Island (PI) migrant community of New Zealand as a case study. It provides a resource with which to consider the political participation of ethnic minority groups both in New Zealand and in a wider international context. It examines the identities and roles of Pacific Members of Parliament through their own words, contributing a new perspective to the already vast amount of literature on political representation. It explores the wider implications of minority representation and the roles of MPs within democracies by analysing the political journeys and case studies of the Pacific MPs of New Zealand.

When considering minority representation, it is necessary to ask, firstly whether it is important for democracies to have a legislature that is representative of all groups in society, and secondly, if this outcome is important, how do these groups gain access to the political arena? Within the literature on minority representation, opinions are divided over whether giving particular attention to the political representation of minority groups is necessary and important for democracies, or whether it is giving minority groups 'special' rights and privileges. This thesis does not attempt to solve this dilemma once and for all, but it argues that if society's goal is a more consensual democracy, one that truly represents 'the people', greater attention is needed to be paid to minority representation. Minority representation matters not just for the nature of democracy but also for minority MPs themselves.

This is an exploratory work that uses these questions surrounding minority representation as a framework to study the roles of Pacific MPs in New Zealand. Through examining both the theoretical, and the practical - the opportunity structures and institutions that enable minority groups in New Zealand to achieve a political voice, an analysis can be made of the place of minority groups in New Zealand politics. Further, this thesis examines the roles of MPs once they have entered Parliament: what they do as representatives of a minority group and the impact of identity, loyalties, and the norms and values of their constituents. While the literature on the perceived roles of representatives is exhaustive and diverse, very few of these accounts involve primary material from the representatives themselves. This work provides a narrative of the roles of Pacific political representatives in New Zealand, as conceived by those representatives. It moves beyond the theory of what minority MPs do, to the reality of their roles and responsibilities; from their views on the institutions that help shape these day to day tasks, to their conceptions of personal role-defining identities.

The Pacific community in New Zealand is a distinct and important migrant group, and therefore its political journey is a fundamental part of New Zealand's wider political history. New Zealand and the Pacific Islands have had a long history of close contact and their histories are largely intertwined. A large percentage of Pacific Islanders make their home in New Zealand, assisted by the various treaties and agreements signed between the countries. In the case of the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau, they retain New Zealand citizenship, with the first two being self governing states in free association with New Zealand, and the latter administered by New Zealand. Western Samoa has a Treaty of Friendship with New Zealand, which allows for close consultation and aid between the two countries. In 2006, the seven largest Pacific ethnic groups in New Zealand were Samoans, Cook Island Māori, Tongans, Niueans, Fijians, Tokelauans and Tuvaluans (See Table 1). At the 2006 census, there were

265, 974 Pacific people in New Zealand, 6.9 per cent of the total New Zealand population.[1] In comparison, in 2001 there were 231,801 Pacific peoples, comprising 6.5 per cent of the total population.[2] New Zealand's Pacific population is projected to reach 420,000 by 2021, driven by high fertility rates and a young population. This will result in a predicted increase of the total Pacific population in New Zealand from 7 per cent to 9 per cent. Statistics New Zealand notes that "the faster growth of the Māori, Pacific and Asian populations will increase the ethnic diversity of most areas of New Zealand."[3]

Table 1: Seven Largest Ethnic Groups of Pacific Peoples in New Zealand [4]

Ethnic Group	2001 Count	2006 count	% Change 2001 - 2006
Samoan	115,017	131,103	14.0
Cook Islands Māori	52,569	58,008	10.3
Tongan	40,719	50,481	24.0
Niuean	20,148	22,476	11.6
Fijian	7,041	9,864	40.1
Tokelauan	6,204	6,819	9.9
Tuvaluan	1,965	2,628	33.7

Source: The 2001 – 2006 New Zealand Censuses

The Pacific community in New Zealand is a migrant community in a country which is rapidly diversifying and becoming multi-cultural. Despite this, there has been virtually no academic attention paid to the political activities of Pacific Islanders in New Zealand. Literature on Pacific Islanders frequently portrays negative statistics in health, education or crime. To the best of this author's knowledge, there are currently no published works on

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[1] Statistics New Zealand (2007) *QuickStats about Culture and Identity: Pacific Peoples,* http://www.stats.govt.nz/census/2006-census-data/quickstats-about-culture-identity/quickstats-about-culture-and-identity.htm?page=para016Master, accessed 20 July 2007.

[2] Statistics New Zealand (2008) *Census Snapshot: Pacific Peoples*, http://www.stats.govt.nz/products-and-services/Articles/census-snpsht-pac-ppls-Jun02.htm, accessed 18 April 2008.

[3] Statistics New Zealand (2008) *Ethnic population projections: issues and trends*, http://www.stats.govt.nz/products and-services/Articles/pop-proj-Jun04.htm, accessed 13 March 2008.

[4] All data collected from Statistics New Zealand (2007) *Pacific Profiles 2006*, http://www.stats.govt.nz/analytical-reports/Pacific-profiles-2006/default.htm accessed 9 December 2007

Pacific people and political involvement in New Zealand.[5] This is and ought to be a concern not only because the Pacific community in New Zealand is an integral part of the country's identity, but because it means that among the scarce information available about the experiences of Pacific people in New Zealand, very little is actually written by Pacific people themselves. This means that "Pacific Islanders are rarely given the opportunity to frame their own experiences, actions or relationships or to speak directly through the media to the Palagi majority."[6] This thesis provides an opportunity for Pacific political elites to frame their experiences through their own words in a way that will be accessible for all people, regardless of culture or ethnicity. It is hoped that through this narrative process, there may be a greater understanding of what the Pacific MPs contribute to New Zealand's wider political environment.

Methodology

This thesis uses an ethnographic approach to analyse the roles of Pacific MPs in the New Zealand Parliament.

> The emphasis on ethnography is upon explanatory understanding rather than upon trying to make predictions about what might occur. It does not make prior assumptions about what is important or what to expect. The influence of the cultural context is central, and the research approach allows for the focus of the research question to change during the course of data collection. Therefore, it is an inductive, not a deductive, research approach.[7]

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[5] See Kim Summersby's annotated bibliography "Māori and Pacific peoples' electoral participation in NZ", provided by the New Zealand Electoral Commission, http://www.elections.org.nz/maori-Pacific-biblio.html accessed 17 June 2007, and Loto R., D. Hodgetts, K. Chamberlain, L. Nikora, R. Karapu and A. Barnett (2006) "Pasifika in the News: The Portrayal of Pacific Peoples in the New Zealand Press" *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology* 16 p.102.

[6] Loto, Hodgetts, Chamberlain, Nikora, Karapu and Barnett (2006). Palagi means a white, or Caucasian person.

[7] L. Harrison (2001) *Political Research: An Introduction,* New York: Routledge, p.78.

Because of the lack of available literature on Pacific people and politics in New Zealand, it was essential to conduct interviews with political elites: the small group of Pacific Island MPs and Party Presidents who had access to this information. There are six past and present Pacific MPs in New Zealand's Parliament: Taito Phillip Field, Vui Mark Gosche, Anae Arthur Anae, Luamanuvao Winnie Laban, Charles Chauvel and Su'a William Sio. Of these, I interviewed all except Taito Phillip Field.[8] I also interviewed Judy Kirk, Party President of the National Party in the same type of in-depth interview, because there is very little data available for Pacific Island political involvement with the National Party. I was unable to obtain an interview with the Labour Party President, Mike Williams, but as four of the six respondents were from within the Labour Party, I felt I had an adequate sample from which to discuss the Labour Party and Pacific people. While only a small sample of Parliament as a whole, the interviews included all of the past and present Pacific Island MPs, except for one, meaning that I interviewed nearly the entire universe of possible respondents.

Elite interviews are concerned with the study of decision-makers and as such, the balance of knowledge and expertise is usually in favour of the respondent.[9] In this case, the Pacific MPs possessed knowledge from their own experiences that I, as the interviewer, could know nothing about. It was essential therefore, to conduct in-depth interviews where the respondents could share with me their stories and knowledge of the subject matter. This allowed me the opportunity to compare the theoretical knowledge of how political representatives carry out their roles with how the MPs themselves perceive what they do. The interviews were approximately one hour long, and semi-structured. This entailed compiling a list of key questions or areas that I wanted to cover, which were then prioritised, as the length of responses and the length of interviews varied between respondents. This also meant that

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[8] In the case of Taito Phillip Field, I refrained from requesting to interview him as he was under police investigation at the time. Data concerning Field were collected from prior public interviews and speeches and further information on his experiences as the first Pacific MP is contained in his bibliography in Appendix 1.
[9] P. Burnham, K. Gilland, W. Grant and Z. Layton-Henry (2004) *Research Methods in Politics*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 205.

the interview remained fairly flexible, so I could develop or elaborate on any new areas of inquiry that emerged during the course of the discussion. The discussions usually covered political involvement and party history, perceptions of political institutions, role and identity, and Pacific representation issues. I supplemented the interview data with additional data gathered from publicly accessible speeches, interviews, media releases and maiden speeches in Parliament.

Although qualitative research cannot be analysed in the same way as a data set developed from quantitative research, theorists have argued that:

> If one is interested in actor's perceptions of the world in which they live, the way in which they construct their world, and the shard assumptions which shape it, there is much to be said for the model of the elite interview as an extended conversation.[10]

This thesis seeks to understand the meaning of Pacific Island representation from the perspective of MPs; to contribute something further and something new to the theories of minority representation and the roles of representatives. This could only be achieved through the MPs themselves sharing their own experiences, beliefs and attitudes about Pacific representation in New Zealand.

Thesis Outline

Minority groups often face barriers when attempting to have their concerns heard in a political forum. These barriers may manifest themselves in a variety of ways, and can include personal factors such as lack of access to funds, education, or time to be politically involved, or institutional factors, such as a lack of minority candidates involved in politics. But does minority political representation really matter? Do democracies need to have minority MPs in

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[10] Burnham, Gilland, Grant and Layton-Henry (2004) p. 219.

their institutions in order to be consider themselves truly representative of the population at large? Chapter Two examines the concept of descriptive representation and whether it is a useful tool for enhancing the political experience of minority groups. It also examines the problems of multiple representational roles, and the influence of identity politics on the roles of minority MPs. It concludes that representation for minority groups is important because it helps overcome those barriers for minorities discussed above, but it also acknowledges the potential logistical problems that can develop when attempting to implement such representation. These include deciding which groups are "entitled" to special representation, who should be given authority to act as a representative for a minority group, and how representation should be established. The principles of democracy which state that one person with one vote equals political equality are seen by some as an adequate means to providing representation for all citizens. The best candidates are elected through a political process that theoretically allows any person, regardless of ethnicity, gender or disability to stand as a political candidate and be elected. Under these conditions, any special concessions or "rights" of representation of minority groups are seen as discriminatory and favouring some groups above the majority. Examples of this type of thinking can be seen in the criticism of the Māori seats, as discussed in Chapter Three. The provision of allocated electoral seats for Māori, the indigenous people of New Zealand, has served as a model for both critics and supporters of minority political representation. On the one hand, the seats provide important political representation for Māori, and are an intrinsic part of New Zealand's history, but on the other hand, the seats can be perceived as inequitable, and based solely on racial differentiation. Analysing the Māori seats provides insight into the place of minority representation in New Zealand and is a practical demonstration as to how it can be implemented. Chapter Three also discusses electoral reform in New Zealand and the impact that this had on increasing the diversity of Parliament. The change from the First-Past-the-Post (FPP) electoral system to Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) resulted in an increase in

representatives of women, Māori and other ethnic minority groups, including Pacific Islanders, and is an example of how institutional change can affect representation.

Chapter Four continues the theme of institutions and roles by moving from examining opportunity structures for minority groups to discussing the political journey of Pacific people in New Zealand. This includes attempts at political mobilisation, and the function of New Zealand's two largest political parties, the Labour Party and the National Party, in furthering Pacific political involvement and representation. The Labour Party, in particular, has a strong history of Pacific involvement in the Party and five of the six Pacific MPs in New Zealand's history have been from Labour. The remaining MP was from the National Party, and his experiences are unique in that regard. Political parties play a vital part in encouraging minority groups to become politically active and providing the means for them to stand as candidates. This chapter uses data from in-depth interviews, speeches and press statements to consider the relationship between minority MPs and political parties and provides insights into how the roles of these minority MPs are affected by the demands of their party.

Expanding on this use of interview data to explore the roles of Pacific MPs, Chapter Five explores in more depth the ways that past and present MPs describe their political journeys. It focuses on the ways they entered politics, the possible barriers for Pacific people in politics and the impact of MMP on increasing Pacific political participation. It reiterates the importance of how institutional rules affect the roles of MPs and provides insights into potential ways to increase the number of Pacific people who become politically active. Chapter Six focuses on the MPs' perceptions of their own roles and responsibilities, again using interview data. This section of the thesis thus departs from the purely theoretical literature on representation by portraying the experiences of minority MPs in their own

words, meaning the description of their roles is self-constructed, rather than imposed. Another crucial issue for Pacific MPs is the relationship between culture and their roles as representatives of a Parliamentary democracy. This is a matter that has been often raised, particularly in light of the Taito Phillip Field affair, and although pertinent to Pacific MPs in this case, can be applied to the representatives of any minority ethnic group.

These individual reflections on roles and issues of representation of Pacific people provide information that can help fill a gap in the story of the Pasifica community in New Zealand. This is not by any means the complete retelling of the political experiences of Pacific people, nor does it attempt to be. It is merely a piece of a much wider picture, which reflects not only the experiences of the six Pacific MPs, but the state of minority representation in both New Zealand politics and on the international stage. It takes a step towards increasing what we know about the role of minority representatives and what they do when elected, and it also provides critical information about the way in which a migrant community has become part of New Zealand's political process.

Chapter 2 - Theories of Minority Representation: Positive, or Positive Discrimination?

The concept of representation is one that has been defined in many different and diverse ways, and as such, literature on this subject offers conflicting perspectives on what representation means. More specifically for this study, the issue of minority representation is one that is both contested and challenged, creating polarising opinions as to its merits or necessity. This chapter explores some of this literature in order to frame the experiences of minority and indigenous representation in New Zealand. It focuses on the nature of political representation, both as it relates to what MPs do when they are in Parliament, and also the people that they represent - the groups on whose behalf they speak they speak. In analysing these roles, we can see how both are complex and complicated matters that can change and adapt, depending on an MP's personality, the political circumstances and the issues of the day. What is of importance to consider when discussing the multifaceted nature of representation is that the roles of representatives are often self-defined, and affected both by personal identity and allegiances but also by the norms and values of the society they choose to represent. This chapter explores the concept of minority representation and the role it has to play in advanced modern democracies. Further, it argues that minority representation is important in order to increase the diversity of Parliament and to ensure all groups in society are having their needs addressed and advocated for, by their political representatives.

Within the literature on representation of minority groups, there are two common schools of thought. Firstly, there are those who feel that that any attempts at "positive discrimination", or solutions that discriminate in favour of minorities to increase their political participation and representation, would be at odds with the principles of democracy which argue that one person has one vote and all votes are equal. Secondly, there are those who feel that such

measures are both necessary and vital to ensure minority groups can overcome the barriers that they face when they attempt to be part of the political process. The latter argues that minority groups face barriers above and beyond those faced by the majority group when trying to become politically active, and that steps are necessary to ensure that these groups have a vocal political presence. Debate between these opposing viewpoints has dominated much of the literature on minority representation. Descriptive representation, where the representative typifies the group of people that he or she represents, and which is commonly seen as a tool to enhance greater minority representation, is a controversial topic among scholars. Pitkin, in her noted work on representation, dismissed descriptive representation as placing too much emphasis on who the representative is rather than what they do,[11] and Pennock refers to the oft-quoted comment that "no one would argue that morons should be represented by morons"[12]. However, others believe that legislatures should look as much like the society that they are representing as possible. Banducci and Karp (1998) believe that "[d]escriptive representation lends legitimacy to representative institutions if they actually appear to be a reflection of society."[13]

Rather than offer a new description to this already extensive library, my study seeks to consider the existing work on the subject of representation. Much like Malcolm Jewell's research on representation in legislatures, where he uses the existing literature to identify the boundaries of the subject and analyse representation,[14] I approach this chapter with a particular focus on the nature of representation and the role of the MP and then follow with a more detailed study of descriptive representation, to discover how it fits with the concept of the political representation of Pacific Islanders in New Zealand. In doing so, I will be

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[11] H. Pitken (1969) *The Concept of Representation* Berkeley: University of California Press, p.226.

[12] J.R. Pennock (1979) *Democratic Political Theory,* Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 314.

[13] S. Banducci and J. Karp (1998) "Representation Under a Proportional System" in J. Vowles, P. Aimer, S. Banducci and J. Karp (eds.) *Voters Victory? New Zealand's First Election Under Proportional Representation* Auckland: Auckland University Press, p.136.

[14] M. Jewell (1983) "Legislator-Constituency Relations and the Representative Process" *Legislative Studies Quarterly,* Vol. 8 (3) pp.303-337.

investigating the arguments offered which oppose and support descriptive representation, in order to demonstrate a theoretical perspective within which to ground my empirical data. The constraints on this work mean that it aims to provide only a very brief overview of an enormous body of literature on political representation, to question what it is that a representative does and how they should behave (the nature of representation) and attempt to demonstrate some of the diversity and controversy of opinion that surrounds descriptive representation.

Exploring Representation: The Role of an MP

There are many labels given to the various types of representation an MP can undertake, but the most common are trustee, delegate, mandate, and descriptive. This chapter gives a brief description of each of these roles, supported by examples from New Zealand politics. In this way, the thesis seeks to investigate further what it is that representatives generally do, before engaging in a more thorough study of the roles of minority representatives.

The trustee model emerges from the work of early liberal theorists such as Edmund Burke and John Stuart Mill. A trustee is a person given formal responsibility for another's property or affairs and, in the case of political representation, given the responsibility to use their own judgement to determine what is best for their constituents. The trustee tends to be a member of an educated elite and therefore should act for those that are less qualified and less able to make an informed political decision. Burke argues in his famous speech to the electors of Bristol in 1774 that:

> Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his
> judgment; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he
> sacrifices it to your opinion…[B]ut authoritative instructions;
> mandates issued, which the member is bound blindly and
> implicitly to obey, to vote, and to argue for, though contrary to

the clearest conviction of his judgment and conscience,--these

are things utterly unknown to the laws of this land, and which

arise from a fundamental mistake of the whole order and tenor

of our constitution.[15]

In his work "On Representation", Mill describes one of the dangers of representative democracy as "a low grade of intelligence in the representative body and in the popular opinion which controls it."[16] He suggests that the solution to this problem is a system of plural voting that gives people with education in the form of degrees or diplomas multiple votes, while the "average" labourer or worker has only one vote. He maintains that this will allow the educated not only to make better decisions for the uneducated, but will also see the election of educated people to office.

However, this notion of governance by an "educated elite" has its critics, who argue there is only a tenuous link between education and representation. If representatives are needed because the public is poorly educated and ignorant, why should members of the public be trusted to elect their representatives in the first place? Surely their lack of education would ensure that only those who were elected were wholly unsuitable for the task.[17] Others claim that it is an elitist argument. It would ensure a dominant educated class who held all the political power, and would endow those in political control with an enormous amount of power over their fellow citizens.

On the other hand, the delegate model means the representative acts at the behest of his constituents, operating under their guidance or instructions.[18] Some liken this role to that of a trade union official; a representative with very little chance to exercise their own independent

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[15] E. Burke (1975) *On Government, Politics and Society* B.W. Hill (ed.) Hassocks: Harvester Press p. 157.
[16] J.S Mill (1861) *Representative Government*, London: J.M Dents and Sons Ltd, p.256.
[17] A. Heywood (2002) *Politics* 2nd ed. Hampshire: Palgrave, p.225.
[18] R. Miller (2005) *Party Politics in New Zealand* Auckland*:* Oxford University Press p.199.

judgment or preferences.[19] Acting as a delegate heavily limits an MP's personal power - Pennock terms delegates "functionless"[20] as they have little to do but provide a mouthpiece for their constituency. This often proves problematic as very few constituencies can boast absolute unity of opinion or desire and the MP may be faced with competing points of view. This total support for their constituency can lead to clashes between the demands of the party and the demands of the constituents, which may be conflicting. Miller claims that in New Zealand, when there is "friction between an MP's constituency and party roles....the influence of the latter usually wins out."[21] He links this to the strength of the party system as parties prefer to discipline their MPs internally and "hammer out" disagreements in caucus and cabinet meetings, not letting divisions get to the point where the MP abstains from voting or crossing the floor.[22] Examples of conflict in New Zealand between the demands made by MPs' constituencies and those of their party include the decision of Māori MPs Nanaia Mahuta and Tariana Turia to cross the floor on the first reading of the Labour government's Seabed and Foreshore Bill (2004) and Labour Muslim MP Ashraf Choudhary's decision to abstain from voting on the Labour government's Prostitution Bill (2003), as it faced opposition from the Muslim community. This inaction earned him little support from either his party or the religious community he claimed to represent, demonstrating the pitfalls of having multiple groups to represent as will be elaborated on further in this chapter. In the case of Mahuta and Turia, Miller claims that "[t]heir decision was based on a belief that, as the delegates of their local iwi (tribes) and hapu (sub-tribes), they must act at the behest of their constituents, not their colleagues in the Labour Party."[23] Again, this demonstrates the potential for conflict, not only between the types of representative roles but between conflicting loyalties to different groups.

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[19] See A. Heywood (2002) pp.225, 227.
[20] Pennock (1979) p.315.
[21] Miller (2005) p.199.
[22] Miller (2005) p.199.
[23] Miller (2005) p.209.

Party mandate terminology suggests that an elected political party gains a mandate to govern from the public who elected it. Theoretically, this mandate extends only to the policies outlined in the election campaign; those that the voters have given their support to by electing a party. In his work on representation, Birch summarises the theory of the electoral or party mandate: that at elections, voters are given a choice between two or more programmes of action, knowing the party that wins will do its best to establish this programme once in Parliament. The party winning a Parliamentary majority at a general election is then both entitled and obliged to pursue the aims which it stated during the election, as it has a mandate from the people, and individual MPs are obliged to support their party in Parliament, as it was on the party platform that they were elected.[24]

Vowles et al. argue that "political parties select and sustain MPs, and they do so expecting that MPs will support and promote the party's objectives and policies which are agreed collectively."[25] This reiterates the ways in which the roles of MPs are tied to the position of their parties. However, the concept of political mandate is contested because there are a number of issues that can affect the ways voters elect candidates. They do not always elect their representatives based solely on party platforms; issues such as history and traditional loyalties, personalities, or the current political situation may all have an impact on how a voter makes their decision.[26] Many policies that the newly-elected government undertakes have not necessarily been open to public scrutiny before the election and so the mandate given by the public is not necessarily all-encompassing. The mandate model places emphasis on the fact that representatives are selected because of their political affiliation, and places little weight on the importance of other characteristics, such as ethnicity or gender.

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[24] A.H Birch (1971) *Representation* London: Pall Mall p.98.

[25] J. Vowles, P. Aimer, H. Catt, J. Lamare and R. Miller (eds.) (1995) *Towards Consensus: The 1993 Election in New Zealand and the Transition to Proportional Representation* Auckland: Auckland University Press, p.123.

[26] See J. Vowles, P. Aimer, H. Catt, J. Lamare and R. Miller (1995) "Values, Perceptions and Voting Choice" in *Towards Consensus: The 1993 Election in New Zealand and the Transition to Proportional Representation,* and S. Levine and N. S Roberts "Consistent Patterns and Clear Trends: Electoral Behaviour in 2002" in J. Boston, S. Church, S. Levine, E. McLeay and N.S. Roberts (eds.) (2003) *New Zealand Votes: The General Election of 2002*, Wellington: Victoria University Press.

Descriptive representation is a concept that is vital to the study of minority representation and as such, will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter. Briefly, descriptive representation, microcosmic representation,[27] or sociological representation,[28] is where the representative may share a similar background or characteristics such as gender, ethnicity and occupation with their constituents. The assumption is that when this occurs, the representative's views are more likely to be similar or the same as the constituents. People identify with their representative because they have something in common, a trait that links them, and this gives the representative the authority to speak on behalf of others with those shared characteristics. Similar notions of representation are expressed by Catt, who defines group representation as being "the representation of a group identity, as a reflection or symbol of that identity"[29]; Heywood, who discusses the resemblance model of representation which is based on whether representatives typify or resemble the group they claim to represent[30] and Birch, who uses the example of an Arab student speaking in class "on behalf of" the Arab population of the world.[31]

Other definitions of representation, apart from the models above, have been put forward, most notably in the work of Hanna Pitken whose *The Concept of Representation* is one of the most influential works on this subject. She argues that most of the classic definitions of representation are incomplete, unrealistic and of limited value. She rejects Hobbes' notion of authorization, or what is commonly termed the trustee model, as "formalistic". She also rejects the arguments of accountability (the delegate model); descriptive representation; and symbolic representation, which is the use of the representative as a symbol of identity such as

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[27] H. Catt (1997) "Women, Māori and Minorities: Microrepresentation and MMP" in J. Boston, E. McLeay, S. Levine and N. S Roberts (eds.) *From Campaign to Coalition: New Zealand's First Election Under Proportional Representation* Palmerston North: Dunmore, pp.199-205.

[28] Banducci and Karp (1998).

[29] H. Catt (1997) "Representation" in *New Zealand Politics in Transition*, R. Miller (ed.) Auckland: Oxford University Press, p. 398.

[30] Heywood (2002) p.228.

[31] Birch (1971) p. 17.

the Crown or monarch. Pitkin refers to descriptive representation as "passive" because it is achieved through the representative possessing certain characteristics rather than acting on behalf of constituents.[32]

Her first working assumption is that representation does in fact have an identifiable meaning, and that it is "a single, highly complex concept that has not changed much in its basic meaning since the seventeenth century."[33] Her own definition is focused on the importance of the representative acting independently and avoiding conflict with their constituency:

> Representation here means acting in the interest of the represented, in a manner responsive to them. The representative must act independently; his action must involve discretion and judgement. He must be the one who acts…. And despite the resulting potential for conflict between representative and represented about what is to be done, that conflict must not normally take place.[34]

However, while Pitkin favours a model of representation similar to the trustee typology, she also notes the importance of consultation with a constituency and the need to explain to constituents any conflict between their wishes and his/her own.[35]

Many theorists on representation, including Pitkin, write without considering political structures and how these affect the roles of representatives, but these structures do play an important role in affecting the ways in which political representation takes place. An example of this is the adoption of the Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) electoral system in New Zealand. Under MMP, voters have two votes; one for an electorate representative and one for a party vote. MMP created two distinct types of MPs - electorate MPs and list MPs. List MPs

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[32] Pitkin (1967) in Banducci and Karp (1998).
[33] Pitkin (1967) p.8.
[34] Pitkin (1967) p.209.
[35] Pitkin (1967) pp.209-210

are elected by the nationwide party vote which determines each party's share of seats. Party lists are a formal nomination of candidates for election, ordered in the sequence the party wants them to enter Parliament. List MPs are used to make up the difference between electorate MPs and total allocation of seats that parties received due to the party vote.[36] McLeay and Vowles discuss the differing roles of constituency and list MPs in a MMP political system and note that under a list-based electoral system, ethnic minorities benefit.[37] This can be for two reasons: firstly, because lists allow greater numbers of minority candidates to have the chance to be elected, and secondly because once list MPs enter Parliament, there are greater opportunities for them to reach out to minority groups. In the first instance, minority groups can make use of a party's need to include a diverse range of people on their lists, in order to appeal to the widest possible population demographic. Vowles and Aimer argue that single member constituency electoral systems are effectively barriers to the representation of minority groups:

> This is simply because in choosing candidates party selectors will tend to pick 'safe' or 'middle of the road' candidates when the vote is for a single member as in an electorate. Where the vote is for a list or a larger number of candidates, party selectors are more likely to go for a balance of different sorts of candidates, some of which can be chosen in order to represent minorities or other more marginal groups.[38]

In terms of role definition, McLeay and Vowles note that there are no prescribed job descriptions or differentiation between electorate and list MPs in New Zealand. However, they did note that the electorate MPs spent more time than list MPs in their community,

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[36] New Zealand Electoral Commission (2005) *MMP: frequently asked questions* http://www.elections.org.nz/mmp/mmp-faq.html accessed 6 June 2007.

[37] E. McLeay and J. Vowles (2007) "Redefining Constituency Representation: the Roles of New Zealand's MPs under MMP" *Regional and Federal Studies* Vol. 17 (1) pp.71-95.

[38] J. Vowles and P. Aimer, (2004) "Political Leadership, Representation and Trust" in Vowles, J., Aimer, P., Karp, J, Banducci, S., Miller, R, ed., *Voters' Veto: The 2002 Election in New Zealand and the Consolidation of Minority Government.* Auckland: Auckland University Press, p.168.

dealing with constituents and building up relationships with local groups; usually using their weekends as well as a weekday. This time is seen by the public as the way in which an MP "earns" their salary. The role of an electorate MP is also much more clearly defined, with a fixed geographical location for MPs to represent. In addition, some government list MPs are so highly ranked that they have an important Cabinet portfolio, such as Dr Michael Cullen. These list MPs have clear duties and responsibilities to fulfil which makes role legitimation easier to establish, but others who do not hold ministerial positions may struggle to find who they represent. McLeay and Vowles argue that list MPs will aim to both develop and legitimise their own roles and may use defined minority groups to do so. Because their geographical constituencies are so large, they hypothesize that list MPs, more than electorate MPs, will specialize in representation of descriptively defined groups. Luamanuvao Winnie Laban has stated that"[a]s a list MP I did not have a geographical constituency. The Pacific Island community became my constituency."[39]

However MPs, whether they are elected via party lists or through electorate seats, are still constrained by established roles within the spectrum of their political party and this may influence the type of representation roles they perform. Vowles et al. conducted a New Zealand survey on the role expectations of MPs, where they interviewed the public, MPs and other political elites.[40] They asked the interview participants what they believed the most important representational role should be, and then what the most important role actually was. Representation was divided into five typologies by the authors: trustee, delegate, interest groups (which incorporates both minority groups and the more traditional concept of interest groups), partisan (political parties are central and MPs should support them above all else), and politico. Results showed that the majority of the public and political elites believed that the most important representational role should be the delegate role with MPs

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[39] McLeay and Vowles (2007).
[40] Vowles, Aimer, Catt, Lamare and Miller (1995) pp.125-7.

responding to the majority view of the electorate; while the majority of MPs felt that the partisan role was the most important. Interest groups had hardly any support as players that should sway legislation. All three groups felt that the actual most important representational role was a combination of the partisan and trustee models, as the public and elites believed what mattered most was the view of the government or party cabinet, while MPs placed more weight on the majority view of MPs within the party. Again, there was little support for the importance of interest groups in representation.

The Representation of Ethnic Minorities

Although there are multiple general descriptions of the types of political representation, this thesis aims to explore more specifically the nature of representation for ethnic minority groups. This requires a wider investigation into descriptive representation in order to answer the questions: would increased descriptive representation be an asset for New Zealand's minority groups, and if so, how could it be implemented?

The Case for Descriptive Representation

As previously discussed, descriptive representation is where the representative shares similar characteristics with their constituents, which means that the views of the MP and constituency are likely to be similar. Vowles and Aimer describe the benefits of such similarity:

> Having an MP who shares one's own gender and/or ethnic characteristics might make people belonging to less represented groups more satisfied about politics and more likely to feel close to or contact an MP.[41]

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[41] Vowles and Aimer (2004) p.169.

Often termed "the politics of presence",[42] descriptive representation is seen as essential for the protection of the rights of minority groups. The United Nation's Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities stated in Article 2 (2) and (3) that:

> (2) Persons belonging to minorities have the right to participate effectively in cultural, religious, social, economic and public life.

> (3) Persons belonging to minorities have the right to participate effectively in decisions on the national and, where appropriate, regional level concerning the minority to which they belong or the regions in which they live, in a manner not incompatible with national legislation.[43]

Nevertheless, having the right to participate is one thing; having the opportunity to take part is, in fact, another. Theorists of the 'politics of presence' argue that minority groups face significant barriers to gaining equitable political representation; therefore measures must be taken to rectify these inequalities. They also argue that Parliaments should recognise and respect the different perspectives that abound in society and that the best way to do this is by ensuring that these voices and opinions have the forums in which to be heard. The "Western democratic" form of government is supposed to ensure that every person has adequate political representation, achieved through the act of voting a representative into power to speak on their behalf. As previously discussed, this in itself can lead to difficulties, with the role and responsibilities of the representative frequently ambiguous. However, the logic stands that if a person/group/community is unhappy with the representation they are

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[42] See A. Phillips (1995) *The Politics of Presence*, New York: Oxford University Press; W. Kymlicka (1995) *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press; and R. E. Goodin (2004) "Representing Diversity" *British Journal of Political Science* 34 (3) pp.453-469.
[43] United Nations *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities,* Office of the High Commissioner For Human Rights, http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/d_minori.htm accessed 3 January 2008.

receiving, they can effect change by voting that person out of office in the next election. In reality, the system is more complicated for many minority groups who struggle to have their voices heard in democratic systems and Parliaments frequently dominated by white middle-class men.

Commonly linked with the concept of descriptive representation is "mirror representation", or "microcosmic representation"[44] the idea that the elected Parliament should be a mirror of key groups in society. In this case, the representative mirrors the ethnic, gender, or class characteristics of society. The argument for mirror representation states that Parliament should be made up of representatives who reflect the differences in society so government can be a true mouthpiece for the population, and that communities should be able to look at Parliament and see a representative of their group there, speaking on their behalf. Mirror representation is also based on the argument that it is necessary that representatives share the experiences, needs and interests of their constituency, as the minority group cannot be adequately represented by the majority. Christine Boyle argues "[a]t some point members of one group feel that someone belonging to another group has such a conflict of interest that representation is impossible, or at least, unlikely."[45] Jane Mansbridge has argued that minority groups benefit from being represented by members of their own group in three separate instances: firstly "where the dominant group has learned not to listen and the subordinate group has learned not to trust."[46] In this case, Mansbridge argues that minority groups may find themselves better represented by members of their own group "with whom they can communicate easily and by whom they can reasonably expect to be better

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[44] H. Catt and M. Murphy (2002) *Sub-State Nationalism: A Comparative Analysis of Institutional Design* New York: Routledge p.27, and Birch (1971) p. 17.
[45] C. Boyle (1983) "Home-Rule For Women: Power-Sharing Between Men and Women*" Dalhousie Law Journal*, 7, pp.797-8 in Kymlicka (1995) p.139.
[46] Jane Mansbridge (2000) 'What does a representative do? Descriptive Representation in Communicative Settings of Distrust, Uncrystallized Interests, and Historically Denigrated Status', in Will Kymlicka and Wayne Norman, (eds.), *Citizenship in Diverse Societies,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.99.

understood."[47] Secondly, descriptive representation may be effective when there is a need to put new issues on the political agenda, which requires someone who has had personal experience or who is personally in touch with the needs of their constituents to be a representative for the community.[48] In the third instance, representation of minority groups not only legitimises the groups right to have a place and a voice in the legislature, but it also can "change the social meaning of membership in that group through their actions and presence in the body authorized to make laws for the polity as a whole."[49] The argument for mirror representation then is that democratically unrepresentative legislatures are failing to represent minority groups and that having greater diversity in Parliament will allow minority or oppressed groups to have their needs addressed in a political forum by someone who fully understands or has experienced being a part of the group. Minority representation both legitimises the concerns of the group and acknowledges their place as citizens of a democratic society which respects and appreciates their political participation.

Also supporting the claim for greater minority representation is the minority empowerment thesis, as discussed by Banducci, Donovan and Karp, in which minority representation fosters more positive attitudes towards government and encourages political participation among minorities.[50] This reinforces the work of Bobo and Gilliam who argue that after a minority group achieves significant representation and influence in political decision-making, they can be empowered to participate on a larger scale. They reason that when minority groups are represented, members of that minority group are sent "contextual cues" that the benefits of voting outweigh the costs of not voting. Participation is important because there are gains to be made from it. Bobo and Gilliam also found that empowerment leads to higher

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[47] Mansbridge (2000) p.100.
[48] Mansbridge (2000) pp.99-100.
[49] Mansbridge (2000) p.100.
[50] S. Banducci, T. Donovan & J. Karp (2004) "Minority Representation, Empowerment and Participation in New Zealand and the United States" *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 66 (2) pp. 534-556.

levels of political knowledge and a greater sense of trust and efficacy concerning politics.[51] However, the question of whether descriptive representation does in fact equal substantive representation, or action to benefit the minority group, is something that is still debated. Empirical studies seems to suggest that gender, race and sexually orientation do make a difference to attitudes and behaviours of those in power,[52] but this is something that would need to be explored further in New Zealand's case.

Descriptive representation argues that if representatives share similar characteristics with their constituents, then the political needs of both groups are likely to be the same. Having political representatives who are members of a minority group should mean that the needs of that group are represented in political decision making. Mirror representation, or having MPs that reflect the diversity of society, is important not only to increase diversity in legislatures and thus be a reflection of the composition of the voting population, but to ensure that the voices of minority groups are being heard in Parliament. Having political representatives of diverse groups helps minority groups overcome a sense of being excluded from a democratic process established by the majority, and creates a sense of political trust and empowerment. There are however, conceptual and practical problems concerning descriptive representation, and these can affect that ways that we consider the ideals and the implementation of political representation for minority groups.

Critics and Complications

One difficulty with the concept of descriptive representation is how to decide who is a "minority", which groups should be represented politically and how to achieve this representation. Belonging to a "minority group" is usually based on what is commonly

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[51] L. Bobo and F. Giliam, Jr. (1990) "Race, Sociopolitical participation and Black Empowerment" *American Political Science Review* Vol.84 (2) p.377- 393.
[52] See R. Ogmundson (2005) "Does it Matter if Women, Minorities and Gays Govern?: New Data Concerning an Old Question" *Canadian Journal of Sociology* Vol. 30 (3).

thought of as self-defined identity or identity as a choice, but in reality, these identities are often the result of inequality and discrimination imposed by others, based on such things as race, gender, income or disability. The questions of who is entitled to representation, and how it will be achieved are issues that are vital to address in any discourse on descriptive representation and I shall cover them briefly here.

One of the basic premises of mirror representation is that it is essential to have political representatives of minority groups because only they can truly speak for their communities. The logic is that only a member of the minority group can identify and campaign on behalf of the issues that matter to the group; thus only a Pacific Islander can speak on issues concerning Pacific Islanders. The other key argument in this line of reasoning is not merely that majority groups cannot speak on behalf of minority groups; it is that they will not. Representatives of the majority group cannot be adequately trusted to fully represent the needs of minority groups in a political setting. This argument leads to questions, not only about the nature of representation, as I have discussed earlier, but even about the concept of descriptive representation. If men cannot or will not speak for women, can women speak on 'men's issues'? Are there such things as men's issues? Or as Kymlicka puts it:

> If men cannot represent women, can white women represent women of colour? Within the category of women of colour, can Asian women represent African-Caribbean women? Can middle-class heterosexual able-bodied Asian women represent poor, disabled or lesbian Asian women? Taken to its conclusion, the principle of mirror representation seems to undermine the very possibility of representation itself.[53]

Anne Phillips notes that this argument has created tension for feminist politics, as logic dictates that it reaches nowhere but a dead end.

[53] Kymlicka (1995) p.140.

[O]nce men were dislodged from their role of speaking for women, it seemed obvious enough that white women must also be dislodged from their role of speaking for black women, heterosexual women for lesbians, and middle-class women for those in the working class. The search for authenticity ... then makes it difficult for anyone to represent an experience not identical to her own and, taken to this extreme, renders dialogue virtually impossible.[54]

However, although the majority of MPs in advanced modern democracies may be male and white, they have frequently been elected to power by majority and minority groups and therefore have a legitimate right to speak on their behalf.[55] It seems neither "right" nor fair to criticise MPs or the work they do solely because they happen to be, for example, white men. This relates back to the debate on the nature of representation and the functions that a representative should perform. Are they in power to act as delegates, trustees, symbolic representatives or to act as mirrors for society? Heywood notes that descriptive representation, or the resemblance model, as he terms it, is presented in narrow terms, in assuming that only a woman can represent a woman or only a Pacific Islander can represent another Pacific Islander. He argues if everyone felt this way, there would be no sense of the "common good". Representatives would only advance the interests of their particular group, leading to social divisions. Heywood also argues that forcing parties to select quotas of female or minority candidates is applying constraints to electoral choice and the freedom of the individual.[56]

Other critics of mirror representation have noted that having a representative of all the potential differences in a society is impractical and fraught with logistical difficulties. America's founding fathers objected to mirror representation on the grounds that the House

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[54] Phillips (1995) p.9 in Goodin (2004).
[55] See Kymlicka (1995) p. 138.
[56] Heywood (2002) p. 228.

of Representatives was not large enough to accommodate "all the different classes of citizens", combine their interests and opinions, and ensure their representative was responsive to those needs.[57] This is an ongoing concern for supporters of descriptive representation: how to establish which groups are entitled to, or "deserve" representation.

In addition to the practical complications of having a representative from every minority group in the political institution, there is the additional and complex problem of multiple identities. People very rarely have one sole, all-encompassing identity which defines them. Most have a combination of different identities to call on, and these may have opposing or competing interests. A political representative who is gay and also a member of an ethnic or religious group with traditional and conservative beliefs may face opposition from one or both communities as their requirements will certainly not be the same. Amartya Sen notes that there are many different identities that a person may acknowledge, through origin, gender, class, interests, employment or politics. These diverse identities can lead to conflict for the individual, when are faced with competing interests from the various groups.

> I can be, at the same time, an Asian, an Indian citizen, a Bengali with Bangladeshi ancestry, an American or British resident, an economist….when they compete for attention and priority over each other (they need not always, since there may be no conflict between the demands of different loyalties), the person has to decide on the relative importance to attach to the respective identities.[58]

Turning back to the central focus of this thesis: among the four current MPs in the New Zealand House of Representatives who are of Pacific Island descent, there are differences of gender, religion, country of origin, employment history, as well as personal political

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[57] A. Hamilton, *Federalist No. 35*, p. 218 quoted in Goodin (2004).

[58] A. Sen (2006) *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*, New York: W.W Norton & Company p.19.

differences. Within the Pacific Island community in New Zealand, there are people from Samoa, Tonga, the Cook Islands, Niue, Fiji and more. There are Pacific Islanders who are married, divorced, gay, conservative, religious, and have children. Categorizing people by way of gender, class or ethnic group leads again to the issue of how to implement adequate representation for minority groups and the sheer logistical problem of deciding which groups are entitled to, or should be encouraged to seek, political representation. If legislatures are supposed to be mirrors of society, how does anyone determine which groups should have representation? Does the concept of mirror representation mean that we in fact need a representative for every group in society? If a certain number of people in the population are Māori, young, gay and from Auckland, and may have faced discrimination because of one or a combination of the above qualities, does that mean that Parliament should not only contain representatives of the Māori, youth, and gay populations as well as geographically representing the Auckland area, but also must contain at least one MP who embodies all of those characteristics?[59] This argument while being physically impossible to implement, also calls into question the very notion of democratically elected representatives and their roles and responsibilities.

Sen believes that humans cannot be categorised under "some singular and overarching system of partitioning"[60] often assigned to them by the mysterious "others". He argues that people have the right to choose which part(s) of their own identity they wish to acknowledge, despite being 'seen' or labelled by the rest of society as fitting into a certain category. Each representative has the capacity to choose which part of themselves they identify with and the people with similar traits that they feel they represent. He notes that while "classification is certainly cheap, identity is not."[61] Classification can also become problematic when it comes to group representation because of the possibility that members of the perceived group may

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[59] See Goodin (2004).
[60] Sen (2006) p. xii.
[61] Sen (2006) p.26.

not feel themselves adequately represented by a constituent from the same group. Simply being a member of a particular group does not automatically mean that the representative does speak for the group, or even that they share the same ideas about what is in the groups "best interests". In addition, representatives seen by the majority group as being in 'the same generic category', as Goodin terms it,[62] as the members of the oppressed group may in fact be completely different. A Samoan in New Zealand may not feel adequately represented by another Samoan, let alone a person from Tonga or Niue or Fiji; despite being grouped under the generic title of 'Pacific Islander'. As with plural identities, the interests and needs of the groups may be polar opposites. In fact, even within a seemingly homogenous group, there may be division and debate about what their representative should be advocating for.

All these aspects of identity and unresponsiveness complicate the matter of defining descriptive representation and deciding on which groups should be represented politically. More recent migrant communities such as Pacific Islanders in New Zealand often occupy an awkward place in literature on representation in liberal democratic countries; they are not seen to be "entitled" to political rights as an indigenous people,[63] a point which I pursue in more detail in the following chapter on Māori representation. The perceived difference between national minority groups such as Māori or the Aboriginal population of Australia, as opposed to voluntary immigrant groups (to be distinguished from the unique case of African Americans, whose immigration was the result of abduction or enslavement) is that while the voluntary immigrant has made the choice to come to the country and consequentially work within the boundaries of its political system, the national minority group has often had its traditional form of governance overthrown by the majority group. Thus, when it comes to the "greater" claim for representation rights, the national minority group often has the advantage.

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[62] Goodin (2004)

[63] Kymlicka (1995) makes the distinction between national minorities, ethnic migrant groups and what he terms 'new social movements' such as movements by gays, women, the poor or disabled who have been marginalised within their community, although he does note the frequent lack of distinction drawn between national minorities and ethnic minorities by political theorists. pp 19-20

It must be noted however, that migration does not automatically mean assimilation and that the cultural norms of an ethnic minority should not be subjugated to the dominant political culture. However, ethnic minorities are usually seen as what Iris Young terms "oppressed groups"[64] and are therefore subject to barriers and discrimination. Within America, Young's list of oppressed groups includes women, blacks, Native Americans, Puerto Ricans and other Spanish speaking Americans, Asian Americans, gay and lesbians, working-class people, poor people, old people and mentally and physically disabled people.[65]

More and more frequently, it is recognised that ethnic minority groups do need certain political rights, such as access to representation, to ensure they have a political voice. Not only are they commonly underrepresented in legislatures, but they also may face barriers that prevent them from achieving equivalent representation, such as language, lack of knowledge of the political process, or lack of available resources and networks to run for office.

> In ethnically plural societies, some individuals are inclined to publicly express their ethnic identities, but that choice has not always been easy to make because of governmental interference in favour of dominant ethnicity or even government indifference when this is accompanied by a hostile majority opinion.[66]

If we accept, for the moment, the argument that descriptive representation is important for minority groups and that achieving it does matter; we are then faced with the dilemma of how to achieve it.

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[64] I. Young, (1989) "Polity and Group Difference: A Critique of the Ideal of Universal Citizenship" *Ethics* Vol. 99 (2) in Kymlicka (1995) p.145.
[65] I. Young, (1989) in Kymlicka (1995) However, both Kymlicka and Phillips have noted that Young's list of oppressed groups encompasses a large percentage of America's population, with the exception of young white men in good health.
[66] J. J Preece (2005) *Minority Rights: Between Diversity and Community* Cambridge: Polity Press, p. 161.

Implementing the Ideal

As can be seen from the discussion so far, the notion of having a representative from every disadvantaged group in the legislature seems impossible to execute without overloading the numbers of MPs in Parliament. Despite this, there have been several institutional alternatives for increasing minority representation put forward. These include allocated seats such as the seven Māori seats, which will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter Three; re-districting or gerrymandering to ensure ethnic populations are grouped together to create majorities, thus suggesting that a candidate from that minority group is more likely to be selected to stand in that area; or adopting a proportional representation (PR) system, such as MMP, that can increase representation of minority groups through multiple parties, lists, and coalition governments. Banducci and Karp note that in the case of women, PR systems produce, on average, twice as many elected women as First-Past-the-Post (FPP) systems[67] and New Zealand's experience under a PR electoral system will be discussed in the following chapter.

Nevertheless, institutional change is not always possible, or even seen as desirable by the under-represented. Kymlicka notes that "many immigrant groups prefer to work within existing political parties to make them more inclusive, rather then trying to get guaranteed seats in legislation."[68] Some minority groups, particularly those who lack the "rights" of indigenous people, hope to operate within the confines of the existing legal system and attempt to influence and change things for their group from the inside out. This appears to be the model adopted by the Pacific Island community in New Zealand although, as will be discussed in Chapter Four, there have been movements to promote a Pacific party.

Goodin notes that even once minority groups have established themselves in Parliament, they can still face barriers.

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[67] S. Banducci and J. Karp (1998) p. 136.
[68] Kymlicka (1995) p.146.

> In purely power-political terms, getting representatives of minority communities into the legislative chamber might not make much difference. Minorities who have historically been marginalized outside of Parliament can easily enough be marginalized inside Parliament, in much the same way, for much the same reasons, with much the same effect.[69]

Lending support to the idea that achieving some form of representation through institutional change does not guarantee equitable representation, McLeay observes that "[d]espite the increase in diversity of ethnic representation under MMP, compared with their share of the general population, Pacific and Asian peoples are still under-represented in Parliament."[70]

While this thesis does not seek to explain conclusively why Pacific Islanders in New Zealand are under-represented, it does investigate the existing Pacific MPs and the journeys they have made to the New Zealand Parliament. Through this, it is hoped that greater insight will be gained into the institutions, identities, and opportunity structures that allow for minority representation in New Zealand. The following chapter seeks to place the theoretical literature on minority representation in a New Zealand context, by analysing the example of the Māori seats in New Zealand - an important illustration of indigenous political representation. It also examines the role that electoral reform has played in developing a more diverse Parliament, which is a significant factor for the increase of Pacific Island representation.

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[69] Goodin (2004).

[70] McLeay E (2003) "Representation, Selection, Election" in J. Boston S. Church, S. Levine, E. McLeay, and N.S Roberts (eds.) New Zealand Votes: The General Election of 2002, Wellington: Victoria University Press p.296.

Chapter 3 – Electoral Rules and Minority Representation in New Zealand

This is our word to you and your companions that you may open the doors of Parliament to us, the great discussion House of New Zealand, for we are members of some of the tribes of this land.[71]

Within New Zealand's political history, minority representation has played an important role. Indeed, New Zealand is held up as an example of political rights for indigenous people because of its guaranteed electoral seats for Māori.[72] Minority representation was also a vital factor when the country was considering and implementing electoral reform during the 1980's and 1990's. New Zealand has proved to be an example that electoral rules do matter in regards to minority representation, by having two different electoral systems which created new paths for minority representation. The first, the single-member First-Past-The-Post (FPP), favoured the major parties; however the Māori seats ensured guaranteed political representation for Māori in a limited number of electorates. The second electoral system, Mixed Member Proportional (MMP), produced a multi-party Parliamentary system through proportionality and offered three pathways to Parliamentary office: electorate seats; list seats; and the continuation of the Māori seats. Increased minority representation was one of the important considerations of the Royal Commission on the Electoral System when they recommended change to a proportional system, and the advent of MMP allowed greater numbers of Pacific Island people to enter Parliament both through the lists and as electorate MPs. Five of the six Pacific MPs originally entered the House through party lists, although Gosche and Laban went on to subsequently win and hold electorate seats. This chapter discusses the opportunity structures which affect minority groups and Parliamentary representation in New Zealand and how these are relevant for studying the roles of Pacific

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[71] Tukairangi, Taupo Chief, 1864 in A. Fleras (1985) "Māori Representation in New Zealand" *Canadian Journal of Political Science* Vol. 18 (3) p.556.
[72] See Kymlicka (1995) Chapter 7.

Island MPs. An investigation into the change of electoral system in New Zealand and the role that minority representation played in this change ensures a deeper understanding of how issues of representation have shaped New Zealand's political history, including expectations about the practical rights of minorities.

This chapter also demonstrates the ways that institutions can affect the roles and political representation of minority groups. Although Māori were underrepresented politically under an FPP system, theirs is an interesting case, as the provision of allocated seats for the indigenous people of New Zealand ensures that Māori are guaranteed a place in Parliament. Despite this, Ranginui Walker argued that under a two-party Parliamentary system, Māori were forced into the role of an "outvoted minority" as Parliament was dominated by Europeans.[73] Provided here is a broad outline of the circumstances surrounding representation of Māori in New Zealand. The division in New Zealand's House of Representatives between Māori and 'European', now 'general', seats is one that has been studied extensively[74] and it is not the objective here to provide an analysis of the benefits or problems with the representation of the tangata whenua[75] of New Zealand. Nevertheless, the model of the Māori seats does provide a useful tool for analysing one of the ways in which the implementation of minority representation can be carried out because it is a practical example of political representation for an indigenous group. The Māori seats and the quest to increase Māori political representation allows for a comparison between these experiences and those of the Pacific Island community in New Zealand.

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[73] R. Walker (1979) "The Maori Minority and the Democratic Process" paper delivered to the New Zealand Maori Council, in Fleras (1985).

[74] See E. McLeay (1980) "Political Argument about Representation – The Case of the Māori Seats" *Political Studies* Vol. 28 (1) pp.43-62, W.K Jackson and G.A Wood (1964) "The New Zealand Parliament and Māori Representation" *Historical Studies: Australia and New Zealand* 11 pp.383-96, and A. McRobie (1981) "Ethnic Representation: the New Zealand Experience" in E. Stokes (ed.) *Māori Representation in Parliament* Occasional Paper 14, Hamilton: University of Waikato.

[75] This phrase is literally translated as "people of the land".

Development of Māori Representation

There is conflicting discussion over the origins and establishment of the Māori seats. Sorrenson argues that:

> It [the Māori seats] was a useful way of rewarding Māori loyalists and placating Māori rebels, while also assuring critics in Britain that the colonists would look after Māori interests….thus no high principle was involved in Māori representation.[76]

Fleras believes that Māori representation was a colonial attempt to 'Westernise' Māori by turning them into "brown-skinned Pakeha with a minimum of financial, military and administrative interference."[77] Others argue that the Māori seats were tokenism and discriminatory, as they vastly under-represented the total Māori population of the time,[78] or that they had "stumbled into being."[79] Opposing arguments, such as those of New Zealand historian Claudia Orange, argue that fear of censure from Britain does not explain the change in attitude towards Māori and that a "thread of idealism, present in the treaty-making, was still evident."[80] A report by New Zealand's Parliamentary library on the origins of the Māori seats believes that this idealism was demonstrated through the acknowledgment of Māori equality in the Treaty of Waitangi, the attempts to enable Māori to vote despite property restrictions, and the recognition of the large amounts of taxation revenue paid by Māori tribes.[81]

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[76] M.P.K Sorrenson (1986) "A History of Māori Representation in Parliament" Appendix B in Report of the Royal Commission on the Electoral System (1986) *Towards a Better Democracy*, Wellington: VR Ward, Government Printer, p. B 20.

[77] Fleras (1985) p.557.

[78] R. Walker (1992) "The Māori People: Their Political Development" in H. Gold (ed.) *New Zealand Politics in Perspective* 3rd ed. Auckland: Longman Paul Ltd pp.382-83.

[79] A. Ward (1995) *A Show of Justice: Racial Amalgamation in Nineteenth Century New Zealand*, Auckland: Auckland University Press p.185.

[80] C. Orange (1987) *The Treaty of Waitangi* Wellington: Allen and Unwin Port Nicholson Press, p.184

[81] New Zealand Parliamentary Library (2003) *The Origins of the Māori Seats* 2003/09 p.7.

Established by the Māori Representation Act of 1867, the four Māori electorates were a means to provide Māori with political representation, while ensuring the European seats were not "taken over" by Māori voters. The concept of separate Māori seats also avoided the restriction that men had to be property owners to vote. As communal landowners, Māori did not classify and were therefore ineligible to cast a vote.[82] The Māori seats were initially seen as a temporary measure that would be removed once Māori men began to own property on an individual basis, but it was later acknowledged that this process would take longer than anticipated and in 1876 the Māori seats were made permanent. The four seats were to represent Northern, Eastern, Western and Southern Māori. The Northern, Eastern and Western electorates comprised the North Island of New Zealand, while the Southern electorate represented the South Island, Stewart Island and adjacent islands.[83] At the first election following the establishment of the Māori seats in 1868, only two seats were contested – Eastern and Southern Māori.

From 1867 – 1993, there were four fixed Māori seats and only those who were of more than half Māori descent could vote or stand in these electorates. The Electoral Amendment Act of 1967 saw the end of the 'reservation' of the seats solely for Māori candidates, meaning non-Māori could run for Parliamentary office in the Māori electorates, while Māori in turn, could stand in general seats. In 1975 the Labour Government introduced the Electoral Amendment Act, which allowed Māori voters to choose whether they enrolled on the general roll or a Māori roll. The number of persons on the Māori roll would have a direct result on the number of Parliamentary seats allocated to Māori. If numbers on the Māori roll increased, the number of Māori electorates can also increase but if more Māori voters switched from the Māori roll to the general roll, the number of seats will decrease. In 1976 the new National Government

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[82] See T. Arseneau (1997) "The Representation of Women and Aboriginal Peoples Under PR: Lessons From New Zealand" *Policy Options* Vol. 18 (9) and The New Zealand Electoral Commission (2005) *History of the Vote: Māori and the Vote,* http://www.elections.org.nz/study/history/Māori-vote.html, accessed 31 May 2007.
[83] Sorrenson (1986) p.B21.

decided that the number of Māori seats was to remain fixed at four, despite the numbers enrolled on the Māori roll.[84] The 1993 Electoral Act, like the repealed 1975 legislation, permitted the number of Māori seats to go up and down depending on the number of people enrolled on the Māori roll.[85] The number of Māori seats increased gradually to the total of seven for the 2002, 2005 and 2008 general elections.

The Māori seats became particularly prominent during what M. P. K Sorrenson calls the "Second Phase", from 1887-1936.[86] This was during the rise of the Young Māori Party, a group of young, university educated Māori including Sir James Carroll, Sir Apirana Ngata, Sir Maui Pomare and Sir Peter Buck. Once elected, these men were

> [a]lso able to compete on an equal footing with their Pakeha counterparts in Parliament, being lawyers and doctors of the highest calibre and fluent in both English and Māori unlike the former Māori MPs.[87]

They fulfilled an important role, not simply by increasing the amount of Māori in Parliament, but by working for Māori issues. This was particularly true of Ngata, who advocated strongly for Māori land and culture issues. Another central factor in Māori political mobilisation was the influence of the Ratana Church. The Ratana Party, founded by Tahupotiki Wiremua Ratana, won two of the Māori seats in the 1935 general election. Its two members joined the Labour Party and supported the new Government.[88] This was the beginning of an alliance between Ratana and the Labour Party, and would help ensure that Labour dominated the

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[84] The New Zealand Electoral Commission (2005) *History of the Vote: Māori and the Vote.*
[85] The New Zealand Electoral Commission (2006) *2006 Māori Electoral Option Resource Kit* http://www.elections.org.nz/news/meo-resource-kit.html, accessed 31 May 2007.
[86] Sorrenson (1986) p.B29.
[87] R. Dibley (1993) *Māori Representation in Parliament: The Four Māori Seats*, MA Thesis, Political Science Department, Victoria University of Wellington.
[88] Sorrenson (1986) p.B40.

Māori seats for many years to come.[89] Indeed, when Tabacoff was writing on the Māori seats in 1975, he argued that "the Māori MP is still very much a Labour Party man and his position on the economy, for example, has always been in accord with Party policy."[90] Some believed that the relationship was more beneficial to the Labour Party than Māori. Fleras describes the way in which the Labour Party leaders of 1935 "reneged on many of the earlier promises for fear of alienating Pakeha supporters on charges of pandering to the Māori mandate."[91]

The Labour Party dominated the Māori vote after 1943, with little challenge or attempts at Māori political mobilisation until after Labour's defeat in the 1975 general election. Matiu Rata, the Māori Labour MP from Northland, resigned and set up his own party, Mana Motuhake, to provide Māori with their own political party and to give them a voice within Parliament. Rata felt that Māori interests were being subjugated to Pakeha interests by both the major political parties, but his resignation was seen by many as disgruntlement at his demotion from the front bench.[92] Rata contested the Northern Māori seat in the 1980 by-election, but lost to Labour's candidate. Despite this, Mana Motuhake had grown in number; they stood candidates in the following four general elections: 1981, 1984, 1987 and 1990, but were unsuccessful on each occasion. Nevertheless, Walker claims that the Māori political movement "engendered fear in the Labour Party over its tenure of the Māori seats"[93] which were traditionally "safe" Labour seats. In 1991 Mana Motuhake joined with the New Labour Party, the Green Party and the Democratic Party to form a new Party, Alliance, in opposition to the economic reforms of the Labour Party. This relationship lasted until after the introduction of MMP when in 2001/02 the Alliance Party leader Jim Anderton left to found the Progressive Coalition. Internal divisions within the coalition saw the Alliance lose

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[89] For a more detailed examination of the Māori seats and political parties in New Zealand see D. Tabacoff (1975) "The Role of the Māori MP in Contemporary New Zealand Politics" in S. Levine (ed.) *New Zealand Politics: A Reader* Melbourne: Cheshire; McLeay (1980) and Fleras (1985).
[90] Tabacoff (1975) p.379.
[91] Fleras (1985) p.562.
[92] Walker (1992) p.390.
[93] Walker (1992) p.399.

support from voters and Mana Motuhake formally left the party after the 2002 elections and gradually disappeared from the political scene.

The New Zealand Labour Party has proved to be a powerful vehicle for increasing Māori representation, and as will be discussed in the following chapter, Labour was also a strong advocate for Pacific Island political representation. This suggests that unlike many of the other political parties in New Zealand, Labour has strong institutional structures in place which promote a diverse range of candidates, and they also appear to be ideologically supportive of Māori and Pacific Island political involvement in the Party. Nevertheless, as the remainder of this chapter explains, electoral change has seen many Māori voters move away from their traditional Labour links and explore ideas of Māori mobilisation under the Māori Party.

The Māori seats provide representation for the indigenous population of New Zealand in Parliament. Under FPP they allowed representatives of Māori to have an assured place in the halls of Parliament and provided the forum to address issues crucial to Māori as a group. After MMP was implemented, Māori could also enter Parliament through a political party, as a list or electorate MP, but these dedicated Māori seats ensure guaranteed representation. This change of electoral systems affected not only Māori, but Pacific Islanders and other minority groups who were not entitled to the same kind of political representation.

Electoral System Change

The road to New Zealand's new electoral system has been described as a "long and winding one."[94] From 1853-1993, New Zealand operated under the First-Past-The-Post political system. MPs were elected in single-member electorates and candidates did not need to win a majority of over 50% to win the seat. The idea of transferring to a proportional system was mooted in the late '70's and early 1980's with general voter dissatisfaction with both the major parties, National and Labour. In both the 1978 and 1981 elections, the Social Credit Party gained a large percentage of votes but a low share of the seats, something that voters found difficult to understand. Crucially for Labour, it gained a majority of nationwide votes for these two elections but fewer seats than did National. In 1984, the Labour Party's manifesto promised to establish a Royal Commission to examine some of the issues of low proportionality. The Royal Commission on the Electoral System was established in 1985, and consisted of five members: The Honourable John Wallace (chair), John Darwin, Kenneth Keith, Richard Mulgan and Whetumarama Wereta.[95]

The Aims of the Commission

The aims and points of reference for the commission covered a wide range of issues, from the type of electoral system required for New Zealand to the nature of Māori representation. It included queries about whether the numbers of MPs should increase, whether electoral districts should be redrawn and whether proportional representation should be adopted (See Appendix 3). The Commission examined several types of electoral systems as possible for New Zealand, including Single Transferable Vote (STV), Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) and Supplementary Member (SM). The Commission stressed that it was essential

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[94] S. Levine and N. S Roberts (1997) "MMP: the Decision" in R. Miller (ed.) *New Zealand Politics in Transition*, Auckland: Oxford University Press p.25.
[95] *Towards a Better Democracy* (1986) p.iii.

that Māori were "fairly and effectively represented in Parliament."[96] They noted that the electoral system that they chose:

> …should ensure that parties, candidates and MPs are responsive to significant groups and interests. To facilitate this, membership of the House should not only be proportional to the level of party support but should also reflect other significant characteristics of the electorate, such as gender, ethnicity, socio-economic class, locality and age.[97]

The report of the Commission was completed in 1986 and recommended MMP as the electoral system best suited to the needs of New Zealand. In addition, it recommended the increase of the number of MPs to 120, elected from single-member districts and from party lists. One of the most important advantages of MMP in the eyes of the Commission was that it should increase the amount of minority groups (women, Māori and ethnic minorities) in Parliament. The report noted that:

> It is generally accepted that parties have much more opportunity and incentive to ensure the election of representatives of interest groups, regions, women and ethnic groups in electoral systems based on lists of candidates than in other systems…the MMP system would allow the parties to achieve representation of significant groups and interest within our society.[98]

It also emphasised the fact that at the time of writing, there was still no representatives of any other minority groups in Parliament, except for Māori. It concluded that in order to rectify this problem, two things must occur. Firstly, parties needed to actively recruit both women and members of ethnic minority groups and secondly, these groups must see for themselves

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[96] The New Zealand Electoral Commission (2006) *Royal Commission criteria for judging voting systems* http://www.elections.org.nz/rc-voting-system-judging-criteria.html accessed 1 December 2007.
[97] The New Zealand Electoral Commission (2006) *Royal Commission criteria for judging voting systems.*
[98] *Towards a Better Democracy* (1986) p.50.

the benefits of "active party membership and strive for the political experience which positions of responsibility within their party's organisation can give them."[99]

The report devoted one entire chapter to the question of Māori representation and the issue was described as "the most sensitive of all the matters we have investigated, and one on which the views of our Māori member have carried considerable weight."[100] In addition to the chapter, the report provided a detailed appendix of the history of Māori political representation in New Zealand by MK Sorrenson, and an analysis of the voting patterns in the Māori seats by Professor Robert Chapman.[101] The report noted several submissions to the Commission by Māori and the consultation that had taken place with both Māori and political parties about the issues of representation. Interestingly, the majority of non-Māori submissions on the subject were in favour of removing separate Māori representation, while all bar one of the Māori submitters were in favour of retaining the guaranteed representation.[102]

As previously discussed, the Māori seats are not a permanent fixture in New Zealand's system of government. They were not entrenched either under the 1956 Electoral Act, as are the General seats, or under the 1993 Electoral Act. This drew criticism, especially from Māori. Ranginui Walker argued that this lack of entrenchment is a discriminatory measure, as the Māori seats are open to change at any time by a majority vote in the House.[103] If a government decides that the Māori seats are no longer necessary or desirable, their majority vote can remove them. The National Party, under leader John Key, has stated its intention of abolishing the Māori seats once negotiations over Treaty settlements were concluded in,

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[99] *Towards a Better Democracy* (1986) p.240.
[100] *Towards a Better Democracy* (1986) p.81.
[101] Sorrenson (1986).
[102] *Towards a Better Democracy* (1986) p.85.
[103] Walker (1992) pp.382-83.

approximately, the year 2014.[104] The National Party believed that 'there's no place for ethnically-based electoral systems in 21st Century New Zealand'[105] and that "the only way forward is to have a single system that unites us, rather than divides us."[106]

The Royal Commission noted the special significance of the Māori seats 'beyond the issue of political representation", but recommended that the seats be removed, in favour of a more proportional system. The Commission argued that the Māori seats did not equate to adequate representation for Māori because of the problems of large electorate size, the fixed number of seats, the domination of Labour in the seats, administrative problems and disapproval from non-Māori. They argued that a common roll would provide assurance that "all MPs and not just Māori MPs were in some way accountable to Māori electors."[107]

This issue of accountability of MPs appeared to be one of the major reasons that the Commission wanted to remove the Māori seats. The report stated that:

> [i]f Māori are separately represented, than non-Māori must be too. And if Māori MPs are primarily responsible only to their group, then by the same token non-Māori MPs must also be primarily responsible only to their group. It is not so much the separate representation of Māori that causes problems for Māori representation, but rather the separate representation of the numerically dominant non-Māori.[108]

The report also believed that Māori MPs had become dependant on the majority vote to enact any positive policy change for Māori, as they were too few to make a proactive difference on

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[104] J. Key (2008) *National on the Māori seats* National Party website
http://www.national.org.nz/Article.aspx?articleId=11909 accessed 2 April 2008.
[105] J. Key (2007) *National confirms position on Māori seats* National Party website
www.national.org.nz/Article.aspx?articleId=9245, accessed 1 June 2007.
[106] G. Brownlee (2006) *Māori option costs $308 for each new voter*
http://www.national.org.nz/Article.aspx?articleId=7631, accessed 1 June 2007.
[107] *Towards a Better Democracy* (1986) p.98.
[108] *Towards a Better Democracy* (1986) p.90

their own, and that their roles as representatives for a specific group had left them isolated from the majority of MPs, who could treat Māori issues as something to be dealt with solely by the Māori MPs. While the report certainly was in favour of and advocated for greater minority representation, the Commission felt that MMP and the lists gave minority groups a better chance at political representation than designated seats.

The report briefly addressed the issue of Pacific representation, discussing submissions that had been made by both women's groups and Pacific groups to advocate for "special electoral arrangements" such as the Māori seats. The Commission found that:

> As far as Pacific Islanders were concerned, their numbers are small, but they come from many diverse societies and it would accordingly be very difficult to arrange for appropriate representation for them. In any advent…the Commission sees great disadvantages in separate electoral representation for any group. On the basis of the Māori people's experience, we believe such arrangements would only serve to promote separation and division over issues that are of vital concern to women and to the Pacific Island community. The better course is to ensure that political parties recognise their responsibilities to facilitate the adequate representation of women and minorities.[109]

In concluding, the Commission noted that MMP was the system which would be "likely to provide more effective representation of Māori and other minority and special interest groups"[110] because of the party lists and the possibility of parties standing a wider range of candidates.

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[109] *Towards a Better Democracy* (1986) p.240.
[110] *Towards a Better Democracy* (1986) p.63.

Is Māori Representation Discrimination?

The Royal Commission's concern over separate political representation and the unease that Māori MPs would only speak for their Māori constituents was one that mirrored similar concerns about minority representation on a wider international stage. In reality, the MPs for the Māori seats and their counterparts from the "European" seats have both differences and similarities in terms of their function and responsibilities. McLeay notes that "the non-Māori MP represents all those within his electorate while the Māori MP represents the particular concerns of a minority group within New Zealand society."[111] Fleras comments that the early Māori representatives in Parliament were regarded as 'observers with speaking rights over issues of relevance only to Māori.'[112]

Supporters of Māori representation acknowledged the right of Māori as the indigenous people of New Zealand to have adequate political representation, and hoped that the introduction of MMP would allow more ethnic minorities in Parliament.

> Although they were not set up for this purpose, the Māori seats have nevertheless come to be regarded by Māori as an important concession to, and the principal expression of, their constitutional position under the Treaty of Waitangi. To many Māori, the seats are also a base for a continuing search for more appropriate constitutional and political forms through which Māori rights might be given effect. [113]

Arguments against the Māori seats include the belief that such privileges violate the principles of democracy, where everyone supposedly has the same opportunities, either to

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[111] McLeay (1980) p.44.
[112] Fleras (1985) p.556.
[113] Waitangi Tribunal *Māori Electoral Option Report*
http://www.waitangitribunal.govt.nz/scripts/reports/reports/413/9E5A41CD-DC92-4BD0-835A-FDB6309E2E0D.pdf accessed 19 June 2007.

enter Parliament as an MP or to have adequate political representation provided through their electorate MPs. Levine notes that:

> Debate [over the Māori seats] centres on the principle of equity, which is not easily interpreted on this issue. Is it 'fair' to other disadvantaged minorities to maintain separate representation, indefinitely, solely for the Māori? Is it 'fair' to the majority to maintain a guaranteed representation for one ethnic group?[114]

Critics of minority representation may argue that placing such emphasis on ethnicity is creating division in a country that prides itself on being 'multi-cultural'. It can be seen as establishing an 'us verses them' dichotomy by granting special rights and privileges to one group above another.

> Outwardly, the continued presence of the four Māori seats gives the appearance of communal representation in which 'being Māori' is more significant as a determinant of representation than where a person lives.[115]

It is difficult for any writer on democracy and representation to clearly define what is 'fair' to groups: on the one hand, arguments can be made for the 'fairness' of having an equal political system where everyone has the same opportunities and rights, but this is assuming that everyone as the same access and resources to the political arena. Literature has proven that this is not so. Minority groups, including women, ethnic minorities, the poor, and disabled are frequently underrepresented politically, and risk having their issues left out of political decision making as there is no one to speak on their behalf. The 'politics of presence' argument believes that minority groups need to have one of their own people speaking on their behalf, as only a member of the group can understand and advocate for

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[114] S. Levine (1979) *The New Zealand Political System* Sydney: George Allen and Unwin, pp.108-109.
[115] McRobie (1981) p.2.

their interests. As the indigenous people of New Zealand, and under the auspice of a constitutional framework that respects these rights, Māori are in a far better position than other minority groups to argue their case for guaranteed representation. This can happen on a twofold level; first, that they are 'entitled' to this representation as the indigenous people of New Zealand, and secondly, through the 'politics of presence' argument that only a Māori MP can speak on behalf of the Māori population and advocate for their best interests. However, as argued previously, there is still much debate over whether the method of having two sets of electoral rules based on ethnicity is "fair" to the rest of the population. McRobie elaborates on this dilemma and demonstrates why the issue of minority representation can become such a topic of debate. There is the complexity of having two separate standards of representation in New Zealand:

> New Zealanders take pride in the harmony of their country's race relations…yet they accept, largely without question, the continued existence of two totally separate patterns of Parliamentary representation in what is effectively a multi-racial state, one based on universal and equal suffrage regardless of race, the other based on the primacy of ethnic considerations.[116]

Following this, there is also acknowledgement of the fact that Māori do face barriers to having to having their voices heard politically, in that they are facing a political system that is dominated by European values and processes.

> New Zealand's electoral system is couched in terms of the dominant European values of the society. If a single Māori system is to occur, the Māori people must feel assured that…

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[116] McRobie (1981) p.4.

they are being listened to, and that a genuine attempt is being made to meet their needs and aspirations.[117]

Electoral reform was meant to overcome some of these institutional barriers for minority groups and increase their political participation. The results of the change to MMP were felt immediately after the first election under the new electoral system in 1996. Most notable was the increase of minority MPs that entered Parliament; an essential factor for both Māori and Pacific Islanders.

The Results of Electoral Reform

The first MMP election in New Zealand took place in 1996 to mixed reactions. While many felt that MMP had fulfilled its goals of increasing diversity in Parliament and giving power to the smaller parties, some resented the other aspects MMP had brought to New Zealand politics. These included giving the New Zealand First Party the power of "kingmaker" in the election aftermath, and the large numbers of MPs who 'jumped ship'[118] to other parties. Despite this, the statistics showed that MMP had certainly had an effect on the composition of Parliament. Not only was the number of MPs increased in the House from 99 to 120, but there was also a marked increase in women, minorities and Māori MPs.[119]

In 2001, a Parliamentary committee was set up to review MMP in New Zealand. It was made up of representatives of all the parties, except for New Zealand First who declined to participate, and was chaired by the Speaker of the House. New Zealand First refused to take part on the grounds that they believed it was a 'jack up' on the part of Labour and National to

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[117] McRobie (1981) p.14.

[118] Party-hopping, which also became known as "waka-jumping" is when MPs switch political parties after an election, causing an in-balance in electoral proportionality. Some well known party-hoppers at this time included Michael Laws (National Party to New Zealand First), Tau Henare (New Zealand First to Mauri Pacific) and Alamein Kopu (Alliance to Independent).

[119] S. Levine and N. S Roberts (1997) "The 1996 General Election" in R. Miller (ed.) *New Zealand Politics in Transition*, Auckland: Oxford University Press, pp.230-231.

get rid of MMP.[120] The committee was established under Section 264 of the 1993 Electoral Act, which stated that the House was required after April 2000 to establish such a committee to report on 1) the general electorates, 2) the provision for Māori representation and 3) whether there should be a further referendum on electoral change in New Zealand.[121] Because of the importance of the issues that the committee was considering, the House had asked that they reach a unanimous, or near unanimous decision on all issues. This was to ensure a fair process for the smaller parties represented on the committee who were more likely to be out-voted, and to avoid 'bloc' voting by a majority group. While the committee agreed that the status quo should remain on such issues as the number of seats in the South Island and that there should not be any legislative measures to support or enhance Parliamentary representation of women, ethnic minorities, or Māori, it was unable to reach a unanimous decision on the larger questions. These included such important issues as whether or not MMP should be retained, the number of members in the House of Representatives, whether there should be another referendum to decide if MMP was kept, and whether the Māori seats should be abolished or retained. The Government responded that it "notes that changes to the voting system should not be made lightly, nor be too frequently embarked upon."[122] It also stated that it:

> [a]cknowledges the difficulty that the Committee had in reaching consensus on many of the major issues… Changing any major constitutional arrangements would require a higher level of consensus from the public than currently appears to exist. In the absence of that high degree of consensus, the

[120] J. Vowles, P. Aimer, J. Karp, S. Banducci, R. Miller (2002) "Reviewing MMP" in J. Vowles, P. Aimer, J. Karp, S. Banducci, R. Miller and A. Sullivan (eds.) *Proportional Representation on Trial: The 1999 New Zealand General Election and the Fate of MMP*, Auckland: Auckland University Press p.176.
[121] MMP Review Committee (2001) *Inquiry into the Review of MMP*
http://www.elections.org.nz/uploads/review_of_mmp.pdf, accessed 2 February 2008.
[122] *Government Response to Report of the MMP Review Committee on Inquiry into the Review of MMP* (2001)
http://www.justice.govt.nz/pubs/reports/2001/mmp-inquiry/mmp-review-report.pdf accessed 2 February 2008.

Government is of the view that it would not be appropriate to recommend any significant amendments at this time.[123]

After the advent of MMP, the Māori Party was set up by Tariana Turia, a former Labour Party MP, and Dr Pita Sharples, a Māori academic. The catalyst for the establishment of the Māori Party was debate over the seabed and foreshore, and the ownership rights of Māori over these areas. In 2003, the New Zealand Court of Appeal ruled that the Māori Land Court did have jurisdiction under the Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993 to determine whether the foreshore and seabed in an area of the Marlborough Sounds had the status of Māori customary land.[124] This created concern that Māori would be able to claim ownership of the entire foreshore and seabed: a move the Labour Government hoped to counter by introducing legislation to ensure public ownership. Support for the Government's position (Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004) was divided, with the National Party criticising it as providing too many concessions to Māori and many of the Māori iwi (tribes) angry that it was denying Māori their customary rights as tangata whenua of the land. The Government's Māori MPs were placed in a difficult position, caught between the position of their party and the desires of the group they identified with and were meant to be representing. Labour's junior Minister, Tariana Turia, had indicated her disapproval of the Government's position and the prospect that she might vote against the Foreshore and Seabed Bill. As discussed in Chapter 2, MPs breaking away from the Party position was something that was strongly discouraged, unless the matter was a conscience vote, which the Bill was not. Consequently, Turia and another Māori MP, Nanaia Mahuta, who also did not support the Bill, were cautioned that voting against the Government's Bill would result in dismissal from ministerial posts and could

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[123] *Government Response to Report of the MMP Review Committee on Inquiry into the Review of MMP* (2001).
[124] See Mark Hickford. 'Law of the foreshore and seabed', *Te Ara - the Encyclopedia of New Zealand,* updated 21-Sep-2007
http://www.TeAra.govt.nz/EarthSeaAndSky/OceanStudyAndConservation/LawOfTheForeshoreAndSeabed/en accessed 17 March 2008 and J. Ruru (2004) "A politically fuelled Tsunami: The foreshore/seabed controversy in Aotearoa Me Te Wai Pounamu New Zealand" *Journal of the Polynesian Society* Vol. 113 (1) for further information on the Foreshore and Seabed case.

possibly affect their careers within the party. Although the Labour Caucus eventually allowed Turaia and Mahuta the opportunity to cross the floor and vote against the Bill, Turia decided in addition to voting against the Bill, to resign from the Labour Party and force a by-election in her Te Tai Hauauru Māori electorate. Mahuta voted against the Bill but did not leave the party. Consequently, Labour leader Helen Clark announced that Turia was removed from her ministerial portfolios. Clark argued that the Labour Party had worked hard to put Māori issues on the political agenda and felt Turia was focusing too strongly on one issue.

> This government has made tremendous strides in reducing Māori unemployment and supporting Māori achievement in many areas. It is of concern that Mrs Turia does not wish to continue to support that work. A by-election now is a waste of everybody's time and money and the Labour Party will not be participating in it.[125]

National Party member Gerry Brownlee argued that Turia should have been removed much earlier, as she had not demonstrated the required 'support and responsibility' for the governments position.

> She is in clear breach of section 3.22 of the Cabinet Manual which states 'a Minister's support and responsibility for the collective Government position must always be clear'. Tariana Turia's 'support and responsibility' is anything but 'clear'. Helen Clark is employing two sets of standards, one for Māori Ministers and another for non-Māori.[126]

This incident was a clear example of how multiple representation can affect MPs, forcing them to choose between the competing needs of various groups. In the case of Tariana Turia, her loyalty to the Māori community and her role as their representative outweighed the

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[125] H. Clark (2004) *Tariana Turia relieved of ministerial responsibilities*, Media Statement, 30 April 2004, http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PA0404/S00505.htm accessed 18 September 2007.
[126] G. Brownlee (2004) *Tariana Turia should be gone already*, Press Release, 28 April 2004, http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PA0404/S00439.htm accessed 12 March 2008.

demands of her party. Brownlee's comments also demonstrate the problems MPs representing minority groups can encounter, when they are seen to have special privileges granted to them because of their minority status.

After leaving the Labour Party, Turia fought and won her seat in Te Tai Hauauru as a member of the newly formed Māori Party. Like Mana Motuhake, the Māori Party was seen as a means to unite Māori behind a single political movement. In the 2005 election, the Māori Party won four of the seven Māori seats and had the sixth largest party vote. At the 2008 general election, the party aims to win all seven Māori seats and "[t]o liberate the Māori electorates from the political domination of the current government".[127] The Māori Party is an example of political mobilisation along ethnic grounds, appealing to issues that affect the Māori population of New Zealand. This form of political unity is seen as vital to ensure Māori have adequate representation in the House, but also to protect the rights of Māori as the indigenous people of New Zealand. In this respect, Māori differ from the Pacific community, who are a migrant group and thus have a lesser claim to the allocation of certain "rights" that are given to Māori. Nevertheless, when investigating change to New Zealand's electoral system, the Royal Commission placed emphasis on the need for political representation of both Māori and other ethnic minority groups, including Pacific Islanders.

At the time of writing, no changes have been made to the MMP system. In the 2005 newly elected Parliament, there were 121 MPs: 39 of these were women, 21 were Māori, 2 were Asian and 3 were Pacific Islanders.[128] This was an increase from the last FPP election in 1993, which was made up of 21 women (out of 99 MPs), 7 Māori, 1 Pacific Islander and no

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[127] The Māori Party *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*
http://www.Māoriparty.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=61&Itemid=44 accessed 12 June 2007.
[128] See New Zealand Electoral Commission (2006) *Māori, Pacific and Asian MPs 1990-2005*
http://www.elections.org.nz/electorates/ethnicity-mps.html accessed 10 June 2007 and *Women in Parliament 1933-2005* (2006) http://www.elections.org.nz/electorates/women-in-Parliament.html accessed 10 June 2007.

Asian MPs.[129] MMP does appear to have produced a more diverse Parliament, which was one of the aims of the Royal Commission when it recommended electoral change for New Zealand.

Conclusion

It is clear that the circumstances surrounding the rights to political representation are not the same for all minority groups in New Zealand. Consequently, the roles of the minority MPs will not be the same either. For Māori MPs, representational roles can be increasingly complicated depending on how they are elected. As previously outlined, the New Zealand Labour Party has traditionally held a monopoly on the four Māori seats, meaning that the MPs elected there are operating under dual mandate: firstly from the Māori that elected them and secondly, from their allegiance to the Labour Party. No other minority group in New Zealand faces such clear division of roles and as demonstrated in the case of Tariana Turia, this can lead to issues of where an MP's loyalty lies. For the MPs of the Māori Party who won the Māori seats in the 2005 general election, the issue of who they represent is much clearer because the desires of their electorates and their party are likely to be in concord. Both seek the advancement of the rights and interests of Māori and as they have been accorded the right to speak on the groups behalf from both their party and their electorate, divisions of interests are less likely to emerge. Tabacoff argues that the representational role of the Māori MP is clearly defined.

> The Māori MP has been designated to represent a particular
> racial and cultural community of a certain geographical area. If
> he is a defender of constitutional interests he must basically
> remain a defender of Māori interests. [130]

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[129] J. Vowles, P. Aimer, H. Catt, J. Lamare, and R. Miller (1995) *Towards Consensus: The 1993 Election in New Zealand and the Transition to Proportional Representation,* Auckland: Auckland University Press, p.102 and New Zealand Electoral Commission (2006) *Māori, Pacific and Asian MPs 1990-2005.*
[130] Tabacoff (1975) p. 380.

The Māori seats were initially established under New Zealand's First-Past-the-Post electoral system, a plurality system that proved difficult for minority groups to be elected to Parliament, as candidates for general electorates were selected to appeal to the majority of voters. Thus despite their four allocated seats, Māori found it difficult to increase their representatives in the House. Other minority groups faced even greater difficulties in gaining representation, as they lacked allocated seats in Parliament. Moves towards electoral reform provided a timely opportunity to rethink the political status of minority groups in New Zealand and the eventual change of the electoral system encouraged an increase in minority MPs in Parliament.

As been shown in this chapter, the idea and practice of minority representation has played a significant role in New Zealand's political history. Māori representation was and still remains a contentious issue for New Zealand, with supporters and detractors among both Pakeha and Māori. This thesis has shown how opportunity structures in New Zealand enable minority representation and analysed how these affect the case of the Pacific community, as both an ethnic minority and an immigrant group. Needless to say, Pacific Island people in New Zealand do not have the same claims to representation that Māori, as the indigenous people of the land, can make; however, the issues that dominate debate over separate representation are valid for all minority groups. Essentially, should some groups have the right or the mechanisms for separate political representation and is there a place for descriptive representation in New Zealand? The issues raised by the 1986 Royal Commission seem to demonstrate, that for them at least, minority representation was both important and necessary for the democratic process in New Zealand. However, issues were also raised by the Commission as to the suitability of the Māori seats to ensure this representation, and it was argued that these seats increased, rather than removed, political division between ethnic groups. Their criticism of the Māori seats links back to the earlier criticism of descriptive

representation which argues that if an MP speaks solely as a representative of a particular group, then they are "ultimately only responsible to the particular community that elected them."[131] In other words, Pakeha representatives will have no incentive to argue for the rights of Māori, or Māori MPs for the best interests of the Pacific community, or Pacific MPs for the rights of Asian immigrants. It is useful here, to consider whether there is any difference between the ways in which minority representation is implemented - for example, a person can freely advocate for increasing diversification in Parliament, without supporting allocated seats for minority groups in Parliament.

In the case of the Pacific MPs, most are happy to operate within the political 'mainstream' as will be discussed in the following chapter, and do not seek either special seats or a designated political party for Pacific people. This does not mean though that special measures should not be taken to increase minority representation in Parliament, as suggested by the Royal Commission; be it through electoral reform, ensuring political parties encourage diversity through their candidate selection, or promoting the concepts of political participation and representation among minority groups. The example of the Māori seats demonstrates the importance of representation both as a measure of reaffirming the identity of a minority group and as a means of advocating for its needs in Parliament. The examples set by Māori, particularly in regards to political mobilisation, have inspired many Pacific Islanders to seek greater political participation. While they are not entitled to guaranteed electoral seats, Pacific Island people are able to make use of the benefits of MMP to increase their numbers of political representatives. The rise in numbers of Pacific MPs since the advent of MMP from one to six has shown that the Pacific community is just one of many minority groups that have reaped the benefits of electoral reform in New Zealand.

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[131] *Towards a Better Democracy* (1986) p.90.

Chapter 4 – Pacific People, Parties, and Mobilisation

Pacific people are an integral part of the New Zealand community, with large numbers migrating to New Zealand during the 1960's and 1970's. Migration of Pacific people to New Zealand has steadily increased, with large populations of Samoans, Cook Islanders and Tongans now living and working in New Zealand. (See Graph 1)

Graph 1: Pacific Born People in New Zealand, 1961 – 2001[132]
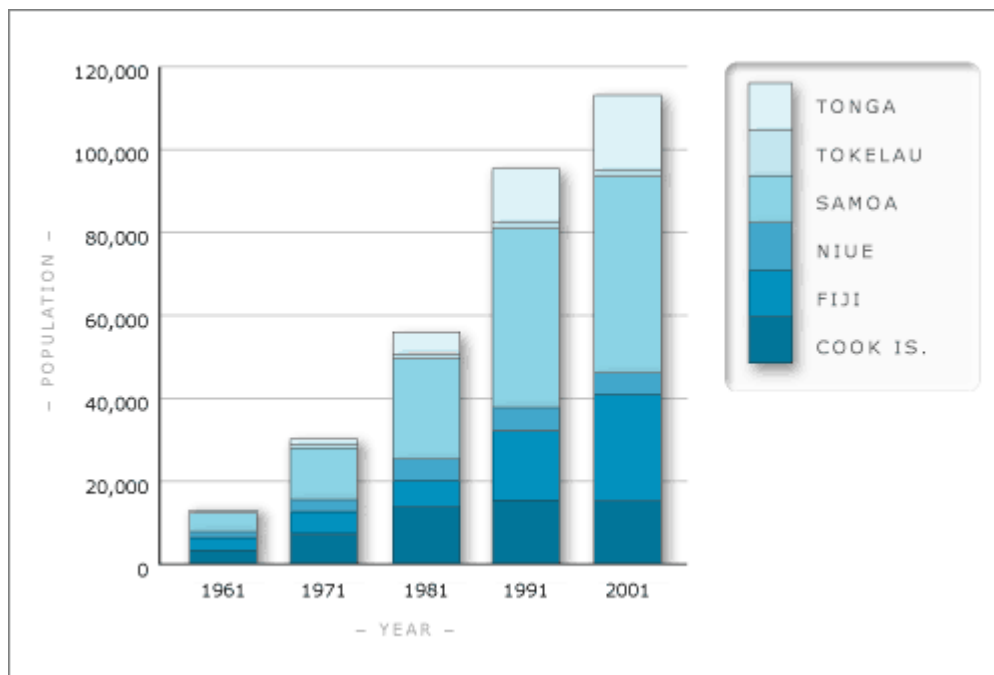
 Source: Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand

These groups of new migrants tended to settle in similar geographical areas, often to be near family or friends who had already lived in New Zealand. 93.4 per cent of Pacific peoples living in New Zealand in 2006 lived in the North Island. Two-thirds (66.9 per cent) of Pacific peoples lived in the Auckland Region.[133] Due to these migration patterns there are certain areas in New Zealand that have a high Pacific population. Consequently there are a number

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[132] Te Ara: The Encyclopedia of New Zealand "History of Immigration"
http://www.teara.govt.nz/NewZealanders/NewZealandPeoples/HistoryOfImmigration/15/ENZ-Resources/Standard/4/en, accessed 12 April 2008.
[133] Statistics New Zealand, *Pacific Profiles 2006*, http://www.stats.govt.nz/analytical-reports/Pacific-profiles-2006/default.htm accessed 9 December 2007.

of electorates with large numbers of Pacific voters, and after the most recent general election in 2005, three of these five electorates had a Pacific MP. Although the electorates in New Zealand with large populations of Pacific people have, in recent years, voted into office a Pacific MP (See Table 2), this is not always the case. In the Manurewa electorate, the Labour candidate, George Hawkins, comfortably defeated the National candidate, Fepulea'i Ulua'ipou-OMalo Aiono, who is Samoan. This seems to demonstrate loyalty to the Labour Party, who has traditionally held the support of the Pacific Island community, rather than support of a Pacific candidate. Another interesting factor to note is that the Labour Party stands Pacific candidates in electorates with large Pacific populations; however it is unclear whether this suggests that the Party also believe the Pacific community is more likely to vote for one of its own. There have not been enough Pacific candidates running from political parties other than Labour, or in more 'general' seats to discern why and how Pacific people are voting, nor the survey evidence to provide any conclusive data on the subject, and this thesis does not have the scope to cover such material.

Table 2: Pacific Dominated Electorates[134]

Electorate	% of Pacific Islanders	MP post-2005 election
Mangere	49	Taito Phillip Field
Manukau East	34	Ross Robertson
Manurewa	24	George Hawkins
Maungakiekie	22	Vui Mark Gosche
Mana	20.5	Luamanovao Winnie Laban

Source: New Zealand Parliament Electorate Profiles

After the 2005 general election, 2.5% of all MPs were Pacific Islanders, representing the 6.5% of the population recorded at the 2001 census as Pacific Islanders. At this time, there were three MPs who identified as themselves as Pacific Islanders: Taito Phillip Field, Luamanuvao Winnie Laban and Mark Gosche, all from within the Labour Party.

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[134] New Zealand Parliament (2008) *Electorate Profiles* http://www.Parliament.nz/en-NZ/PubRes/Research/Electorates, accessed 2 April 2008.

Taito Phillip Field, the first Pacific Island MP in New Zealand, was elected in 1993 to represent Otara. Mark Gosche also entered as a list MP in 1996, and gained an electorate seat in the following three elections. Luamanuvao Winnie Laban, the sole female Pacific Island MP, entered Parliament as a list MP in 1999 and was elected to the seat of Mana in 2002. The only Pacific Island MP from outside Labour's ranks was Arthur Anae, who entered Parliament via the lists in 1996 to become the first National Party Pacific MP. In 2006, the Labour MPs were joined by the list MP Charles Chauvel who is of Tahitian descent, who entered Parliament following the retirement of Jim Sutton, another Labour MP. This brought the total of Pacific Island MPs in the House to four. In late 2007, it was announced that Su'a William Sio would be joining the list of Pacific MPs, entering the House via Labour's list and also replacing a retiring MP, Dianne Yates. Sio, like Field, Laban, and Gosche, is of Samoan descent. Su'a William Sio was sworn in as an MP on April 1 2008.[135]

Table 3: Number of Pacific Island MPs 1993 - 2005[136]

Pacific Island						
	No. electorate MPs	No. list MPs	Total no. MPs	Size of Parliament	% of all MPs	% of population at previous census
1993	1	n/a	1	99	1.0	5.0
1996	1	2	3	120	2.5	5.8
1999	2	1	3	120	2.5	5.8
2002	3	0	3	120	2.5	6.5
2005	3	0	3	121	2.5	6.5

Source: New Zealand Electoral Commission *Māori, Pacific and Asian MPs 1990-2005*

In contrast to the relatively low percentage of Pacific Island MPs compared with the proportion of the population, Māori have a greater percentage of MPs in the House than their total population.

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[135] M. Houlahan (2008) "Newest MP urges House to address youth issues", *New Zealand Herald* http://www.nzherald.co.nz/section/story.cfm?c_id=280&objectid=10501507 accessed 2 April 2008.
[136] New Zealand Electoral Commission (2006) *Māori, Pacific and Asian MPs 1990-2005* http://www.elections.org.nz/electorates/ethnicity-mps.html accessed 13 July 2007.

Table 4: Number of Māori MPs 1993 - 2005[137]

Māori						
	No. electorate MPs	No. list MPs	Total no. MPs	Size of Parliament	% of all MPs	% of population at previous census
1993	7	n/a	7	99	7.1	13.0
1996	7	9	16	120	13.3	15.1
1999	9	7	16	120	13.3	15.1
2002	10	9	19	120	15.8	14.7
2005	7	14	21	121	17.3	14.7

Source: New Zealand Electoral Commission *Māori, Pacific and Asian MPs 1990-2005*

The Asian population of New Zealand, like the Pacific Island community, is also noticeably under-represented, although the two Asian MPs as of 2007 represent an immigrant group whose rising population numbers in New Zealand have been relatively recent. The Asian percentage of the population is still dramatically increasing, and one would expect that soon their political representation would reflect that.

Table 5: Number of Asian MPs 1993 - 2005[138]

Asian						
	No. electorate MPs	No. list MPs	Total no. MPs	Size of Parliament	% of all MPs	% of population at previous census
1993	0	n/a	0	99	0.0	3.0
1996	0	1	1	120	0.8	5.0
1999	0	1	1	120	0.8	5.0
2002	0	2	2	120	1.7	6.6
2005	0	2	2	121	1.6	6.6

Source: New Zealand Electoral Commission *Māori, Pacific and Asian MPs 1990-2005*

In terms of Pacific representation, the Labour Party has a much higher percentage of Pacific Island MPs than any other party and this demands further exploration to analyse why the Pacific MPs believe this is the case. The remainder of this chapter shall therefore examine Pacific political mobilisation, the role of political parties, and their relationship with the

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[137] New Zealand Electoral Commission (2006) *Māori, Pacific and Asian MPs 1990-2005*.
[138] New Zealand Electoral Commission (2006) *Māori, Pacific and Asian MPs 1990-2005*.

Pacific community. It discusses perceptions of the past, present and future Pacific MPs on their relationships with their political parties.

Pacific Political Mobilisation

Despite being a migrant community in New Zealand, Pacific people have made several attempts to become politically mobilised and advocate for the best interests of their community. Examining these forms of mobilisation creates a wider perspective on the relationship between Pacific people and politics in New Zealand. It also demonstrates the important role that political parties play, both as institutions which increase representation for Pacific Island people and as a means of obtaining political support from the Pacific community. There have been several political movements, both past and current, that aim to capture the Pacific vote by providing a "Pacific Party". Among these have been the Mauri Pacific Party, founded in 1998, and the Polynesian Panther Party which was founded in 1971 and developed out of the revolutionary theory of groups like America's Black Panther Party and the teachings of Che Guevara. More recently, there have been attempts by the new Christian-based Family Party, the newly formed New Zealand Pacific Party, and even the Māori Party, to capture the Pacific vote traditionally held by Labour.

Political Movements and Parties

The Polynesian Panther Party (PPP) was one of the earliest attempts to politically mobilise Pacific people in New Zealand. It was set up in June 1971 and was strongly influenced by the American Black Panther Party, which aimed to promote civil rights and black nationalism. The PPP came out of inner city Auckland, and was made up of people from diverse Pacific backgrounds – from Samoa, Tonga, the Cook Islands, and even some Māori.[139] Most

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[139] Māori Independence Site *The Evolution of Contemporary Māori Protest,* http://aotearoa.wellington.net.nz/back/tumoana/, accessed 12 January 2008.

members were young, university students but from working class backgrounds. They were influenced by the notion of black unity, and supported the Māori group, Nga Tamatoa.[140]

> The revolution we openly rap about is one of total change. The revolution is one to liberate us from racism, oppression and capitalism. We see many of our problems of oppression and racism are tools of this society's outlook based on capitalism; hence for total change one must change society altogether.[141]

A statement by the PPP notes that the group's formation was the result of the "complete dissatisfaction the Polynesian youth has in today's way of life"[142] and a growing political awareness combined with a desire to change the system. While the party was vocal about its support and inclusion of Māori, many of its themes were couched in more divisive language when referring to the 'white community'.

> Sometimes we find it's a waste of time rapping to the white community about problems and how we are working towards a better society with racial harmony as its theme…Our battle is also a battle for the European. He must determine on which side he will choose to stand. Hopefully for his survival, it will be on our side.[143]

The group aimed to unite Pacific Islanders and Māori, who were acknowledged as part of the Polynesian race. It supported Nga Tamatoa, as well as other political movements by Māori activists, and attempted to use forms of protest such as demonstrations, street marches and rent strikes to raise public awareness of issues for Pacific people in New Zealand. In addition to protest, they also ran education, legal-aid and food programmes, which provided support and assistance to Polynesians. The PPP had their headquarters in Ponsonby, with chapters in

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[140] *The Evolution of Contemporary Māori Protest,* accessed 12 January 2008.
[141] Polynesian Panther Party (1975) "What We Want" in S. Levine (ed.) *New Zealand Politics: A Reader* Melbourne: Cheshire p.226.
[142] Polynesian Panther Party (1975) p.225.
[143] Polynesian Panther Party (1975) p.227.

South Auckland, Christchurch, Dunedin, and even in Sydney. June 2006 marked the 35th anniversary of the Panther movement and although the PPP is no longer an active voice on the political stage, Dr Melani Anae, Polynesian Panther and sister to former Pacific MP, Arthur Anae, claims that "[w]e still hold on fast to those ideals we had as 17 and 19 year-olds and that was to be proud of being Pacific, don't stand for any crap from the establishment and to expose any kind of racism."[144]

Formed in 1998, the Mauri Pacific Party (MPP) was another attempt to unite Māori and Pacific Islanders under a common political banner. The name translates as "spirit of the Pacific" but in reality, the party had a stronger Māori focus than a Pacific one, three of its high profile MPs were Māori, and the party had a number of policies favourable to Māori. The MPP emerged out of the New Zealand First party. In the 1996 general election, New Zealand First, who had a number of Māori MPs, won 17 seats including the five Māori seats, and assumed a kingmaker role in Parliament. Peters decided to form a coalition with the National Party, but when relationships between the two parties broke down in 1998, he was sacked from Cabinet and in retaliation removed New Zealand First from the coalition. This effectively forced New Zealand First MPs back into Opposition, a decision that some of its MPs were unhappy with. Eight New Zealand First MPs resigned from the Party, although not from Parliament; establishing themselves as Independents. Five of these formed the MPP: Tau Henare, Tuku Morgan, Rana Waitai, Jack Elder and Ann Batten. Tau Henare, who had been Minister for Māori Affairs prior to the splits with National and New Zealand First, remained in that role despite being a member of Mauri Pacific.

Despite attempting to appeal to the Māori and Pacific vote by formulating policies based on cultural traditions, such as the practice of 'ifoga' or marae justice, Mauri Pacific was never

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[144] Television New Zealand (2006) "Polynesian Panthers mark 35 years" http://tvnz.co.nz/view/page/411365/752642 accessed 20 January 2008.

well-received by the public, perhaps because it was born out of deserting New Zealand First, the party which had got the MPs into Parliament. At the 1999 election, MPP put forward 20 candidates and a party list of 22 people. However none of these were successful and Mauri Pacific only managed to gain 0.19 per cent of the total vote, putting it in thirteenth place. This was a huge disappointment for the Mauri Pacific Party and it disbanded shortly afterwards.

Like the Polynesian Panthers and the Mauri Pacific Party, attempts have been made to link Pacific Islanders with Māori as a cohesive political force. In his maiden speech, New Zealand's first Pacific MP, Taito Phillip Field, argued that Māori were Pacific Islanders thus reiterating the connection between the two groups.

> I have been attributed as being the first Pacific Island Member of Parliament in New Zealand. I take pride in that status but feel humbled by the responsibility that it carries. As a passing thought, I have wondered about the accuracy of this tribute. The islands of Aotearoa are islands in the Pacific Ocean…so in a sense all New Zealanders are Pacific Islanders…the Māori people were the first Pacific Island people of New Zealand. With that thought I officially greet all those present as fellow Pacific Islanders.[145]

In their early days, the Māori Party, formed in 2004, promoted these links and encouraged Islanders to consider standing for seats in three heavily dominated Pacific areas: Porirua, Mangere and another Auckland seat, although it seemed there was little support for that idea among either Māori or Pacific people.[146] Tariana Turia, co-leader of the Party, made headlines in 2006 when she suggested that the Māori roll should be opened up to Pasifica, as well as Māori, on the grounds that Māori were a Pacific people and because of the under-

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[145] Taito Phillip Field "Maiden Speech" 10 March 1994, *Hansard,* New Zealand House of Representatives.
[146] Television New Zealand (2004) "Māori Party wooing Pacific Vote".
http://tvnz.co.nz/view/news_national_story_skin/431648%3Fformat=html, accessed 14 September 2007.

representation of Pacific Islanders in Parliament. This idea was opposed by Shane Jones, a Māori MP from within the Labour Party, who argued that the Māori seats were a result of the Treaty of Waitangi, and an acknowledgement of the rights of Māori as tangata whenua, or people of the land. United Future leader Peter Dunne also opposed the idea, noting that the Royal Commission on the Electoral System which had investigated MMP had found that a proportional representation system had reduced the need for a Māori, or separate ethnic roll.

> To suggest that Pacific peoples should also have their own seats just because they are ethnically close relatives of Māori is a baseless proposition that was disappointing to hear from the Māori Party. …Further ethnic division of New Zealand's Parliament would be acrimonious to good government, and to suggest otherwise is unhelpful and ill-considered.[147]

The Labour Party, The National Party and Pacific Islanders

As previously discussed, all the Pacific MPs in New Zealand have come from the two major political parties, Labour and National. This suggests that these parties either provide opportunity structures for Pacific people to participate in politics, or that they have large support bases among the Pacific population. With this in mind, the relationship between the Pacific MPs and the major parties is explored in greater depth through the use of interview data.

The Labour Party

The New Zealand Labour Party has had a long history of involvement with the Pacific community in New Zealand and five of the six Pacific MPs have come from within its ranks. There are a number of factors that may have influenced the proportionally high number of

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[147] P. Dunne (2006) *Pacific Island seats ill-considered,* http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PA0612/S00189.htm, accessed 20 September 2007.

Pacific MPs in the Labour Party; these include Labour's history of support of the Pacific Islands, the Pacific Sector Council, and a tradition of voting Labour among the Pacific communities. Labour has also been seen to reward its Pacific MPs, with safe seats and ministerial positions, with Taito Phillip Field, Luamanuvao Winnie Laban and Vui Mark Gosche all receiving portfolios. Gosche was the first Pacific Island person to become Minister of Pacific Affairs, a position that is now held by Winnie Laban, which was seen as a great achievement by the Pacific community. In an interview, Gosche stressed the importance that the Labour Party placed on having Pacific representation within the Party and the role it had played as the first major party to do so.

> The Labour Party was prepared to take risks in 1990 with Taito Phillip Field, and why I say that is because that was a very difficult election. We were heading for an absolute hammering - the seat was called Otara but it had a huge part of the neighbouring suburbs that weren't Pacific at all. When he didn't get elected, they didn't turn him off, they put him back up the next time and he won the seat on very similar boundaries. Somebody had to take the risk first and it was the Labour Party, and I don't think anyone else in New Zealand politics, despite what they might say, has ever put their money where their mouth is. I looked at the Alliance and New Labour and their list, and I couldn't find anybody Pacific. The National Party did with Arthur Anae, to their credit, but they dumped on him and he'll tell you that. But the Labour Party's done it not only in central government, but they've done it in local body politics for years, and there's no other Party that's really taken that stand.[148]

Su'a William Sio noted the importance of Labour's Pacific Sector Council for Pacific people, both from within the Party and through policy that emerges from the input of the Council.

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[148] Interview with M. Gosche, August 2007.

> Labour has a political structure that encourages Pacific
> participation in the party and is actively engaging with Pacific
> people throughout the country. As far as I'm aware National
> does not have a participating structure for Pacific people. So
> you've got the Pacific Sector Council, a structure which allows
> Pacific people to participate and advocate for issues that are
> important, it puts them in charge of what they want to
> achieve.[149]

The Labour Party's Pacific Sector Council is made up of various Pacific people who are members of the Labour Party. The Pacific Sector Council has the roles of organising the Pacific communities within the Labour Party structure and advocating to the MPs or Ministers issues that are relevant to Pacific people.[150] In 2008, the Council is chaired by Jerome Mika and its officers are elected at the Party's Annual Conference. The Council meets regularly during the year and works closely with the Pacific MPs. Council members also play an important role in promoting Pacific candidates, as Su'a William Sio, a former chairperson of the Council, describes:

> I sit on the New Zealand Council as the Pacific Vice-President
> and where selection takes place in a community with a high
> Pacific population, they [Council members] will generally ask
> for participation from a Pacific representative on the selection
> panels. But they are able also through their networks, to lobby
> some of the other sectors within the Labour Party to make sure
> someone is represented.[151]

In 2004 Sio, Gosche and Laban played an important role in strengthening Labour's Pacific Sector Council. They decided to take up the challenge of campaigning nationally, and now

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[149] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.
[150] See New Zealand Labour Party, *New Zealand Labour Party Constitution and Rules*, Wellington, December 2003.
[151] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.

have a core group in Auckland, in Wellington, in Dunedin and Christchurch. These groups work within the regions to promote Pacific issues and campaigning for the local Labour Party structures and there are also Pacific people within the various structures of the Labour Party who ensure a Pacific perspective is promoted on policy issues.[152]

A common theme in the interviews with the Labour MPs was the benefits that the Labour Party had given the Pacific community in New Zealand. Laban stressed the importance of the work that the Labour Party does for Pacific people:

> The Labour Party has been very good for our people. The income related rent, the huge reductions in unemployment and the huge commitment to us in the arts, affordable health, all those practical tangible things…It's not about me as an individual. It's about a party that represents values that nurture and support our people and their potential and that's why I'll always always be deeply Labour, be committed to Labour, and deeply committed to trying to stimulate much more political activity.[153]

Chauvel discussed the idea of diversity and Pacific representation within the Labour Party as being central to the relationship between the Party and the Pacific community. He also linked rising Pacific political representation to the development and strengthening of Māori representation in New Zealand.

> I think that earlier than most major and minor political movements, Labour realized that the model that it had successfully managed to graft on with its Māori representation was one that would serve to pursue that goal of integration and equality with other groups: women, who traditionally were locked out of a lot of political achievements - once the feminist movement came along in the 70s and 80s, it found a strong

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[152] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.
[153] Interview with W. Laban, February 2007.

voice inside Labour…Labour would regard a Māori element in its party as vital going forward, and it sees the same importance with having Pacific representation, I don't think the Labour Party could conceive of itself as existing if it didn't have a Pacific wing, and I think that's the fundamental difference between it and any other party. Labour would see itself lessened and diminished without Pacific representation.[154]

In his maiden speech to Parliament, Su'a William Sio stated the need for a wide range of Pacific groups in Parliament, and the fact that Labour was the only Party to have Pacific MPs:

Pacific communities other than Samoan dream of representation in this House - the 15 stars of the Cook Islands, Niue, Tonga and the other New Zealand Pacific communities. Labour is the only party with Pacific MPs. We are working hard to ensure that more come through the ranks. It is also a dream shared by Asian communities throughout New Zealand. I believe that all political parties in this House must embrace diversity in the make-up of their teams. This is a noble goal. I will do my part in making this happen.[155]

Gosche and Sio both discussed the importance of Labour's longstanding history with the Pacific community, both in New Zealand and in the Islands. Gosche noted that there were historical bonds between the Pacific Islands and the Labour Party – citing the example of the relationship between the Labour Party and Samoa which goes back many years. He argued that this prior relationship meant that when Pacific people came to New Zealand, they already understood what the Labour Party stood for.[156]

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[154] Interview with C. Chauvel, July 2007.
[155] W. Sio "Maiden Speech" 1 April 2008, *Hansard,* New Zealand House of Representatives.
[156] Interview with M. Gosche, August 2007.

Gosche also argued that the linkages between Labour and the unions were important, as many Pacific people worked in low income jobs and were grateful for the support from the party.

> I think quite naturally, people supported the Party that they perceived was looking after the interests of low paid working people. I think that will change over time as more Pacific people get more highly educated, enter into self-employment, business, and so on. They'll not just support Labour out of habit, because Mum and Dad did, they're going to look at it through new eyes. So the challenge there is to keep that loyalty by delivering them things that are meaningful to them and that means a whole lot of things to a whole lot of people and making sure that we deliver on education, which is something that people in the middle classes find important, so why would it be any different for a Pacific person who is now middle class, middle income? If we are doing the right thing, we should keep their support, but it's an evolving area. [157]

Sio noted the differences between the Labour Party and the National Party in regards to Pacific people.

> National's policies have been hard on Pacific families, such as the Employment Contracts Act which slashed a lot of the wages and some of the benefits for working people. It took away time and a half; it took away all those things that workers had struggled for over many years. Overnight that was all slashed. Labour's policies such as the increase of the minimum wage, income related housing, health; all of those things generally support Pacific families throughout. [158]

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[157] Interview with M. Gosche, August 2007.
[158] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.

He also argued that although other parties may have Pacific candidates, this does not ensure that they have the structures in place to support Pacific people.

> When Arthur was in the National Party, he was on his own and he hadn't had the history with the Party. He was shoulder-tapped as I understand it, it was not part of any real commitment from National to increase the Pacific voice or representation, otherwise there would have been a more organised process or structure for it whereas with the Labour Party you've got Pacific people in positions at all levels of the Party who are able to influence lots of decisions and policy and therefore we have a strategy where we are grooming people through that structure, whereas National doesn't have one. You have got a woman, Fepulea'i Ulua'ipou-O-Malo Aiono, with the National Party who should be an MP but isn't an MP. When she campaigned in 2005, she was sticking up for them [the National Party] all the way through and got a lot of flack from the local community for protecting racist remarks from Don Brash. She stuck up for him and National but I don't believe that they really want her to be an MP; otherwise she would be in there as a list MP already. [159]

Sio believed that political participation by Pacific people is improving but encouraged them to think careful about which party they stand for.

> In 2005 I saw more Pacific people participating and standing for various parties, most of them have had no experience with the parties and they were seduced by somebody shoulder tapping them and saying 'come stand for us'. And at that time Labour was getting a lot of flack for the Civil Union Bill and the Prostitution Bill so that stuff turned a lot of people off, but they stood which was the key thing. My challenge is to say "if you want to stand for National or the Māori Party or whatever,

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[159] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.

get involved with the party and see if you can influence their policies see how the structure operates." But because those parties don't have those structures and there's not a Pacific person there that's prepared to welcome them, those other parties will only shoulder tap for their convenience when they need a Pacific face.[160]

Labour Party President Mike Williams is confident that the party will retain its support among the Pacific Island community.

The Pasifica people in general are the strongest and most reliable part of the Labour coalition of votes. It hasn't flinched in many, many, many years and I do not expect to do so this time. That's a matter of tradition and also a matter of policy.[161]

He noted the changes MMP has made for Pacific Islanders political involvement and the continuing strength of the Pacific movement within the Party.

I think what is happening in the Pasifica community, is the discovery that their vote under MMP, the party vote is crucial and important and indeed, won the last election, in part, for Labour…We've got some younger Pacific candidates coming up, our Pacific sector council is one of the strongest within the party – it meets regularly, it contributes to policy, and you see them at our conference.[162]

The Labour Party has traditionally been supported by Pacific community, helped in part, by demonstrating their commitment through having Pacific Island MPs, and policies to help the low income earners in New Zealand - frequently made up of many of the Pacific Island community. The electorate seats of Mangere, Mana and Maungakiekie, which all have

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[160] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.
[161] M. Williams (2008) speaking on "The Pacific Vote" *Insight Programme*. Radio New Zealand, 10 February 2008, http://www.radionz.co.nz/__data/assets/audio_item/0008/1329857/inst-20080210-0812-Insight,_10th_February_2008_The_Pacific_Vote-wmbr.asx, accessed 18 February 2008.
[162] M. Williams (2008) speaking on "The Pacific Vote"

Pacific MPs, are seen as "safe" seats for Labour. However, there has been talk of a backlash against some of Labour's socially liberal policies that have been at odds with the conservative religious beliefs of many of the Pacific Island communities.[163] Many have protested about the civil union legislation that recognises homosexual partnerships (2004) and the prostitution law reform (2003), changing their long-standing Labour loyalty to more socially conservative parties. This desire for traditional Christian-based principles has allowed political parties such as United Future, New Zealand First and the new Family Party, backed by fundamentalist Destiny's Church, to scoop up support from the Pacific Island communities. In 2007, the Family Party announced it aims to challenge and win the South Auckland electorates of Mangere and Manukau in the 2008 general election; both electorates have substantial Pacific Island populations. Mangere resident Jerry Filipaina who is of Samoan and Māori descent will contest the Mangere seat in 2008, while party leader Richard Lewis will stand in Manukau East. Filipaina has stated:

> Mangere desperately needs change. Part of that involves
> bringing a fresh face to politics, with a fresh set of values and
> policy direction. The Family Party is that fresh face and
> direction. I don't say that likely [sic] because like many of my
> Pacific brothers and sisters, I used to support Labour.[164]

Former Labour MP Taito Phillip Field announced in 2007 that he plans to run in Mangere under the newly formed "New Zealand Pacific Party" which he claimed will be a party that "represents Christian values and stands for what our people really believe in."[165] Interestingly, despite the name, the Party appeared to be predominantly targeting Christian supporters, rather than the Pacific community. Field said the Party is "open to all" and

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[163] A. Gregory (2005) "Voters Adrift on Shifting Moral Tide" *New Zealand Herald*, http://www.nzherald.co.nz/topic/story.cfm?c_id=268&objectid=10342123 accessed 20 September 2007.

[164] J. Filipaina (2007) *The Family Party* http://www.thefamilyparty.org.nz/ accessed 20 January 2008.

[165] T.P. Field (2008) speaking on "The Pacific Vote" *Insight Programme*. Radio New Zealand, 10 February 2008, http://www.radionz.co.nz/__data/assets/audio_item/0008/1329857/inst-20080210-0812-Insight,_10th_February_2008_The_Pacific_Vote-wmbr.asx, accessed 18 February 2008.

claimed it already had around 700 paid up members, as of February 2008.[166] However, his decision to run in Mangere will be affected by the outcome of his court case, which is due to take place in April 2008. Field faces 15 charges of bribery and 25 of obstructing or perverting the course of justice and will not be able to stand if convicted. (See Appendix 1)

Notwithstanding critics who say that Labour's support among the Pacific Island communities is decreasing[167], the party itself seems to believe it can maintain the loyalty of Pacific voters. In 2007, Tapu Misa, a Pacific journalist for the New Zealand Herald newspaper, publicly questioned Labour's commitment to the PI community, after Luamanuvao Winnie Laban was appointed Minister of Pacific Island Affairs, but remained a Minister outside of Cabinet. Misa claimed this action effectively "left the portfolio outside of the decision-making process"[168] as well as being seen as a failure to promote Laban, who is a popular Pacific Minister. Laban responded by stating that:

> I am honoured and humbled to be appointed Minister of Pacific
> Island Affairs…Pacific people have a keen sense of history;
> they know Labour has stuck with them during the good times
> and the bad, and they remain loyal to Labour.[169]

The Labour Party has demonstrated that minority representation is important to how it operates as a political party. It appears to be ideologically sympathetic to the ideals of minority representation, it has the structures in place to ensure that groups such as Pacific Islanders have a voice on policy and candidate selection, and in return, it has the voting support of much of the Pacific Island community. The Party has demonstrated that it is

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[166] NZPA (2008) *Field Moves to Register 'Pacific Party',* http://www.stuff.co.nz/4408370a6160.html accessed 12 March 2008.

[167] For further discussion of Pacific people and the Labour Party in recent years, see A. Gregory (2005) "Voters Adrift on Shifting Moral Tide"; T. Misa (2007) "Labour can't afford to sideline the faithful" *New Zealand Herald,* http://www.nzherald.co.nz/section/466/story.cfm?c_id=466&objectid=10474352&pnum=0 accessed 20 November 2007; W. Laban (2007) "Pacific People have a reason to stand tall" *New Zealand Herald* http://www.nzherald.co.nz/section/1/story.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10476803 accessed 20 November 2007.

[168] Misa (2007) "Labour can't afford to sideline the faithful".

[169] Laban (2007) "Pacific People have a reason to stand tall".

prepared to stand Pacific candidates in "safe" electoral seats and has the highest number of Pacific MPs of any political party in New Zealand. The reciprocal nature of the relationship between the Pacific community and the Labour Party is one that must not be taken for granted and is subject to change at any time. It requires a give and take attitude from both sides to ensure political support for Labour by the Pacific community, and the delivery of polices and candidates that speak on behalf of and advocate for, Pacific people in New Zealand.

The National Party

The National Party is the other major political party in New Zealand. Formed in 1936 out of the rural-based Reform Party and the urban-concerned Liberal Party, the National Party has traditionally been seen as "white, male, and provincialised."[170] National have had just one Pacific MP, and have not been traditionally associated with the Pacific community in New Zealand. This is, however, something that the party hopes to change in the lead up to the 2008 general election and Party leader John Key has spoken of his need to have a more "ethnically diverse" party.[171] However, Labour leader Helen Clark believed that the National Party has a long way to go before they have a more ethnically diverse caucus.

> If you look at their party conferences and meetings they are very, very narrowly based in comparison with Labour. I think they've got a lot of catch up to do there and I wouldn't think on their present structure and organisation it would be easy for them.[172]

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[170] C. James (2005) "Finding a new way through the Treaty for National" *New Zealand Herald,* 4 October 2005, http://www.colinjames.co.nz/herald/Herald_2005/Herald_column_05Oct04.htm accessed 12 March 2008.
[171] P. Oliver (2007) "Nats open channels for some fresh blood" *New Zealand Herald* http://www.nzherald.co.nz/section/story.cfm?c_id=280&objectid=10449730&pnum=0 accessed 20 July 2007.
[172] P. Oliver (2007) "Key wanting to attract politicians from Indian community" *New Zealand Herald* http://www.nzherald.co.nz/section/story.cfm?c_id=280&objectid=10478979&ref=rss accessed 29 November 2007.

The National Party does not have a strong history of Pacific Island representation. Their only Pacific MP was Arthur Anae who left the party in 2002 after being demoted down the party list, although in the 2005 general election, the Party did have one Pacific candidate, Fepulea'i Ulua'ipou-O-Malo Aiono. Despite their lack of Pacific candidates, National appears confident it can regain some of the Pacific vote from Labour. I was able to discuss the issue of Pacific political representation with Party President, Judy Kirk and former National Party Pacific MP, Arthur Anae.

When questioned what the National Party view on recruitment of Pacific Island MPs was, Party President Judy Kirk was vague, stating that:

> It's encouraging, very encouraging. The directives come from the [National Management] Board. We are really trying to grow our membership and get new people on board.[173]

The National Party appeared to lack clear strategies for how they would implement greater involvement by minority groups, despite hopes for a more diverse Party. The question was also raised whether a Pacific candidate for the National Party would stand in a seat with a high Pacific demographic.

> Well it depends. Obviously that's good thing to do because they represent their people, but if that's not possible, there are other ways of doing it. They can stand in a seat in the area that they live [in] and they can come through on the list. But it makes sense for them to be in an electorate where there were Pacific Island people, because they're Pacific Island and they probably come from that electorate. Most electorates want a local person.[174]

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[173] Interview with J. Kirk, August 2007.
[174] Interview with J. Kirk, August 2007.

Kirk dismissed the idea of a National Party version of Labour's Pacific Sector Council, but believes that her role as President is to welcome Pacific groups and build relationships within the Party.

> We've had groups in the past, a Pacific Island advisory group.[175] We used to have a women's advisory group, a Māori advisory group, but now we do everything as one, and it seems to be working better…It's all about relationship building; I'm absolutely convinced about that, and making people feel welcome…I absolutely do see that I've got to build a relationship and I've got to encourage candidates and make sure that when there's Party functions on, that Pacific Island communities are included, and to encourage the Pacific Island community in policy development.[176]

While the National Party does not have a Pacific structure in place, it does have a unique form of recruitment and training for its potential candidates.[177] This is the Candidates' College or Candidates' Club which provides support for those considering standing for the National Party. Party President Judy Kirk described the role of the College:

> What they do is they apply to the College, that's like an application form, you write about yourself and your referees and why you want to be an MP. We formed a committee from the board and former MPs, we look at applications, it's not a selection committee – it's a process of suitability. They then come to Candidates' College and have training during the electoral cycle, before the candidate selection comes up…it's a really good thing, it makes people understand what it's about. I've had Jenny Shipley talk to them about the role of an MP,

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[175] This was an informal group and was not in the Constitution and Rules of the New Zealand National Party, unlike the women's and Maori groups which were formal and had vice-presidencies.

[176] Interview with J. Kirk, August 2007.

[177] For a more in-depth study of National's candidate selection methods and the Candidates College see G. R. Stephens (2008) *Electoral Reform and the Centralisation of the New Zealand National Party*, MA thesis, Victoria University of Wellington.

I've had Gerry Brownlee talking about the House and how it's run, the select committees etc, we've had media training, we've had some new MPs talking about my first campaign, I've had MPs talking about me and my family, I talk about the process of selection and the visions and values of the National Party. It's just a jolly good look at what it's really going to be about. Plus it builds a really good team dynamic where people get to know one another. We introduced the College in 2003 and in the first intake, last time, 24 came out of the College and are now MPs. They've got a really good relationship and get on really well.[178]

Kirk believes that her Party has what it takes to appeal to Pacific voters, and that under Leader John Key in 2008, the Party is moving to become more ethnically diverse. Kirk acknowledged that the National Party has traditionally been seen as a "white" political party but hopes to change this perception.

Most people care about education, they care about health, they care about whether their kids are going to be safe and they want someone with vision who's going to see that it happens for them. It doesn't matter if you're brown, yellow, white, blue, does it? … I mean the National Party sometimes, in the past, has been seen as a white, middle class…and people get nervous if they can be included. I've done everything I can to break that down and John is the same. We want everyone to be involved, we want everyone to feel included and we have done as much as we can, going to the communities. We've got to go to them and say welcome; we're doing all sorts of visits. John [Key] has done a lot of work with the Indian and Asian communities, plus Pansy Wong MP, has done a good job. I said to the Pacific Island community…that if we're serious about what we're saying, we have to demonstrate it. Words are easy, and the best demonstration for us, as a party, is to make sure that we select

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[178] Interview with J. Kirk, August 2007.

Pacific Island candidates in a place where they will get elected.[179]

She believed that there are many similarities between the needs of the Pacific community and the values of the National Party.

> Talking to the different groups in the Pacific Island community, when you talk about the principles and values of the National Party, they're very similar to theirs – about hard work and being rewarded for it, freedom to do what they want to do, get government out of your life, all these thing. It's about forming relationships by having contact, by the coming to see us, by us going to see them. And involving them in policy and most importantly having representation.[180]

Key himself agrees that getting support from the Pacific community is important for National's campaign and has outlined the strategies he intends to follow to achieve this.

> We've had some meetings last year and which will wrap up this year, with fairly senior church leaders. They were just at a level of engagement and saying tell us about your issues, tell us about the things that matter to you, and we'll talk to you about where we're going and what we want to do. So that's been in a very preliminary sense. The second part will be the selection of not only good candidates in the seats but I want to see a Pacific Islander within our caucus ranks. Thirdly, we've had some approaches from people there, who have said there's dissatisfaction there; one or two high profile Pacific Islanders who are quite keen to help us and so they might run or they might not run, but they may certainly lend support to us.[181]

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[179] Interview with J. Kirk, August 2007.
[180] Interview with J. Kirk, August 2007.
[181] J. Key (2008) speaking on "The Pacific Vote" *Insight Programme*. Radio New Zealand, 10 February 2008, http://www.radionz.co.nz/__data/assets/audio_item/0008/1329857/inst-20080210-0812-Insight,_10th_February_2008_The_Pacific_Vote-wmbr.asx, accessed 18 February 2008.

There is also an acknowledgement that party support for the Pacific community has to start much earlier than the lead-up to an election.

> I think it's up to us as well, when there's new Pacific Island people coming to New Zealand we should make sure that our people are welcoming people. I think it starts a lot earlier. I think it's got to be something that's happening all the time…we've got to make sure there's a connection there and we've got to make sure there's lots of visits, we need to attend their functions, they come to our home and we go to their home. That's how we get to know each other, all that stuff is really important. So that's one of the stages. The other one is getting them involved in the policy development.[182]

Judy Kirk felt there were improvements that the National Party could make in regards to the Pacific community and wanted to change the perception that Pacific voters need vote for Labour because that is what has "always been done".

> In some electorates like Taupo where I come from, there's quite a large [Pacific Island] community in Tokoroa and some of the things that have happened there I think are wrong. Like people literally being picked up on Election Day and being taken to church, and told "the Labour candidate is the only one and we'll vote on the way out". A Pacific Island woman told the Leader and I at that meeting that when new immigrants arrived in New Zealand, the Labour Party were more welcoming. So it's up to us. What I'm trying to do with my colleagues, and I know John feels very passionate about it, is making people feel included and welcomed and setting up relationships.[183]

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182 Interview with J. Kirk, August 2007.
183 Interview with J. Kirk, August 2007.

John Key has stated that National aims to target the younger, university educated Pacific voters, who lack the traditional loyalties to the Labour Party.

> There are young Pacific Island voters there who are very ambitious for what they want to achieve, they know they can be very successful and a lot of the things that we stand for fit the value set that they do [have]…yes it will take time and it's slow, but we can work our way through that. So I'm pretty optimistic.[184]

Arthur Anae has a unique perspective on the National Party and Pacific people as he has, to date, been the sole MP for the Party. He left National in 2002, after being demoted down the Party's list – an action which, at the time, was seen as by some in the Pacific community as a slight against them. Anae stated he joined the National Party because he was "totally appalled by Labour's dependency attitude" and that he was grateful for his time in Parliament and respected both the leader at the time, Jim Bolger, and the Party for giving him the opportunity to be an MP.[185] He noted however, that had he joined the Labour Party, he may have been more successful politically.

> If I had joined the Labour Party a long time ago, I would be a Minister by now. They have always rewarded their PI MPs with safe seats and National gave me nothing. They basically said, "Why should we support you when your people don't support us?"[186]

He described leaving the National Party as a response to their treatment of him and the Pacific community.

> I left the National Party in 2002 because I wasn't happy with my list placing and they didn't support the many initiatives I

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[184] J. Key (2008) speaking on "The Pacific Vote".
[185] Interview with A. Anae, September 2007.
[186] Interview with A. Anae, September 2007.

> put forward to get support from the Pacific and small minority groups they needed to get on side. They were only interested in small minority groups that had deep pockets irrespective of what colour they were, we didn't make the grade. How could I tell my people that the National Party supported them when it was obvious that I was in a low position? They would have just laughed at me. I am not a hypocrite and so I left. I won't be a puppet to any son-of–a-bitch.[187]

He noted the anger that he felt during his time in the Party towards some of the attitudes of National Ministers towards Pacific people in New Zealand. It is something that he still feels strongly about today, but he acknowledged that in recent years the party has had a change for the better.

> I think the National Party have woken up and seen the light. They are now scrambling for Pacific people because John Key and Bill English are smart and they see it that way. John Key represents Pacific Islanders, he is a state house boy and I think there is quite a bit of empathy from the community for that. But I don't think National has anything in the pipeline for us, and I am worried that the MPs who get in will just be puppets and yes men. That's the problem with the Labour Pacific MPs; they are just "yes men" who want to protect their seats and won't fight for the issues of our people.[188]

Despite this, Anae acknowledged that the Labour Party has done many good things for the Pacific community in New Zealand and that historically it has unified Pacific people.

> The only thing that binds Pacific people in this country is the Labour Party (even Churches aren't as united as the Pacific People who support the Labour Party). And they deserve that because when Pacific People and other small minority groups arrived in NZ in the 1950s and 60s, Labour came to them and

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[187] Interview with A. Anae, September 2007.
[188] Interview with A. Anae, September 2007.

said we will support you and they have. There is a growing group of young educated Pacific people now who could be part of the National Party but the question is, will the Party deliver for them? I have learnt that at the end, the only person who is going to be standing by you is yourself.[189]

One issue that Anae stressed as important was the role of the Pacific MP: he felt strongly that a Pacific MP's first loyalty is to the Pacific community and was disappointed by the attitude of many of the current Pacific MPs, who he saw as supporting the wishes of their party to the detriment of Pacific people in New Zealand. He stated that "I don't like people who capitalise on being a Pacific Islander but don't follow through for our people."[190]

It would be hard to stand as an independent; I wouldn't have the backing of a Party. I think Pacific people believe in me, but so many of them are locked into the Labour Party and they can't get away from it. I believe that Pacific people vote Labour or they don't vote at all.[191]

Anae also claimed that he is still associated in many people's minds as a National MP, despite having left Parliament a number of years ago. This may be because there has been no other Pacific National MP during this time.

I am still labelled a blue rabbit, as a member of the National Party, and it's been 6 years since I was in Parliament…I have no regrets about my time there; I just regret that they didn't treat us with dignity and respect, the Palagi doesn't understand Faaaloalo, when they do they will experience a new world.. In the end, I felt it was just tokenism.[192]

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[189] Interview with A. Anae, September 2007.
[190] Interview with A. Anae, September 2007.
[191] Interview with A. Anae, September 2007.
[192] Interview with A. Anae, September 2007.

Despite the circumstances of his departure, Anae felt that he did good work for Pacific people in his time in Parliament.

> Let's be honest, the things that matter to PI people are the things that I put in there. My top three achievements for PI people were the portability of pensions, which National introduced, the quota system for Pacific people and the Pacific radio, both of which Labour introduced and I give them credit for that. I haven't been given credit for anything, but I'm not looking for credit, I just want to get the job done.[193]

Is there room for a Pacific party?

Although the two major parties are the only two who have had Pacific MPs, there have been recent moves from smaller parties to attract Pacific candidates. One of the newest political parties to register for the 2008 general election is the New Zealand Pacific Party, headed by former Labour MP Taito Phillip Field. Interestingly, none of the MPs supported the concept of a Pacific political party, despite earlier attempts by Pacific people to mobilise the community. The majority of MPs seemed to feel a Pacific party could not work because of a lack of numbers. William Sio noted the difference between Pacific people and Māori:

> I don't support a Pacific party. I think New Zealand supports a Māori party because they are the indigenous people of the land, but I couldn't see them supporting a Pacific party. Māori accept that there are genealogical connections with the Pacific. Pita Sharples has talked to us about wanting to get Pacific involved with the Māori Party, but they have a special legal status that we don't have and unless they are prepared to share that…..[194]

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[193] Interview with A. Anae, September 2007.
[194] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.

Arthur Anae stated emphatically that the idea would not work because of a small population and a lack of unity among Pacific groups. "A Pacific party is a load of rubbish. We don't have the numbers and there is no unity between Pacific people. Many people are selfish and here for themselves alone."[195] Winnie Laban agreed that a Pacific political party would not be feasible in New Zealand. "The problem is we don't have a big enough demographic to have our own party nor do I support that concept."[196] Phillip Field, on the other hand, argued that a Pacific party is necessary for New Zealand and that the Māori Party provides a successful model of ethnic mobilisation.

> I think Pacific people have been used as political fodder for too long and its time that our people now, as the Māori Party is proving, really need a vehicle that represents their aspirations and values.[197]

Conclusion

The Pacific migrant group is one that has helped shape the identity of New Zealand, not only as a multi-cultural nation, but also as a "Pacific nation".[198] The six former and current Pacific MPs have helped shape this identity, by becoming a visible face of the Pacific population in Parliament and, as I show in later chapters, advocating for issues that affect the community. Despite efforts to mobilise Pacific Islanders in New Zealand under a single banner, no Pacific political movement has ever maintained a stronghold of support for long. The Polynesian Panther Movement did succeed in uniting part of the Pacific community but was more a social movement rather than a political force.

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[195] Interview with A. Anae, September 2007.
[196] Interview with W. Laban, February 2007.
[197] T.P Field (2008) speaking on "The Pacific Vote".
[198] H. Clark (2007) "We are a Pacific nation and migration from the Pacific Islands to New Zealand has been significant. Increasingly Pacific peoples are having an impact in shaping our unique national identity." *From the Prime Minister's opening address at Commonwealth Local Government Conference, Auckland* http://www.clgc2007.org/index.cfm/pageid/209 accessed 18 March 2008.

Traditionally, the Labour Party has held fast to Pacific votes, as it is seen to provide resources and policies that help the Pacific community. In addition, five of the six Pacific MPs have come from within Labour's ranks, something that demonstrates to people that the Party is serious about advancing the welfare of the Pacific community. Nevertheless, by 2008, the National Party was hoping to gain more of the Pacific vote in the forthcoming 2008 general election and remove the perception that only Labour has the Pacific vote. Aiding National's goal is the establishment of the position of Minister of Pacific Island Affairs outside Cabinet, and the feeling that some of Labour's socially liberal policies, such as the Prostitution Reform Act 2003 and the Civil Unions Act 2004 are in opposition to traditional Pacific and Christian values. Party President Mike Williams and the majority of MPs listed here, on the other hand, believe that Labour has produced long-term benefits for the Pacific community and will keep their loyalty, despite the plethora of new parties clamouring for the Pacific vote. Despite attempts or suggestions that a Pacific party, which could have combined the traditional values of the Pacific community with practical support for the Pacific population in New Zealand, might be able to capitalise on the Pacific vote; the idea was rejected by most of the MPs as impractical and unnecessary, perhaps because it would eat up potential votes for the major parties. Although there is a history and a tradition of voting for Labour among the Pacific community, one feels that it should not be taken for granted and that the Pacific community has begun to realise that their votes are important. However, as we have seen, institutions play an important role in not only selecting candidates, but in providing a political environment which would attract Pacific people. In the following chapter, the Pacific MPs discuss their involvement in politics and the political institutions that enabled them to do so.

Chapter 5 – The Pacific MPs: Institutions and Involvement

The information gathered here and in the following chapter are the result of in-depth interviews with past and present Pacific MPs and the leader of the National Party, Judy Kirk, as well as additional public speeches, media statements and maiden speeches to Parliament. They document the experiences and thoughts of the people who are seen as representatives of the Pacific community in New Zealand, in their own words. This method provides a narrative structure which contributes not only to the theoretical issues of minority representation, but also provides comprehensive first hand knowledge of what being a minority representative in New Zealand entails. This chapter examines the ways in which the MPs became involved in politics, the barriers for Pacific people in politics, the impact of MMP on Pacific representation, and touches on why have there been so few Pacific Island MPs or candidates in New Zealand's history. The entry of an aspiring Pacific candidate into Parliament is a response to issues, mentors, and networks and these factors continue to influence the roles of Pacific MPs once they are inside the halls of government. There is a linkage between the institutions and issues that enable Pacific people to enter Parliament, and the roles that they play as political representatives.

Involvement in Politics

There were a variety of ways in which the Pacific MPs became involved in politics. Most had a background of party involvement before becoming an MP, and prior to their party membership, had undertaken a variety of roles, including union work and business. Several had a mentor, or a supportive political figure that encouraged them to put their names forward as MPs.

Luamanuvao Winnie Laban recalled her entry into politics as a response to perceiving the inequalities around her, particularly for Pacific people.

Sonja Davies asked me quite a long time ago to consider running and to be honest, I wasn't interested at that time. Sonja wanted me to run…when Prebble and Douglas had hijacked the party and I was not interested at the time. What really got me interested was the impact of the 1990s on our people…The impact of the economic restructuring on our people, in terms of psychological health, physical health, sickness, that loss of mana through losing your job, not having enough money to cope - that was my drive. I was driven by the injustices around treating people like that, ordinary New Zealanders. I was very happy because I went through the whole selection process and it was pretty tough, they put you through the mill but fair enough. I really loved it when I got into Parliament. I was on the Employment Relations Select Committee and we repealed the Employment Contracts Act. At the end of the day those are good scores for me personally.[199]

Vui Mark Gosche saw himself as having been politically active ever since he left school, and noted the role that "the big issues" played in his entry into politics:

I became a journalist, so I was reporting on politics and I got an early taste of what it was like and that was overwhelming. I used to report on city councils and found it fascinating because of the effect it has on ordinary people's lives. I found it fascinating to the point where I thought I couldn't easily continue being a journalist because of the requirement to be supposedly neutral. I got involved in trade unions before I left school at the freezing works and had a taste of what it was like working hard jobs and not having representation…I went on to university and teacher's college and became president of the student union at teacher's college, and as a result, was actively involved in the big issues of the day like the anti-nuclear issue, with warships coming into the harbour and protesting about

[199] Interview with W. Laban, February 2007.

that, sporting contact with South Africa, not only the All Blacks but the softball world cup that came here… So I think that for all of my adult life, post school, I've been active and involved in politics in one way or another.[200]

He noted his move from union involvement to the Labour Party was a natural one:

> Through the unions, we were affiliated to the Labour Party so I became a Labour Party member from 1981 onwards. I worked on a campaign in 1978 in Otara before I joined the Party and I knew political people. So when I became a trade union official full time, that meant going to Labour Party conferences and attending Labour Party meetings in my local area and you just get more and more active because you see that many things can't be achieved just through community based activism, in which the trade union is born. You could be involved at the community level, the local level or the business level, but you couldn't fix the inadequacy of the public health system or what needed to be done better in the schooling system by just being in trade unions. I decided that there should be better representation in Parliament before I stood, and I actively campaigned for Taito Phillip Field to be the first candidate, and that's probably a seat I could have stood for myself, but I thought he was a better person to put forward at that stage.[201]

Gosche also remembered the struggle to get a Pacific person into Parliament:

> He (Field) stood in Otara and didn't get elected, but we carried on our campaign of support for him and he stood again in 1993 and then he did get elected, so we were part of two campaigns. And that includes getting him selected within the Labour Party. We did a lot of work to convince people at that stage, because there hadn't been a Pacific person, that I was aware of, been

[200] Interview with M. Gosche, August 2007.
[201] Interview with M. Gosche, August 2007.

put into a safe winnable seat by any Party up to 1990, so we did a lot of work to ensure that happened.[202]

Later it was his turn to enter the political arena with the support of his wife and an important political mentor:

> By the time 1996 came along, I had decided that I had done all I could in the union movement and lots of people had for a long time encouraged me to go into Parliament and I suppose the two people that were important in encouraging me to do that were my wife and David Lange. He was retiring and he wanted me to get the nomination for his seat. It didn't happen that way – I stood on the Labour Party list and was selected at five or six on the list and that was a winnable position in the end. From my perspective, one of the factors that assisted me to get on a list position that high was the fact that I was a Pacific person, because clearly the Labour Party has an enormous support base among the Pacific community and there was a strong push within the Labour Party to recognise this by putting more people into winnable positions.[203]

This demonstrates that for potential candidates and political parties, the involvement of Pacific people is a supply and demand situation. Parties want Pacific people involved as a means of not only diversifying and providing a reflection of society, but as a means to acknowledge the Pacific community and perhaps increase their share of the party vote among the community. The benefits of Pacific representation are for candidates, political parties and the wider Pacific community.

Issues were also an important motivating factor for Charles Chauvel to become politically involved:

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[202] Interview with M. Gosche, August 2007.
[203] Interview with M. Gosche, August 2007.

I grew up in Gisborne in the 70s and 80s. It was a very comfortable middle class upbringing but it was one where the effects of the Muldoonist era were very strongly felt. It was a socially conservative place, we were economically closed, we weren't receptive to new ideas, everybody minded everybody else's business, no one was particularly proud of having a Polynesian heritage. Then when Labour came to power in '84 there was a massive opening up of the economy, there was the Māori renaissance, there was homosexual law reform, and because I'm gay that was very important for me. So there was a huge energy that was associated with the unlocking of society that that Labour government brought about and certainly the social justice aspect of the government's policies, the international peace and development aspects, and the pursuit of liberal openness were all very exciting for me so that's really what got me interested and involved and I certainly never wanted to see us go back to the way it was prior to 1985 when I joined the party.[204]

Arthur Anae's initial entry into the political scene was interesting for a number of reasons. Although he is known as the first Pacific MP for the National Party, he recalls that this could easily not have been the case:

In 1984 after a Metro write-up about me, I was approached by the National Party and asked if I wanted to join them. At the time, I declined but later I was approached by the CNR (Auckland Citizens and Ratepayers) and I joined them. I stood in the 1987 local body elections, which was an interesting experience…Then I was approached by National Party again and I said yes and then on the same Sunday morning, Jim Yandall,[205] who was a strong Labour man, said "I've signed

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[204] Interview with C. Chauvel, July 2007.
[205] Tanuvasa James (Jim) Yandall, QSM, was known as an "icon of the Pacific community". He was a keen member of the Labour Party and helped set up the Pacific Island branch in West Lynn, Auckland. He was part

you up for Labour". I said, "I can't do that, I've just joined up with National". And when they asked me to stand, the first thing I did was go back to him and tell him and he said "you've put a knife through my heart." I went back to the old man a few months before he passed away and apologised and admitted I made the wrong choice - he was right and I was wrong. I respected him as one of the few pioneering Samoans who came to NZ in the early days who stood up for the people.[206]

Labour's newest Pacific MP, Su'a William Sio, also had an extensive history of party involvement, as well as linkages to his fellow Pacific MPs.

> I got into politics formally about 1986 because I was asked by some of the elders who were on the Labour Party council to come and help out. It was just natural that we got involved, helped them out up their signs, distributed their leaflets, and we took over those manual tasks. Eventually I started thinking: I can do this, I can do more. In attending conferences and things you begin to learn what the political processes are and who is who. I ended up being chair of one of the Samoan branches, which ended up being quite powerful in the Otara electorate, and we were the ones who began to advocate that we wanted a voice in Parliament. We linked up with Mark Gosche who was in the union and we linked up with Taito Phillip Field who at the time was the Pacific Island Vice President of the New Zealand Labour Party. Through them we made connections to the hierarchy of the Labour Party and came through to get involved in the Labour Party Pacific Sector Council. That's how I got involved; I thought that I would rather be a decision maker than have somebody else making the decisions which affected me.[207]

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of a think-tank that set up what would become the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, a member of the Ministers Advisory Council from 1986-1989 and was an Auckland City Councillor.

[206] Interview with A. Anae, September 2007.

[207] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.

This is an example of one of the ways that Pacific networks can play a vital role in promoting and encouraging Pacific candidates, though mobilisation at ground level. It also reiterates the influence of issues on political involvement and the need to have a minority representative making the political decisions for the group.

Sio, like Gosche, had experience within the unions before putting his name forward as a candidate:

> I ended up working for the trade unions, educating people throughout the country and that gets your hands dirty, through campaigns and negotiations and meeting people. I left New Zealand after losing our first campaign for Taito which was quite devastating. I went overseas, worked for the Ombudsman's Office in Samoa and stayed away for eight years. I got involved with the public service association in Samoa, helped organise the private sector workers and worked with trade unions in the region. I came back in 2000 after my mum passed away and decided that Otara was where I grew up, so I would go back there and I started doing work in the community. It just so happened that a councillor at the time had health problems and he was standing down and the Labour Party endorsed me to replace him.[208]

On his return to New Zealand Sio noted there was still a lack of Pacific people involved in national politics and decided to put himself forward as a candidate. He stated, "[w]hen I came back in 2001 I was surprised that things hadn't progressed as I thought they would. The Pacific Sector Council was still there but it hadn't generated sufficient participation from the younger generation."[209]

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[208] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.
[209] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.

Barriers for Pacific People in Politics

One of the arguments behind the promotion of descriptive representation for minority groups is that they face barriers that prohibit their political involvement; be they cultural or institutional. I discussed the notion of perceived barriers for Pacific people and political engagement with the MPs and found a range of different opinions on the subject.

Gosche felt that Pacific people encountered the same barriers as anyone else who was attempting to stand as an MP, such as being selected as a candidate, and he noted the difference between electorate and list MPs in terms of campaigning. His comments demonstrate the ways in which list candidates may appeal to minority groups, or interest groups to help them enter Parliament.

> You have to convince people in your Party to select you and what comes from that is being prepared to do the groundwork, the spade work, get your hands dirty and prove your worth to people within the Labour Party because they are political, and then you've got to convince people to vote for you. On a list that's not so difficult, because they can't vote for you personally. In 1996 I stood as a list-only candidate, but what I did was to campaign very strongly in the Pacific community and the trade union community to say that you've got to give the Labour Party your Party vote if you want me to come in to represent you, because you can't get me in any other way.[210]

Gosche also stressed that despite the comparatively large number of Pacific people in Maungakiekie, he was elected to Parliament by the whole electorate. Merely being "Pacific" was not enough to secure his seat.

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[210] Interview with M. Gosche, August 2007.

When I stood in Maungakiekie for the first time, I was standing in a seat that has a reasonable Pacific population, but by no means a majority. It has a considerable Palagi population and they didn't seem to have any difficulty with who I was because they elected me with a bigger majority than we expected…I think those barriers and hurdles are the same as anybody would face in politics. You've got to convince people that you as an individual is worth voting for, and obviously people vote for me because I've got Labour beside my name, so that helps! [211]

Chauvel also noted the hurdle that faces Pacific and Palagi candidates alike: gaining entry into a competitive political environment where there were limited places available. He described his own experiences of attempting to secure a place on the party list in 2005.

The disadvantages or barriers were probably to do with that it was quite difficult to get new people in to a party in government that had been in office for a couple of terms and where there wasn't enormous amounts of, where people weren't leaving in droves, people were staying because it was a successful proposition, so the biggest barrier was trying to get into a caucus that was already effectively full, and I suppose I was fortunate to be able to rely on those connections and hopefully on my CV, so that a space eventually became available.[212]

Sio argued that his experience campaigning for Pacific MPs had demonstrated that there were specific barriers faced by Pacific people

In 1990 when we were agitating for a Pacific voice in Parliament there were people who said "you're not ready. As a community you are not ready." We would argue that nobody knows that except us and that's why I guess it was so devastating when we did lose that first campaign. So there are

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[211] Interview with M. Gosche, August 2007.
[212] Interview with C. Chauvel , July 2007.

barriers, and our first barrier is probably our own psyche that we were visitors to this country. But we are on this journey now and I say: we are here, this is our home. I'm an example, I was born in Samoa, grew up in Otara and I came back to Otara. So this is our home and like it or not, we are here to stay and we aren't going to move anywhere. In 1990 the ward of Otara was made up of Otara and Howick and on the Howick side - you would knock on their doors and they would slam it in your face, sort of "No way!" That was feelings not just outside of the party, but there were people inside the party who also felt that way. So there have been some changes and now I think the barriers are that we have people who are interested in being involved in politics, but they don't necessarily know how politics works…I think a barrier is lack of awareness of how politics works.[213]

Anae felt that there were no barriers to Pacific people achieving political office in New Zealand, but he did note that even the best attempts at campaigning could be thwarted. He expressed his disappointment at not being elected as Mayor of Manukau City; something he attributed in part to other people, including Pacific Islanders, suggesting the city was not ready to have a Pacific Island mayor.[214]

National Party President, Judy Kirk believed that, while there have been some barriers for Pacific people such as language, culture or lack of encouragement, things are improving.

You've got to involve people, bring them in, and bring them into your loop. You do that by policy development, you do that by relationship building and by backing somebody to be a face. Once more and more people come forward from the Pacific Island community to stand, the better it will be.[215]

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[213] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.
[214] Interview with A. Anae, September 2007.
[215] Interview with J. Kirk, August 2007.

Theoretical literature on representation has demonstrated that one of the barriers that face minority groups when attempting to gain political representation is a single-member electoral system.[216] New Zealand's move to a proportional electoral system (MMP) resulted in an increase in Pacific people in Parliament, thereby reducing one of the barriers for the political participation for minority groups.

Impact of MMP on Pacific representation

The change of electoral systems from FPP to MMP has seen an increase in the number of minority MPs in Parliament, as it enabled minority MPs to enter Parliament via a list system. With a large party list to fill, candidates are more likely to be selected from a wide range of groups, including ethnic minority groups, in order for the party to appeal to the greatest number of voters. Single-member constituencies, on the other hand, are more likely to have candidates that appeal to the majority group of voters - usually the dominant ethnic group, as winning electorate seats ensures political success. As discussed in Chapter 3, electoral system reform had a significant impact on the political representation of minority groups in New Zealand. It increased not only the number of Pacific Islanders in Parliament, but also the number of women, Māori, and Asians.

I asked the MPs whether they believed MMP has been beneficial for Pacific Islanders and found that all acknowledged the positive results of electoral reform. Representatives of both the two major political parties were in agreement in this case. Judy Kirk noted that:

> It's improved it. I mean, you only have to look at the line-up. I
> think MMP has woken us up a little bit about representation
> and I know certainly we were quite mindful of that when we
> did our list last time. Through the Candidates' College we

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[216] For discussion on electoral systems and minority representation in New Zealand see Banducci and Karp (1998) and (2004) and S. Banducci, T. Donovan & J. Karp (1999) "Proportional Representation and attitudes about politics: results from New Zealand" *Electoral Studies*, Vol. 18 (4) pp.533-555.

encouraged new people to come forward who perhaps wouldn't have come forward because they might have been nervous about where they were going…We hope through our list we'll be able to demonstrate diversity. MMP has made us all the more aware and you just have to look at the makeup of the Parliament. Just talking of women in politics, when I became president we had five women MPs and now we have 17. I'm proud of that.[217]

Laban felt that MMP has helped by bringing in voices and views of groups who can't quite muster a majority to have a strong voice, and by creating an informed debate, while Chauvel believed that the Labour Party was particularly strong on diversity of groups, even prior to MMP:

Clearly it has made Parliament more diverse, because you have across the parties more women, more Māori, more Asian MPs, more gay and lesbian MPs, but it's interesting to me to note how much of the diversity has come from a so-called 'old party', Labour, and I think that probably what it indicates is that prior to it coming into vogue under MMP, we were already active, like an MMP party, imagining ourselves as a coalition of groups that sometimes didn't always get to participate in the traditional structures of the nation but nonetheless, we knew had a great contribution to make; and we wanted to use the established political process to provide ourselves with a vehicle to have that participation and so we worked together and we realised that sometimes it's a balancing of interests and issues.[218]

Anae noted the importance of smaller parties in the MMP system, and how their increased importance and power could be beneficial.

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[217] Interview with J. Kirk, August 2007.
[218] Interview with W. Laban, February 2007.

> MMP is fantastic; it has given us new opportunities. It puts the brakes on politics; it makes sure no party has absolute power. Coalition partners can be the kingmakers and force the bigger parties to do things for the community. If National gets absolute power in 2008, they will forget we [the Pacific community] even exist.[219]

Chauvel explained the differences between running as an electorate MP in a predominantly PI area and standing in a seat where the Pacific population was relatively small, such as Wellington Central. This means that as the MP in this electorate, he would be representing the needs of his constituency while still maintaining an interest in needs of the Pacific community.

> I would be a little bit different to the traditional PI model, because if I stood and won in [Wellington] Central, I wouldn't be representing a predominantly or even a significantly PI seat. I think that it would bring about a new set of allegiances in that you would have the electorates interest to represent in Parliament, but I don't think it would mean that you would stop being intrinsically who you are or stop taking an interest in those perspectives or interests in trying to advance them as well, I think it would be more about trying to add another set of responsibilities to those existing ones and balance them adequately.[220]

Luamanuvao Winnie Laban believed that the fact that the Pacific electorate MPs were elected in general seats, by an ethically diverse population, is a great achievement.

> This is our opportunity because for me the fact that we're in here means we can do it. The other thing I've always been very

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[219] Interview with A. Anae, September 2007.
[220] Interview with C. Chauvel, July 2007. This interview took place prior to the nominations for the electorate of Wellington Central for the 2008 general election, which was eventually won by Grant Robertson. Chauvel will be standing for the seat of Ohariu in the 2008 election.

proud of is that I came in as a list MP and then I won my seat in Mana twice. There were three Pacific MPs: all got elected in general seats. The Māori MPs were elected only by Māori people but Pacific… it's quite wonderful that we've been elected by the general public. We have wonderful support from our Pacific community, but we've had all the other people, Palangi people, voting for us and that's really humbling, that's really neat. It just goes to show you that New Zealanders absolutely see that it's wonderful that we can be represented by somebody that doesn't look like them.[221]

Lack of Pacific Candidates: is it a Problem?

One of the interesting things about Pacific Island representation in New Zealand was that there has been so few Pacific MPs; only five in New Zealand's history and only since 1993. A point to consider was whether this was because there were small numbers of Pacific candidates in each party; perhaps Pacific people were simply not interested in being politically involved. I asked the MPs why they believed there had only been five Pacific representatives.[222]

Gosche believed that there were a number of reasons that Pacific representation might have low numbers:

> I don't see it as there have only been five. I just look at the statistics that say since MMP came into being we've been represented in here pretty well. I think that we are not up to the percentage that the whole of the Parliament should be, but I can't help what the National Party does in terms of selection process and I can't help what the other parties do, so if I look at the percentage of Labour MPs in the Labour caucus, we're about right. So I think that the old system of First Past the Post

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[221] Interview with W. Laban, February 2007.
[222] To the best of my knowledge, there has been no research published on candidature and ethnicity in New Zealand, which might help provide answers as to why so few Pacific people have become politically involved.

most definitely worked against us because it was very difficult for people to make their way into a safe winnable seat if they weren't part of the normal mould…and all parties were guilty of that, but Labour was better, if you like, than the others. I really do think that the old electoral system conspired against people doing what they felt they should be doing because elections were so often won by the slimmest of margins that people weren't prepared to take risks.[223]

Chauvel argued the low levels of political involvement of Pacific people could be because of relatively recent migration patterns of the Pacific Island population to New Zealand.

I think the first part of the question is down to the novelty of Pacific communities of any size in New Zealand…It's probably taken a period of time for those communities to bed down, decide they're staying, work out what their ways of interacting with the rest of society are and then thinking about the need for political representation. I think it probably takes a generation and I think you'll probably see parallels with Asian representation in the New Zealand Parliament. We have one Chinese member, one member of Pakistani origin. We'll have more and that's reflected in their generally later immigration and numbers to New Zealand. So I think it's a question of timing. It's also a question of the mores of the general society, New Zealand is now incredibly proud of its Pacific themes and its population - you couldn't talk about New Zealand now without some acknowledgement of its Pacific heritage, but that certainly wasn't the case ten, well certainly twenty years ago. So you know, it's to do with timing and the maturity of the society.[224]

Judy Kirk noted the benefits of electoral reform in terms of increased numbers of minority MPs, but notes the enormous commitment that being an MP entails.

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[223] Interview with M. Gosche, August 2007.
[224] Interview with C. Chauvel, July 2007.

I definitely think MMP had something to do with it because with FPP you're electing one seat and it's probably very hard for a Pacific Islander to win a nomination back then. I've got one [Pacific Island candidate] now that could win a nomination in a general seat, he could, and he could win the seat. So that shows some improvement. It was very hard under FPP for Māori, Pacific Island, Indian, groups, very very hard. But I think we're definitely moving on and I think MMP has far more opportunity for minorities because all of us are far more realistic about the list looking reflective of who we are and what New Zealand is, and I think that's going to provide more opportunities for Pacific Islanders. I think they're probably more keen to do it too. Being an MP is a huge commitment and it's not easy from their perspective either to make that commitment. If you're going to be a candidate, it's a lot of commitment. You might have to give up your job to campaign; you're putting a lot on the line. And unless you've got someone right there with you guiding and mentoring you through it…I definitely think MMP had made the difference. It has to, because it's very hard if you understand the political system of selection. It was very hard to be selected under FPP in the old way.[225]

Su'a William Sio discussed the rejuvenation of Labour's Pacific sector and the hope that this will increase the number of candidates.

Well, politics is hard, it's a numbers game. We are starting from seven per cent of the New Zealand population and then you look at those who are actively participating and I don't know what the exact figures are, but they are smaller again. You are competing with other people, just as good, if not better, from right across the country and you have to get support from a range of people not just the Pacific community,

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[225] Interview with J. Kirk, August 2007.

you have to get a range of people from the affiliated unions and the other sectors who are very powerful in their own right and can influence the decisions of the party. We just haven't had the numbers in the past. I think we've only just started to refresh the Pacific sector since 2001 and we were more active and more determined in 2005. So we are on track to grow the numbers of people who are aiming to be involved in local government and central government and I'm pretty optimistic that in 2008 you will see Pacific faces and names standing for the Labour Party list and I think you will see others standing for other parties.[226]

He also noted that Pacific people in politics are constantly achieving "firsts" but stresses that much is still dependant on numbers and getting Pacific people interested and involved in politics.

I was there in 1990 and we were so excited because we could taste and feel that we were going to get the first Pacific person in Parliament, which we did, albeit after another campaign but we knew that once we were in there the door would be open. We felt we were creating history, which we were. And then Mark Gosche became the first Minister and Winnie became the first woman and Charles became the first Tahitian so we are still creating history but the exciting thing is now, that in 1990 the goal of having a Pacific Prime Minister was so far off, so distant, but it's only a step away from a ministerial portfolio. So I think there are some exciting things there for Pacific people but it's still a numbers game. We've got some shining stars out there that we haven't identified and those are the people who can roll with the punches and hit the ground running.[227]

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[226] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.
[227] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.

Most of the MPs interviewed denied that there was a shortage of potential Pacific MPs in the respective parties and frequently credited their political party as being influential in encouraging and promoting Pacific participation. Despite some criticism that the National Party has little to offer the Pacific community[228], Judy Kirk noted:

> We've got a very nice Pacific Island guy in Auckland who's involved with the party organization and who's in the Candidates' College and he recently arranged for the Leader and I to go to a forum in Auckland for Pacific Island leaders. It was just Pacific Island leaders from the community and there was myself and John and PI spokesperson Judith Collins and one or two party people and we met with ministers, principals, and CEOs; just talking about what was needed. My role there was to extend a hand of welcome to the Pacific Island community and say that we want them to be part of what we're doing and that we're looking for candidates. Sam is already in the Candidates' College, there's a Pacific Island woman there too, and we've got about four people there interested.[229]

Mark Gosche argued that Labour's Pacific Sector Council is instrumental in getting Pacific people involved in the party.

> We've got a very active Pacific Sector Council and we always have had. I think in the past it's been dominated by an older generation who are quite reticent and rather nervous of putting themselves forward as candidates. They're always happy to be involved behind the scenes in the Party machinery, people like Jim Yandell who got themselves elected to the Auckland City Council, who were the path finders, the people who made our life much easier when we came along, and I also think as more

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[228] See Chapter Four: The National Party.
[229] Interview with J. Kirk, August 2007.

and more were born here and educated here, our confidence grows about fitting in.[230]

Sio also acknowledged the role of the Pacific Sector Council in promoting political involvement and participation within the Labour Party.

> The Pacific sector are quite active in promoting Pacific participation among young Pacific people to get them to have the courage to step into the ring so we will grow that and as long as we continue along those lines getting people participating we will see more faces. The other parties, if people feel they are aligned to the Greens or Māori, we encourage that. But until those parties have welcoming structures for Pacific participation….but I'm confident we will see more and more people putting their names forward.[231]

However, there is more to political involvement than the influence of political parties. Many of the Pacific MPs acknowledged the need for people to feel passionate about who and what they were advocating for. Mark Gosche believed that involvement in politics can stem from feeling anger about a situation or the environment around you and wanting to take action to improve it.

> I'm in politics not because my mum and dad were political – far from it. They voted Labour and that's about it. I'm in politics because I learnt a lot of harsh lessons along the way about how hard it is for people in New Zealand and doubly harder if you're brown, and triply harder if you are brown and uneducated. So, I got into politics because I got angry and I never got rid of that anger and I was seeing injustice and felt powerless to do anything about it. I think that in our general population, there's going to be people who have those attributes coming through, so let's just hope that more people

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[230] Interview with M. Gosche, August 2007.
[231] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.

who are Pacific and have those attributes feel the confidence to come through so we can act as, I don't like the term role-model, but for want of a better term, we can say to them "if I can do it, there's no reason why you can't do it as well." I think it makes other people braver: they think, "oh well, they haven't made fools of themselves, they've done a good job, why don't I have a go?" and it will just happen naturally. I think Pacific people are very political so why wouldn't they want to engage in politics here? It's an evolutionary thing – there are not that many generations here, there's been a big bump in numbers during the space of my lifetime.[232]

Winnie Laban believes that while there are young Pacific people in New Zealand who could be good leaders for their people, it is essential that they become politically involved.

You see them in the private sector; they're also in the public sector. A lot of them actually are doing largely very well but there doesn't seem to be a huge interest in politics. They're busy doing their own things. It is really important that those who do have an interest actually get active. What will happen is one day they will wake up and suddenly realise Parliament doesn't look like them.[233]

Anae stressed the importance of young people being prepared before they embark on a political career, both financially and mentally. This is something that is applicable to all MPs, not just Pacific people but is particularly relevant in light of the Taito Phillip Field affair.

I think there is a new generation of leaders aged 25-40 coming up. I would tell them to work like hell, build up assets and become financially secure before entering Parliament. That way you can be honest and do the job that has to be done, not

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[232] Interview with M. Gosche, August 2007.
[233] Interview with W. Laban, February 2007.

because you are going to get something out of it. Politics corrupts if people are weak and greedy. [234]

Mark Gosche stated quite simply the hopes he has for Pacific people and politics:

> We can do better, but we can only do better if people are willing to put themselves forward and do the work. You can't just turn up and say, I'm a Pacific person, you'd better select me.[235]

Conclusion

In order to draw some conclusions about how and why Pacific people become involved in politics in New Zealand, we can examine the ways in which the past and current Pacific MPs entered Parliament to observe if there are any correlations among their histories. Prior party involvement and a supportive political mentor appear to have made a difference for these MPs. Gosche and Sio had a history of union involvement, which frequently meant communicating with the Pacific people who often occupied low paying jobs. The role of fighting against injustices or inequality would often be a catalyst to seek change on a national scale by entering politics.

The MPs acknowledged that politics could be a difficult environment and that in the past, Pacific people had often had to fight to be recognised by their party. But a few decried the idea that Pacific people faced an inordinate amount of barriers to being politically active. Most seemed to believe that things had changed for Pacific Island people in New Zealand and that while prejudices may have been faced in the past, young Pacific people would now find it easier to enter politics. This is largely due to the work that these MPs, and others involved in the parties, have done and the difficulties they have faced being the "first" Pacific people in Parliament.

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[234] Interview with A. Anae, September 2007.
[235] Interview with M. Gosche, August 2007.

The institutions that affect the political makeup of New Zealand can also play an important part in shaping the roles of Pacific Island MPs. These include the introduction of the MMP electoral system, which saw an increase in the number of Pacific MPs in the House; and the political parties who can affect Pacific Island MPs through candidate recruitment and selection. Most MPs discussed the close relationship between their roles of spokespeople for the Pacific community, and the attitudes of their political party towards this minority group. However, despite the importance of these political institutions, there are also other factors that affected the roles of the Pacific MPs including the influence of the wider Pacific community, and their own personal identifications and identities. In the following chapter, the issues of identity and roles of MPs are explored further, with particular emphasis on how these are affected by a unique sense of being "Pacific".

Chapter 6 – The Pacific MPs: Roles and Representation

This chapter touches on some of the issues concerning MP's perceptions of their roles and responsibilities, as well as dealing with issues of representation; namely, who they see themselves representing in Parliament and how they reconcile possible clashes of interests among groups. It provides linkages between the roles of these MPs and their Pacific identities, and the various ways that these identities manifest themselves in their roles as political representatives.

The Roles of a Representative

The question of who MPs saw themselves representing in Parliament drew some varied responses. As suggested by McLeay and Vowles,[236] and discussed in Chapter Two, list MPs may attempt to appeal to interest groups or minority groups as a form of role legitimation, as they lack a clearly defined geographical area to represent. In these interviews, the list MP (Chauvel) noted a wide range of groups that he saw himself representing in Parliament, although Gosche, an electorate MP, also acknowledged linkages to a number of groups. Laban and Anae both stressed the importance of representing the wider Pacific community while Chauvel stated that he felt a particular affinity to a certain sector of the Pacific Island community.

> I think that's the great thing about MMP - you have list MPs who do represent a different range of people. In terms of the Pacific constituency: the people I feel that I am here to try and give a voice to are young New Zealand born, aspirational kids who perhaps don't share the same beliefs and superstitions of their parents and grandparents, but find themselves in a new country. [They] want to defend their identities and their contributions to NZ society, but want to do so in a way that is modern and forward looking, that understand the value of

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[236] E. McLeay and J. Vowles (2007)

education and getting ahead, being a contributor to, essentially to entering the middle class and giving the next generation in turn all the opportunities that our parents came here for us to have. I mean, they didn't come to New Zealand, in my view, so that we could all be cleaners and freezing workers, they wanted us to be lawyers and doctors and accountants. So it's really that group on the Pacific side that I'm keen to speak for.[237]

He also noted the other groups that he felt connections to, predominantly resulting from shared experiences or connections.

As I said, I'm gay, so I speak for gay and lesbian New Zealanders in Parliament, which is important to me. I'm a Wellington regional list MP; I'm the only Wellington Labour MP that's not in a seat in the region, so I have to give a voice to the Labour supporters in the two electorates in the region that we don't hold, the Wairarapa and Ohariu-Belmont; and I think there are probably two other constituencies I should mention – the immigrant community, because both my parents were immigrants to New Zealand, my dad from French Tahiti and my mum from Scotland. I am really very proud of the contribution that immigration has made to New Zealand and I think we undervalue it and I think we should celebrate much more the diversity and the energy that immigration has, and make it easier frankly for immigrants to come to New Zealand. And then I suppose there's the business and legal communities. I was partner for eight years in a big law firm and sat on a few corporate boards and I think that probably on the back bench of the Labour Party that perspective is not strongly represented and it's important in our Party which represents one of the great traditions of New Zealand politics that the people who are responsible for growing the economy have a voice as well.[238]

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[237] Interview with C. Chauvel, July 2007.
[238] Interview with C. Chauvel, July 2007.

Mark Gosche also acknowledged his wide ranging areas of representation, ranging from his electorate to groups that he felt kinship with. In his 1997 maiden speech in Parliament he referred to his trade union roots and his role in advocating for the disadvantaged in society.

> I am angered that whilst some have benefited greatly from the economic restructuring of late, others are victims who are discarded and forgotten. It is my intention to speak often and loudly in this House for those who remain victims.[239]

He also noted that:

> As a representative of Pacific Island people, of working people, of Labour people and as someone who has befitted from the polices of past good government, I look forward to my time in this House, working for what I believe in: a better New Zealand for all its people.[240]

Gosche stressed the importance of the 'moral responsibility' he felt to represent groups that acknowledged him as one of their own – an interesting departure from the idea of the MP being the one who chooses the groups they wish to represent.

> Obviously the people who vote me in from Maungakiekie, I represent them, and that's always going to be the base line; you're there to represent the constituency that elected you. But in a secondary sense, I think you also have a moral responsibility to represent other people who see you in that way, and certainly the Pacific community do. I think low paid workers and people in the trade union movement who assisted me along the way certainly expect me to remember where I came from and speak up on their behalf…I'm in a position as

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[239] M. Gosche "Maiden Speech" 27 February 1997, *Hansard,* New Zealand House of Representatives.
[240] Gosche, Maiden Speech.

an elected member of Parliament to do something about that, so you do.[241]

Luamanuvao Winnie Laban also acknowledged the groups that she felt responsible for as a representative in her maiden speech in 2000.

> While I am in Parliament I will pursue a permanent interest in advocating and promoting the interests of women, Pacific people, Māori, the elderly, ethnic minorities and all New Zealanders, who are struggling to live a life of dignity. These are our people who have borne the brunt of the economic restructuring. These are our people whose lives and families have been shattered.[242]

She felt that her accountability to the Pacific community was something that was both natural and inevitable.

> Our immediate accountability is not an issue of choice, we're accountable to our community and it's through their collective support that we're here. You have to advocate for them, and compete with everyone else's interests.[243]

As the only female Pacific MP, Laban felt an extra burden of responsibility to speak on behalf of women, but wished more Pacific women would be involved in politics.

> I'm the first Pacific woman and it's been heavy. It's a journey that is not easy because you have sexism and you also have racism…I think I feel the accountability more so being the only Pacific woman. Pacific women should have been in Parliament

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[241] Interview with M. Gosche, August 2007.
[242] Luamanuvao Winnie Laban "Maiden Speech" 15 February 2000, *Hansard,* New Zealand House of Representatives.
[243] Interview with W. Laban, February 2007.

> a long time ago. It was overdue. I'm not the only one who can
> do this role; our women are made for it.[244]

In his maiden speech in 1997, Arthur Anae acknowledged the importance of his Pacific identity.

> I stand here today as a proud New Zealander and a proud
> Samoan – proud because of three things. First; I will go down
> in history as a member of the first coalition government in New
> Zealand; second, I will be the first Pacific Islander to be a
> member of the Party in power, and third, I have been given this
> unique opportunity to commit myself not only to addressing
> the issues and concerns of the Samoan people and other Pacific
> Island ethnic groups, but also to represent all the people of
> New Zealand equally.[245]

Although Anae, at the time of the interview, is still an advocate for greater Pacific political representation, he felt that party loyalty can affect representation and that although all people should be represented equally, parties dominate politics in New Zealand and this can be to the detriment of those attempting to represent minority groups.

> I think all people should be represented equally but that's hard
> in Parliament because parties dominate everything. That is why
> I contemplated standing as an independent. I always said, if
> Taito lost his case, I would stand as an Independent in
> Mangere. If he won it, I would give him my full support. I
> can't go back to the National Party unless they gave me
> assurances that the PI agenda was at the top of their list of
> priorities. I can't go with the Labour Party as that would make
> a hypocrite and I refuse to be a puppet.[246]

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[244] Interview with W. Laban, February 2007.
[245] A. Anae "Maiden Speech" 19 February 1997, *Hansard,* New Zealand House of Representatives.
[246] Interview with A. Anae, September 2007.

When asked if these multiple representation roles could cause problems, most MPs acknowledged this was something that they needed to be aware of. Gosche noted the need to be attentive to any sign of favouritism, especially among the Pacific Island community.

> I could come in here and say, I'm representing Samoans, but when I was the Minister of Pacific Island Affairs I was very careful to work on the basis that the Pacific Island community in New Zealand was not just the Samoan community, it was the Tongan community, the Cook Island Community, Niuean and so on. They all would expect me, as a Minister of Pacific Island Affairs, to push their issues and their needs and their desires equally, so you could never say, I'm going to look after the Samoans first, and once I've done that I will look after the Tongans and everyone else. So it's not in the back of your mind, it's in the front of your mind that you have to be even handed. When you take that out to the rest of the world, I've got a job to represent the interests of business people who might be Palangi in Ellerslie the same as I would for a Pacific family living in Otahuhu. And I've got to represent their issues with the same vigour if they're an individual case…You can be a messenger of those views without necessarily agreeing with it and I think you have to be pretty careful that you don't allow yourself to get unbalanced and you advocate for the voices and needs of all the people in the community. [247]

William Sio also emphasised the importance of being responsible for all the groups who had elected him:

> I'm Samoan, first and foremost, but even thought I represent Otara where there's a large proportion of PI, I represent the ward which is not just Pacific people, but a mix. But in politics you look at where the most need is and you work along those lines, but you have to be constantly aware of the needs of other

[247] Interview with M. Gosche, August 2007.

parts of your community. I represent all people on various issues. I suppose you have to, as a political representative, just acknowledge the fact that you have been given a stewardship and our people give it to you and say go for it. You take that on your shoulders and say if I'm going to be true to the stewardship that they give me then I have to be accountable back to them and be responsible about that.[248]

In addition, Sio believed that although Pacific representation is important, it is also essential that the best person for the role is selected, regardless of ethnicity.

There's been a recent debate in the media about one candidate saying 'vote for me I'm Pacific', or 'I'm going to be the first ethnic mayor' or that sort of thing and my feeling is that I strongly advocate for Pacific representation but you also want the best candidate and really what we are campaigning about is the values of that person, of the organisation that they are representing and the policies. And that's the kind of politics that we need to be promoting, rather than personal or emotive politics.[249]

Chauvel felt that as an MP under an MMP system, political representatives must endeavour to respect the wishes of all interest groups they speak for, and noted his own experiences with this.

I haven't found a conflict to date, but probably the closest that we've come has been in a couple of areas where the more traditional Pacific perspectives in our Pacific Sector Council inside the Party have conflicted with my views on two issues, 1) The Child Discipline Bill and 2) The Shop Trading Hours Liberalization. On both those issues our structures told us that they wanted to take a conservative position. Everything I knew

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[248] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.
[249] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.

and felt told me that was not in particular the position that younger New Zealand born people would instinctively take. So I think there are differences of opinion on some issues but I think the hallmark of a capable MMP politician is being able to reconcile those differences and where that's not possible, to speak out and say "this is my position and you may not agree with me, but I hope you respect it for these reasons."[250]

He also argued that as a representative of multiple groups, it is important to ensure that all of them are equally represented.

The nature of our democracy is such that it is representative so if you claim to be in the Parliament as a member of a particular community, I think you do have an obligation to try to do your best to advance their interests and their welfare on the one hand, and ensure that their voices are heard, on the other. Against that, you're also there representing a range of other perspectives, so you have to use your own integrity and your own judgement to make sure that you're not simply pushing one particular barrow either.[251]

The data gathered from these interviews demonstrates that most of the Pacific MPs consider themselves political representatives of more than one group. This suggests that the theoretical literature was correct in noting the difficulties faced by MPs with multiple representational roles in attempting to advocate for a variety of often competing interests. This data also suggests that the representational roles of an MP are often unclear, as MPs struggle to decide where their allegiance lies: to their electorate, their party or their constituents. While the Pacific MPs may be aligned to a diverse range of interest groups, they all stressed the importance of being responsible for and accountable to the Pacific community in New Zealand. Winnie Laban felt that her accountability was a natural part of her role as an MP,

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[250] Interview with C. Chauvel , July 2007.
[251] Interview with C. Chauvel , July 2007.

not a matter of choice. With this in mind, it seemed necessary to examine further the issues of Pacific political representation to see how the experiences of the past and present Pacific MPs could affect the roles of future Pacific people in Parliament.

Pacific Representation

During my interviews with the MPs, I discussed the wider issue of Pacific people in politics; why there has been so little academic interest in the roles they play, and if the Pacific community had found MMP to be a "more inclusive" political environment as the Royal Commission had hoped. Charles Chauvel believed that it was important that the Pacific community recognised that there were Pacific people in Parliament speaking on their behalf.

> I think if what we are trying to do is promote more participation and democracy, we are silly not to demonstrate to our respective communities that they do have representation and it's an institutional failure that the bodies that are charged with promoting better participation don't use those of us who could be used, not in a way to promote our individual candidatures but to speak for us as a group, so that interested communities do participate more strongly in the process. [252]

Winnie Laban noted that Pacific people had many of the skills necessary to be an MP:

> Parliament is an institution where you have to be competent in the Pakeha world and you also have to be competent in your Samoan or Pacificness. I think that's why New Zealand needs people like us here because we do represent that complexity. It's a challenge for us. Samoan and Pacific people are very political people. Samoa was the first country to get independence in 1962. They're very powerful people. So much of Samoan politics is in relation to land and titles, and demands a political mind. Oratory and the debates mean that the sharpest

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[252] Interview with C. Chauvel , July 2007.

mind wins. We come from a country that throughout history has been very political, in terms of the struggle for independence.[253]

She also stressed the importance of younger generations of Pacific leaders stepping forward to be politically active.

I'm deeply committed to a younger generation of leadership to come through. I really feel that's important. We are hugely represented in the younger group. Further down the track in another ten years, twenty years time, we need to be there. You can see that the Asian population is now is seven per cent. It's increased, it's gone up, so to maintain the diversity of voices and that special relationship that New Zealand has with the Pacific, it's really really important that we are represented, everywhere. I'm just hugely committed. We've got some fabulous Pacific people now serving on boards, the arts area, the media area and some of the business areas. We are also trying to encourage our people to go up, middle management, senior management, CEOs, to try and push and encourage them.[254]

William Sio recalled his days campaigning for Taito Phillip Field and the necessity of Pacific MPs standing in seats where they can win – namely those with large Pacific populations.

We had a clear strategy back in 1980's and when I say we, this is a small collection of Pacific people in the Party, who thought that once Taito was in there the door was going to be open and sure, that's what happened, but the strategy was "let's look around and see what other seats are available." We don't have the luxury that Māori have with specific Māori seats so we need to look at seats where we can win and in politics it's a

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[253] Interview with W. Laban, February 2007.
[254] Interview with W. Laban, February 2007.

numbers game. It doesn't matter how flowery your oratory is if you don't have the numbers.[255]

He argued that while the majority of Pacific Island MPs are lucky with the seats that they currently hold, it is necessary to have more Pacific people become involved in politics to increase representation.

The view that I think we ought to be taking is, well we've got Pacific people but when they move on and do something else, the next Pacific person ought to be positioning themselves to take up those positions. We also now have the proportional representation system where we are getting them through the lists as well. I understand that in the early days when MMP came in, they struggled a bit to find some PI candidates and we've been struggling a bit since…I think that we have a group that is growing now and it will take some time to be ready, maybe within the next ten years or so, which isn't long and some of those people we are hoping will be on community boards or local councils in the upcoming local body elections.[256]

He argued that not only was it important for new Pacific leaders to come through the ranks to Parliament; it was also important to retain the knowledge that had been gained by the ones who went before.

As people move on you need others to take their place, but you also need [Pacific] people to stay there to help teach and help people through the different political structures, because if you move too many people up, then you lose the experience.[257]

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[255] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.
[256] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.
[257] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.

Again, this demonstrates the role of that the Pacific community and networks can play in the roles of MPs and candidates; helping them develop by sharing their own political journeys and experiences in politics.

Chauvel felt that Pacific representation in New Zealand has largely been a success, and notes that as the community increases its economic status, Pacific political representation may also correspond and subsequently increase.

> Traditionally our economic performance has been lower than that of the general population but I certainly don't think that's a permanent phenomenon, I suspect that's what's happened over the last decade will help us break out of that and into the middle class in a big way and it will be interesting to see if the political representation patterns remain traditional or if they diversify with economic diversification.[258]

I asked the MPs whether they believed that the Pacific community in New Zealand needed Pacific faces to represent them in Parliament. The result was a unanimous vote for yes, Pacific people were essential to represent the Pacific Island community. This fits with the descriptive representation literature which suggests that minority groups respond to having a representative of the same group in Parliament. Gosche recognised the important things that a Pacific Island MP could bring to Parliament:

> I've always been a strong supporter of MMP because our Parliament didn't used to look anything like New Zealand. It was very dominated by white males because that's what the electoral system threw up. It was very hard for anyone else to get a look in. There were the two big parties, with big seats, and it was hard for them to take a risk on a Māori or a woman or a PI or whatever, and for years both parties were very

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[258] Interview with C. Chauvel , July 2007.

conservative about who they selected. I think that naturally, all things being equal, Pacific people should expect to be in here in the same percentage numbers, at least, as they are of the population, and we are pretty well on that for the last few years and I would hope that we can increase that because there are good young people coming through who will get there on their merits and who will contribute something that New Zealand needs, which is a slightly different perspective culturally and the way that we think governments should operate. I think many New Zealanders have an individualistic approach to the way they see governments behaving, whereas I don't get that from groups like the Pacific community who are still very much in their every day life in a collective approach, and that fits a lot of my philosophy and my cultural understanding so they come together quite nicely and I feel very comfortable.[259]

This was echoed by William Sio:

I think that a Pacific person is probably in a better position than most to understand the issues that are of value to Pacific people or the Pacific community. Now I have worked with other people who are not Pacific who are white, but who I think of being white on the outside and brown on the inside and they have been able to, through their experiences and their willingness to learn and to empathise with the community, feel their way through and advocate for issues that important. So that's my position on it.[260]

Arthur Anae acknowledged the importance of Pacific representation in Parliament; however he also stressed the need for impartial representation that was not affected by an MP's loyalty to their party.

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[259] Interview with M. Gosche, August 2007.
[260] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.

The Labour Party is full of union trained and orientated thinkers who say they are fighting for people but there's always a trade-off. There's no such thing as a free lunch.[261]

Laban emphasised the communal aspect of Pacific Islanders, and related this to her own experiences as an MP.

We're more communal as well. Palangi are certainly much more focused on the individual. We all have our individual preferences, but that's not primary to us. What's primary to us is our relationship and our genealogies and our families and our communities so there's always that responsibility in the end. You must always respect relationships…It's very tempting to become an individual and look after 'me' and not feel any sense of responsibility for others. My deepest desire is that the younger generation never lose that. I've always felt that my success is tied to the world being a community, of our community. I don't measure it in terms in our success stories; I measure it in terms of the challenges with our people who are still trying to get there.[262]

She also stressed that representing the Pacific community was a privilege and one that carried certain responsibilities with it.

Another thing is it's really really humbling to be here. It's very important and it's a privilege. The way I view it is that you're here to serve the community. I think I carry the responsibility even greater because Samoans do expect 110% performance. They don't like losing….despite how small, or how much of a challenge the environment, our people are still fabulously dynamic and they can be the world champions.[263]

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[261] Interview with A. Anae, September 2007.
[262] Interview with W. Laban, February 2007.
[263] Interview with W. Laban, February 2007.

National Party President Judy Kirk stated that she felt that minority representation and diversity was an important part of the political process.

> I think the place of representation is important, and I believe that myself. The diversity of our candidates is really important because you put a statement about there that we're serious about everybody. You can stand up and say it and believe it and be totally genuine, but unless you do something to physically demonstrate it… You've got to do that. Words are true, but they need to be backed up by something.[264]

A Culture Clash?

One of the regrettable results of the Phillip Field affair was that many media outlets picked up on the idea of a "culture clash" between traditional Pacific behaviour and values and those that were acceptable in a Westminster Parliamentary democracy. I discussed this notion with the MPs and found that most were dismissive of the idea of a potential culture clash. Luamanuvao Winnie Laban was clear about her role when receiving gifts as an MP:

> Right from the beginning I've made it very clear that any money given to me is returned, largely because we're on a good salary and we can influence culture in a respectful way. Because our people are incredibly generous and you never want them to lose that, but I always say to them, what's important to me is that we have a relationship and sometimes I might accept one fine mat because you never keep it, the faalavelave mats come and go all the time. But in terms of money, no. Always return it, because you can't keep it. Like I said, you know the difference between right and wrong and you can actually do it in a culturally acceptable way and so

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[264] Interview with J. Kirk, August 2007.

there's not a habit of giving me money. I've established it from the beginning. [265]

She also reiterated the importance of knowing the difference between right and wrong behaviour, despite cultural differences.

> One thing I will say is that integrity and ethics are very important to me. We've been brought up like that and to me it's a very Pacific thing, a cultural thing. That deep obligation to relationship is actually about ethics and it's about government. We are not immune from abuse. We're not a culture that doesn't have sharks too. It's important that leadership is tautua, the values of integrity and hard work and really being there for people… One of the things I've made very very clear is that culturally we know the difference between right and wrong. There's no blurring of the boundaries. That's what creates stereotypical thinking in society. The narrowness and the prejudice happen because people mirror that. That's why we have to be here to represent us and to say, that may be your view but it's not acceptable. I do feel the responsibility. [266]

Chauvel argues that the Westminster system has similarities to the traditional matai system of Samoa, and pointed to the influence this can have on Pacific politics in New Zealand.

> It's a question that is often posed, and it's a good question. I suppose I don't think there needs to be a huge clash. One of the traditions of the Westminster system is its flexibility and a phenomenon like universal suffrage… the Westminster system is at best 100 years old, it's younger than colonization, so when we talk about the Westminster tradition - 100 years ago in most Westminster systems that meant blokes voting if they owned property so I find it interesting when people say "how can you

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[265] Interview with W. Laban, February 2007.
[266] Interview with W. Laban, February 2007.

defend the matai franchise in Samoa?". Well what I say to them is 100 years ago, something very similar operated in those Westminster democracies except it wasn't called the matai franchise. So I think it depends on your historical perspective. Certainly, a mix of traditional structures and the influence of the missionaries means that in many Pacific cultures you do have a conservative approach to political participation and the franchise, and I don't regard it as incompatible with the Westminster tradition, which I believe is ultimately the only tradition that has proved itself to be a guarantor of liberty, but I do think you have to give people space and time to evolve their own version of the tradition, and I think the two are compatible. [267]

Gosche acknowledges that there can be certain expectations put on MPs, but this is true for Pacific and Palagi MPs alike. He also argues that politics is traditionally dominated by vested interests; what is important is how MPs handle them.

I think the expectation that you might help family or people who are distantly related with issues when they come to you for help with, sometimes you feel a little bit like people's expectations are unrealistic, but it's never spoken and you manage it and you make sure you treat people properly, without fear or favour, because once you do that you head down a dangerous path. But that would be the same for a whole lot of other people and certainly the way in which politics ran in New Zealand for many years…narrow interests have driven politics in the world for as long as we have had politics, and what you have to do is make sure that you are behaving ethically in representing the views of people who might expect a favour because they are Samoan and you are Samoan, so you have to keep it in your mind all the time. Your integrity is everything in this job and if you throw it away, your

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[267] Interview with C. Chauvel , July 2007.

effectiveness and your ability to be in this job is vastly diminished, and if you have been really bad, you're going to get chucked out of here and rightfully so.[268]

Sio acknowledged that there could be differences between Pacific and Palagi cultures and societies, but their roles as public servants were the same.

> In this environment, the Palagi New Zealand society is clearly more an individualistic society whereas the Samoan society is more a collective society. But when you are talking about the Westminster system, you are talking about public service being provided to the community and having worked as a public servant here and in Samoa, public servants are the same all over. They've got to be accountable for their activities and therefore they're required and expected to be open and transparent in all things, and in that regard there is no clash there, its simply common sense. Again it goes back to stewardship. Public servants are the stewards and they have to be accountable.[269]

Laban noted that if there was any form of "culture clash" between Pacific MPs and the Westminster system, it was between the adversarial nature of Parliament and her personal values as a Pacific woman.

> The politics of confrontation here can actually lead to a cultural clash. We've been brought up not to be self-effacing but to be respectful. You can actually disagree with someone without demeaning their person, which is a direct contradiction of politics here, in terms of the Westminster adversarial system. You can see the cultural clashes. I think that it is important for us as women, to weave our way around that, and try to look for a balance and say, "I've heard what you said, but this is what

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[268] Interview with M. Gosche, August 2007.
[269] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.

the reality is." I think we need to maintain our uniqueness, and the values that are very dear to us in here. You don't come in here to join everyone else and be like them.[270]

Arthur Anae emphasised the positive things that Pacific MPs could bring to Parliament, such as respect for elders and a sense of family. However, he raised questions about the awareness of some of the Pacific MPs regarding Pacific culture, as their upbringing and traditions had been predominantly Palagi. He suggested that this might affect the ways in which they behaved as representatives of the Pacific Island community.[271]

If MPs identified themselves as Pacific Island representatives, it was important to examine some of the ways that they established and legitimised their roles within their communities. One of the ways was through the use of Pacific networks, such as church events, Pacific festivals and local Pacific Island groups. The majority of the MPs thought it was both necessary and vital for Pacific MPs to establish links within the Pacific community, relating back to the idea of representatives receiving a mandate from the community to speak on their behalf.

William Sio described his activities as a Pacific member of the Labour Party in Auckland, noting the way his culture and upbringing helped him in this role.

> Part of my role in Otara is that I regularly visit all the churches, making myself available to them on Sundays, reporting back from the things that are happening on the council, being prepared to take criticism. It's just them knowing that you are there and that you are advocating and providing a voice for them on issues. It helps that I've been raised in a Samoan environment where I've grown up sitting around and watching

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[270] Interview with W. Laban, February 2007.
[271] Interview with A. Anae, September 2007.

> other people make the decisions and you pick upon what's
> being said and recognising that there are values that Samoans
> have which are important for you to adopt when making
> decisions.[272]

Gosche noted the many activities he undertook as a Pacific MP; through the trade unions, working with community groups on the youth gang issues, and through his interest in Pacific media and broadcasting.

> There's a constant stream of invitations to meet with Pacific
> groups and I think they will keep coming as long as I'm seen to
> be doing something as a result of it. You don't get invited just
> because you make a nice speech and go away and never do
> anything. Pacific people are pretty astute about what you're
> worth as a politician and if you don't deliver in some way on
> the things that they request of you, they don't ask you back.
> And you might not always deliver exactly what they want, but
> if you actually go into bat for them, or at least take their case
> forward to be assessed, there's a huge amount of respect from
> people if you do that. There's no excuse to sit on your laurels,
> you have to be working all the time as a politician to deliver on
> what people expect from you, and if you don't want to do that,
> why would you want to be a politician? [273]

Charles Chauvel felt that while networking was important for Pacific Island MPs, networks in New Zealand were still evolving and developing out of traditional forums, such as churches.

> If you take the perspective of some of my Pacific colleagues,
> they will often go to a lot of the Pacific churches and that
> generally isn't a constituency that's a very useful one for me, I
> don't think. But the Pacific Business Trust, and the networks
> that are evolving out of publications like Spasifik magazine

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[272] Interview with W. Sio, September 2007.
[273] Interview with M. Gosche, August 2007.

and the various ethnic associations, do provide networks which are probably of more relevance to me so I think that it's an evolving situation. You have to in some ways create your own networks when you're wanting to represent not so much the traditional society, but the young New Zealand-born, up and coming ones.[274]

Winnie Laban felt that Pacific networks were still very much an important part of her role. "The networking really is part of the daily menu. Giving interviews on Tagata Pacifika, and there's the Samoan groups as well. The networks are still a lively part."[275] After becoming Minister of Pacific Island Affairs, she attended a myriad of Pacific events throughout the country. In the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs report for December 07-February 08, which highlights many of the Pacific events in New Zealand, Laban featured predominantly. She attended a diverse range of Pacific events such as the opening of the Canterbury Pasifika e-Learning Centre, the 35th anniversary of the Mangere Pacific Islanders Presbyterian Church, the North Shore Pasefika Forum and the Arts Pasifika Awards.[276] She noted however, that many of the Pacific networks established now are the result of an earlier generation.

Well, it [networks] was all my life; I didn't actually go out and seek it. I came from parents who were amongst that group of pioneers. I was lucky. My parents were always at meetings, or church or whatever, so I think largely the networks are the generation before us.[277]

Conclusion

As can be seen from the conversations and speeches reported here, the question of who MPs feel that they represent is not a simple question. In fact, as demonstrated in the international literature on representation, the issues of multiple representation roles and how best to

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[274] Interview with C. Chauvel, July 2007.
[275] Interview with W. Laban, February 2007.
[276] Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs (2007) *Newsletter: December 2007-February 2008,* Wellington: Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs.
[277] Interview with W. Laban, February 2007.

accommodate these can be a complex matter for MPs. For New Zealand's Pacific MPs, the question of Pacific identity plays an important part in how they define their own roles. All of the MPs however, had other roles besides their Pacific identity that they felt strongly about representing: women, the gay and lesbian communities, or people on low income wages, as well as their electorates. These roles usually developed out of an MP's own experiences or background and this wide variety of interest groups that they chose to identify with could lead to a potential conflict of interests. All the MPs discussed the need to avoid bias when handling cases and ensuring the needs of one group were not prioritised above another.

However, nearly all the MPs advocated strongly for increased Pacific representation in Parliament; firstly in order to ensure the Pacific community had a voice inside Parliament, and secondly, as part of the political journey that Pacific Islanders are making in New Zealand, both their entry into the Parliament and also into Ministerial positions. Most of the MPs believed that there is no culture clash between traditional Pacific Island values and those of an advanced Parliamentary democracy, as long as MPs are clear about what is acceptable and what is not. MPs made it clear that temptations existed for all political figures, not just for those in the Pacific community, and recognised it was part of their role as a Member of Parliament to establish clear boundaries, be they cultural or otherwise.

In spite of the potential issues of conflict of interest, all the MPs spoke of their attachment to the Pacific communities and most maintained a very active presence in those communities by making the most of Pacific networks and events. As Mark Gosche stated, the Pacific communities need to see that their MPs are working on their behalf before entrusting them with the responsibility and respect that comes with leadership. It appears that for these MPs, political representation is a two-way street; the MP can claim the right to represent the Pacific community but there are conditions that come with this. These include providing an accurate voice on Pacific issues in Parliament, working hard and delivering results and

maintaining a presence in the community. Most of the Pacific MPs see their role as a privilege rather than a right – something that requires trust and respect from the Pacific community in New Zealand as well as personal challenges and responsibilities.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

The roles of any political representative can be hard to define. Representation is a multifaceted concept, which involves competing loyalties to political parties, groups, and electorate constituents. The role of a minority group representative is particularly complex, as representing the minority group often comes second to other competing interests, especially the demands of political parties.

The issue of whether democracies need to have minority representation is one that is often at the centre of debate. Some argue that granting 'special' representation rights to one group is starting down a slippery slope, in which all disadvantaged or minority groups will be seeking their own political representation. Others argue that by taking measures to increase diversity in Parliaments, democracies are becoming more truly representative of society at large and are better able to say that they are the political voice of all citizens.

Central questions are whether minority representation is both important and necessary for democracies, and if so, how MPs carry out their roles as representatives of a minority group. This thesis explores these issues by analysing firstly the nature of representation and more specifically, descriptive representation. This argues that when representatives share a similar background or experiences as their constituents, their political views are more likely to be similar. Hence the representative is in a better position to speak "on behalf of" the group they are representing. As demonstrated, there are cases for and against this form of minority representation. Some theorists argue that the democratic process allows every citizen an equal opportunity to be selected as a Member of Parliament and this is equality at its finest. Others argue that giving special rights or privileges such as guaranteed Parliamentary seats or quota systems is favouring one group, albeit a minority one, above the remainder of the

population. Still others argue that minority representation is essential and a central part of the democratic process; that all groups do not have the same access to political representation and therefore allowances must be made to help certain groups "cross the threshold". This thesis does not attempt to solve this debate, but it argues that, on the evidence of the experiences of the Pacific Island MPs, minority representation does matter. It matters to society because democracy should represent all its members, not just the majority, and it matters to individuals and groups that risk having their voices go unheard in the political arena. Using the case study of Pacific people in New Zealand, a migrant group that make up approximately seven per cent of the population, I have examined the experiences of Pacific MPs through their own words and experiences. This method allows Pacific MPs to be authors of their own stories, to describe their roles as political representatives; the ways they claim their Pacific identities and the ways in which they relate to their communities. If we truly want to understand the roles of MPs, and in this case, the roles of minority MPs, it is not merely enough to analyse what the theoretical literature says. A significant part of representation is identity and who the individual pledges to represent, and this can only be fully understood by letting the representatives portray their own experiences.

The literature on representation suggests that there are many different labels given to the varying styles of political representatives. These include trustee, delegate, mandate, and descriptive; all of which have varying degrees of loyalty – to parties, to one's own conscience, to the electorate or to groups with common features. In an ideal world, when faced with potential clashes between these groups, it is the job of an MP to ensure that all groups that they advocate for are represented equally. In reality, an MP's decisions may be constrained by other pressures such as an overriding loyalty to the party, or supporting the position of the majority group. The role of an MP in New Zealand can also be affected by whether the representative is a list or electorate MP. Electorate MPs have the task of being

responsible to their geographically defined constituency, a role that list MPs do not. While list MPs may stand for an electorate seat at a general election, or be assigned a wide geographical area to be "their" constituency, they occupy a different position than the elected MPs and as such, their roles are much less clearly defined. This sense of being an "extra" MP can lead to list MPs attempting to legitimise their roles by reaching out to interest or minority groups in the wider community and representing their needs in Parliament. However, it was clear from interview data that all the MPs, both list and electorate, were proud of their Pacific identity and acknowledged a responsibility to be representatives of the Pacific community in Parliament. This may be because there have only been a small number of Pacific candidates and MPs, ensuring every one that reaches Parliament is a success for the wider Pacific community.

Those who support greater rights for minority groups and their increased political representation argue that achieving a 'politics of presence' is essential for democracies, because minority groups need people from within the group to speak on their behalf. It has been argued that only people with a shared history or shared experiences can adequately represent the needs of a minority group. Becoming a political representative on behalf of any group consists of two parts; firstly the candidate has to choose to be representative for the group – be it party, electorate or minority group. Secondly, the MP has to be given the authority to speak "on behalf of" the group; in other words, they need their role legitimised by the group itself. This generally requires evidence of a commitment to advancing the interests of the group and a sense that the MP is one of the community. In the case of the Pacific Islanders in New Zealand, the MPs demonstrated that it was not merely enough to self-identify as a Pacific person in order to be a representative of Pacific people, you had to work hard and maintain an active presence within the community to gain respect and trust.

The Māori seats provide an example of one of the ways in which minority groups can achieve representation. Despite the controversy that has surrounded them since their inception, they have proved to be important for Māori; seen both as a right and as a means of advocating for Māori issues. In analysing the ways in which Māori have mobilised and been represented politically, comparisons may be made to the case of the Pacific communities and the perception of minority representation in New Zealand. Although the electoral reform of the 1908's and 1990's enabled and promoted increasing diversification in Parliament, some critics of the Māori seats have articulated undercurrents of doubt that are evident in much of the wider literature on minority representation. There is a recurring theme of what is 'fair' for New Zealand society as a whole; the suspicion that some groups are getting more than others, that a divisive line in being drawn through Parliament. This type of mentality has long pervaded discussion on minority rights, and is frequently led by the majority population, who would rather advocate for 'equality' for all citizens; ignoring or perhaps not understanding that not all groups have the means to reach this state of equality. The Māori seats are an important part of New Zealand's political history, despite the diverse reasons for their conception, because they act as a means to increase and support the diversity of Parliament and to serve the needs of the Māori community. While the Pacific Island community does not necessarily seek its own seats in Parliament, the themes that surround Māori representation are equally relevant when discussing other minority groups.

Using the voices of the Pacific MPs to describe their time as political representatives, as this thesis has done, was important not only to ensure validity when recounting their experiences, but also because of the small sample size and the uniqueness of each individual political journey. These interviews provided in-depth studies of the roles of political representatives, as seen through their own eyes and offered a new perspective to the oft-described role of minority MPs. They demonstrated several factors about the experience of Pacific people in

New Zealand politics, as well as illustrating wider themes of minority representation. Identity played a vital part in the roles as MPs, both on a personal level and in their wider community interaction. Firstly, it affected the ways MPs viewed themselves as 'Pacific' and the ways in which this identity manifested itself; and secondly, other identities played an important part in establishing their role as MPs and the people they felt they represented. Because of the small number of Pacific people who have entered Parliament, many of the MPs were examples of "firsts". Taito Phillip Field was the first Pacific Islander to become a Member of Parliament, Vui Mark Gosche was the first Pacific MP to become a Cabinet Minister, Arthur Anae was the first Pacific MP for the National Party, Luamanuvao Winnie Laban was the first Pacific woman to enter Parliament, and Charles Chauvel was the first Pacific MP of Tahitian descent, as well as being the first gay Pacific MP. These are not only examples of achievements for the MPs and the Pacific community; they frequently demonstrate the multiple representational roles that MPs hold as they combine representing the Pacific community with their other identities (women, the gay and lesbian community and so forth).

The stories of the six Pacific MPs may provide insights into how New Zealand can increase political representation from within the Pacific community. Some shared a business background, some had previous union involvement that made them fight for the rights of the less privileged in society, most had strong existing links to their Pacific heritage and culture, and all were proud to recognize themselves as Pacific and to advocate for the needs of the Pacific community. There was an acknowledgement of the importance of support from individual mentors and from their political party. It was demonstrated that institutions such as electoral systems and political parties do affect the roles of minority MPs in New Zealand; both by providing assistance to get into Parliament and thus creating a more diverse and representative legislature, but also as a means of promoting and encouraging Pacific people to be involved in politics. The Labour Party MPs particularly emphasised the role of the

Party's Pacific Sector Council in supporting Pacific candidates, MPs and the wider Pacific community in New Zealand. Most of the MPs felt that New Zealand had many potential Pacific leaders and recognised the ways in which individuals and institutions can encourage them to be politically active. On the whole, they dismissed claims of a possible cultural clash between Pacific traditions and values and those of a Westminster Parliamentary democracy, noting that once in Parliament, the problems faced by Pacific MPs were largely the same as those faced by all other MPs. MPs also stressed the importance of the values that the Pacific community can bring to Parliament, namely a sense of the communal and the collective, rather than the individual. This idea of the strength and importance of community is evident in the time the Pacific MPs spend cultivating and maintaining their links with Pacific networks in New Zealand and reaffirms the significance of MPs having a strong personal Pacific identity.

Pacific people in New Zealand are a distinct migrant group, one that has played an important part in the shaping of New Zealand's identity. They have no claim to assured seats in Parliament, or to gain special political concessions as people of the land. But they are an important minority group in New Zealand and their political journey needs to be told. There are few published works on Pacific people and politics in New Zealand, despite the rising numbers of both Pacific political representatives and Pacific academics. This thesis attempts to provide a starting point for future work on this topic. For a number of reasons, it can not provide all the information or all the answers on the story of the political involvement of Pacific people in New Zealand. It did not, for instance, focus on the ways in which Pacific MPs effect change for their communities, once they are elected. Nor did it examine the voting records and history of Pacific voters and how this was related to the election of Pacific MPs. It did not address the wider issues of Pacific mobilisation and candidature or what role civil society plays in these. But despite there being neither time nor resources to fully

investigate all of these issues in this thesis; it is acknowledged that these are all issues that need to be addressed. It is hoped that this beginning into the analysis of the place of Pacific people in New Zealand politics will give cause to others to consider the political journey that the Pacific community is making. The story of Pacific people in politics is one that is important, not just for the growing Pacific population in New Zealand, but for wider studies on democracy and the roles of minority representatives. It discusses not only what the existing theoretical literature tells us about what minority representatives do and how they feel, but addresses these issues by viewing these theoretical conceptions through the words of the representatives themselves.

Appendix 1 – Biographies of the Pacific MPs

Taito Phillip Field

Phillip Field was born in Apia, Samoa and is of Samoan, Cook Island, German, and Jewish American descent. He came to New Zealand at the age of seven and was educated in Wellington. He describes this initial period in Wellington as difficult, because he could not speak English.[278] His parents, who had brought him to New Zealand to receive a better education, insisted he spoke only English to help him achieve at school. In the 1950's, there were few Samoans in New Zealand and his Samoan language was gradually lost. Prior to entering Parliament, Field was a union official and involved with many Pacific organisations, including the Vaiala Ulalei Golf Club in Auckland, the Auckland Cook Island Volleyball Association, the Manukau Outrigger Canoe Club and the New Zealand Universities Samoan Students' Association (National Patron). Despite being born in Samoa, by the 1970s, Field felt that he had lost much of language and cultural roots. He went to the Wellington Samoan Advisory Council because he wanted to learn the Samoan language and familiarise himself with the Pacific community. He noted that the Council was vital for addressing political issues of Pacific people: "[w]e saw it as a great opportunity for Pacific peoples and particularly Samoans because they had the larger numbers, as a vehicle for conveying to government important issues for the Pacific community at that time."[279]

In 1975, he was bestowed the title of Taito, paramount Chief of the Village of Manase, Savaii, Samoa. Field joined the Labour Party in 1976 and assisted on several campaigns. He became the Pacific Island Representative on the Labour Party's New Zealand Council from 1988-1994. In 1990, he stood as Labour's Parliamentary candidate for Otara; the first Pacific

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[278] P. Field (2003) "Tackling Pacific Island problems from within the Parliament" *DecisionMaker Guide to Parliament and Government* Published 3rd qtr, http://www.decisionmaker.co.nz/quarterlies/Pacificcitizens/Parliament.htm, accessed 12 January 2008.
[279] P. Field (2003) "Tackling Pacific Island problems from within the Parliament".

Island candidate in New Zealand's history, but was defeated. In 1993, he not only became the elected Member of Parliament for electorate of Otara and the first MP of Pacific Island descent in the New Zealand Parliament, but he was also the first Pacific Island Vice President of the New Zealand Labour Party. Field notes that Pacific people wanted to be heard in Parliament.

> They wanted a voice… There was a feeling we needed a voice inside where it counted. What came home to me was that there was no representation in the halls of power at that time. So there was a drive for representation in central and local government at that time.[280]

During Labour's time in Opposition, he was the Spokesperson on Pacific Island Affairs, as well as serving on several Select Committees. In 1996, Field became the elected Member of Parliament for electorate of Mangere in the first MMP General Election, a seat that he still holds as of early 2008. In 2003, he was made the first Pacific Minister, although remained outside Cabinet. He was appointed Minister of State and Associate Minister of Pacific Island Affairs, Associate Minister for Social Development and Employment and Associate Minister of Justice in the second Clark Labour Government.

In 2005, Field was stood down from his ministerial posts following allegations that he had improperly used his influence as an MP to receive material gain. It was alleged that he had used his position as an MP to obtain a work permit for a Thai non-resident who had worked on his home in Samoa and that he had given immigration assistance to other non-migrants, in return for working on properties that he owns. Field publicly claimed that he had never taken bribes or payments for services; never wrongly altered any official document, or asked any staff member to do so; never asked for cheap labour in return for services; never required

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[280] P. Field (2003) "Tackling Pacific Island problems from within the Parliament".

cheap labour rates for painting on his properties or never asked or arranged for Mr Suriwan [the Thai tiler] to go to Samoa and work on his house in return for assistance.[281] An inquiry, headed by Noel Ingram QC, was set up which cleared him of any conflict of interest but did criticise his judgement over the events.

After he made comments to the media that indicated he may run against Labour in a future election, he was formally expelled from the Labour Party in February 2007. Field returned to Parliament as an Independent, with the support of many within the Pacific Island community. In October 2007 police announced that they would be charging Field with corruption and bribery of a Member of Parliament, which carries a maximum sentence of 7 years' imprisonment. In November of the same year, police laid 40 charges against Field, 15 charges of bribery and 25 of obstructing or perverting the course of justice. (See Appendix 2 for a detailed timeline of the case.)

The Field affair has had serious repercussions for the Pacific community, with many denouncing the corruption accusations as a "cultural clash" between traditional Pacific values and those of a Western Parliamentary democracy. Judith Collins, the National spokesperson for Pacific Island Affairs, stated in the House that:

> The great villainous act of this situation is that it has besmirched the name of Pacific New Zealanders throughout the country. In my role I come across, and have a lot to do with, Pacific Island New Zealanders. They are heartily embarrassed at the way in which their culture and their name have been besmirched by these allegations of corruption… All Pacific New Zealanders have now been tarred with the brush of corruption—just as MPs in this House have been tarred by that brush….Helen Clark has taken

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[281] P. Field (2006) *Public Statement* http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/PA0608/S00532.htm, accessed 26 March 2007.

the votes of Pacific New Zealanders for years. She has treated Pacific New Zealanders as less than first class. She has said that is all right for them, because it is all they can expect. I am here to tell her that is not what Pacific New Zealanders should expect.[282]

In late 2007, Field announced that he would be standing for the seat of Mangere in the 2008 general election. In January 2008, Field registered a new political party, the New Zealand Pacific Party, which aimed to promote Christian and family values. Field stated that he was "reasonably confident" of winning Mangere,[283] but his eligibility to stand as a candidate in the 2008 election will depend on the outcome of his court case.

Vui Mark Gosche

Vui Mark Gosche is a New Zealand born Samoan, and was raised and educated in South Auckland. His father came to New Zealand from Samoa in the 1950's and met and married Mark's mother. At a time when there were very few Pacific families in New Zealand, he has noted that he never learnt or was encouraged to speak Samoan at home, and this was something that would cause him regret in later life.

> Having a Palangi, New Zealand mother, we grew up knowing we were Samoan but not knowing a lot about the culture and certainly not being taught the language. And so from there I was educated in south Auckland, so we knew the other Samoan families in the community because there weren't that many. Playing sport, and in particular by playing rugby league, I grew

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[282] J. Collins (2006) *Hansard,* New Zealand House of Representatives, Wednesday 30 August 2006.
[283] NZPA (2008) *Field Moves to Register 'Pacific Party'.*

up with a lot of Pacific Island and Māori people in the sporting sense.[284]

Despite this, Gosche was proud to claim his Samoan, along with German and English heritage. In his maiden speech, he acknowledged this inheritance but chose not to make any of his speech in Samoan.

> I thought long and hard when composing this speech about using the Samoan language. I do not speak or understand the language. I deeply regret that fact. The Samoan culture, like Māori and other cultures represented here in New Zealand, is based on spoken rather than written word. To be truly part of that culture and feel comfortable within it, one needs a command of the language. As a result, I grew up not being able to feel truly comfortable in either of the cultures of my origins.[285]

Despite this, his family did have strong church values, and acknowledged the importance of family, sharing and accepting collective responsibility for others; traits that he feels are strongly Pacific. He became actively involved in the trade union movement at the age of 25 and became a full time union official. He managed the Hotel, Hospital and Restaurant Workers Union (now the Service Workers Union) which had a large proportion of Pacific Island and Māori workers as members. He was a founder director of Union Health Centres (low cost medical centres) and trustee of Union Law Centre, a National Executive member of NZ Council of Trade Unions (NZCTU) and a past member of NZ Tourism Council & Trade Union Education Authority. He remained involved with the union for 15 years, negotiating on behalf of those in some of the lowest paid and most menial jobs in New Zealand. Gosche

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[284] Interview with M. Gosche August 2007.
[285] M. Gosche (1997) "Maiden Speech".

claims that this, along with his experience of anti-apartheid and anti-nuclear protests during his teacher training days, would give him the incentive to become politically involved at a national level. Gosche supported Taito Philip Field's campaign to become the first Pacific Island Member of Parliament in 1990 and 1993, and then was encouraged to stand himself by his friend David Lange. He was elected through the Labour Party's list in the 1996 general election and subsequently stood for and won the electorate seat of Maungakiekie in 1999 when the Labour Party returned to government. He was returned to Parliament in the 2002 and 2005 elections. In 1999 he was made Minister of Housing, Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation and was the first Pacific Island Minister of Pacific Island Affairs. He noted that while the Pacific community was extremely proud of this achievement:

> I found that in going around the Pacific communities, they
> were more proud of me being the Minister for Transport and
> Housing in some ways, because it said 'look we're there, we
> don't have to be there in a token sense; we can be there in a
> real sense.[286]

In 2002, he was additionally appointed Minister of Corrections and Minister of Racing. In 2003, Mark Gosche stepped down from his Cabinet positions to care for his wife, who is disabled. At this time, Prime Minister Helen Clark acknowledged his achievements, particularly his appointment as Minister of Pacific Island Affairs. Gosche himself stated that:

> It is an enormous privilege to be a member of Cabinet and it is
> a job of great responsibility. To fulfil that responsibility well is
> a challenge at the best of times. Give my current and on-going
> personal circumstances I believe it is best to step aside from

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[286] Interview with M. Gosche August 2007.

that role and concentrate on fulfilling my responsibilities as

MP for Maungakiekie.[287]

In 2007, Gosche travelled to Samoa, where he was honoured with his family's matai title of Vui. Gosche said that it had been something that he was wary of, because he felt "inadequate" for the position, because he did not speak the Samoan language, and because he was New Zealand-born, but he noted that it had felt "right in the end" and that his situation was similar to many New Zealand-born Pacific Islanders who were confused about their identity.[288] When asked whether receiving a matai title had changed the way he felt about his Pacific heritage, Gosche stated that:

> Yes, but its not like an overnight revelation because I took
> quite some time to build up to that, but it's certainly a huge
> honour and something that I felt really proud of and good
> about. I think people have treated me with the respect that goes
> with holding this sort of office in a very similar way to what
> they would have treated me if I had a matai title, so I'm not
> expecting that its going to make a lot of people treat me hugely
> different to what they already have, but the positives is that
> non-Pacific people have had their eyes open to something that
> they didn't know about so its been quite interesting seeing the
> reactions. For me, there was a long long time when I thought
> about whether I should be doing that so when you finally get

[287] M. Gosche (2003) *Personal Statement*, 9 May 2003,
http://staging.labour.org.nz/Our_mps_top/mark_gosche/speeches_and_releases/speach1/index.html, accessed 3 January 2007.
[288] C. Trevett (2007) "Kiwi-born MP embraces Samoan roots" *New Zealand Herald,*
http://www.nzherald.co.nz/section/story.cfm?c_id=280&objectid=10438191&ref=rss, accessed 9 May 2007.

there it seems to me to have been the right time to do it, so not

a lot has changed.[289]

He acknowledged that it is important for New Zealand born Samoans to know who they are and feel proud of where they come from.[290] He also notes he has always felt strong links to the Pacific community, despite a lack of recognition of his heritage by the general public.

I guess it's just natural to feel that through all that time, I've

been a part of the Pacific community. I'm not necessarily seen

by the general populace as being Pacific, because I don't look

very Pacific and it's only in more recent times that people have

come to know who I am in terms of my ethnic background. But

certainly within the Labour movement and within the Labour

Party it was pretty well known for a lot longer than the general

population would have known.[291]

After the sudden death of his son Kristian in 2007, Vui Mark Gosche announced that he would not be re-seeking the electorate seat of Maungakiekie. His decision was based on "the need for greater flexibility because of his personal circumstances" which includes being a carer for his wife Carol. He also told New Zealand Press Association (NZPA) that a more personal campaign was required when campaigning for an electorate seat and he did not feel able to do that so soon after his son's death.[292]

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[289] Interview with M. Gosche, August 2007.
[290] C. Trevett (2007) "Kiwi-born MP embraces Samoan roots".
[291] Interview with M. Gosche August 2007.
[292] NZPA (2008) *Gosche seeks list spot only*, http://www.stuff.co.nz/4415000a6160.html, accessed 27 February 2008.

Luamanuvao Winnie Laban

Winnie Laban was born in New Zealand to Samoan parents, Ta'atofa Kenneth Poutoa Laban and Emi Tunupopo Patu, who immigrated during the 1950's. Her parents were very involved in the Samoan community and she and her brother Ken used to perform in a Samoan cultural group with her parents. Laban says they were brought up "to be very much an integral part of a whole in terms of churches, communities, cultural groups."[293] She also notes that when people would accuse her of being New Zealand born, "I'd say I'm actually Samoan too. I know my gafa. I know where my family's come from and my genealogy and no one can deny me a place or a voice."[294]

She was always interested in issues of social justice and studied Social Work at Victoria University and Development Studies at Massey University. Before entering Parliament, she worked in the public, private and voluntary sectors in New Zealand and overseas, and held such positions as board member at the Mental Health Foundation, member of the Samoan Women's Project, member of the Pacific Island Committee to the Mayor of Hutt City, board member on the Minister of Foreign Affairs Advisory Committee on Aid and is an Elder at the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand. Laban maintained strong links with her Samoan heritage, as demonstrated in 1992, when she was bestowed the Samoan chiefly title of Luamanuvao, from the village of Vaiala, Vaimauga, Samoa.

In 1999, Laban was elected to Parliament as a List MP for the Labour Party - New Zealand's first Pacific Island female Member of Parliament. In the 2002 election she won the seat for the Mana electorate and retained the seat in 2005. After this election, Laban was promoted to Minister for the Community and the Voluntary Sector, Associate Minister for Pacific Island Affairs, Associate Minister for Social Development and Employment and Associate Minister for Economic Development. She sat on the Health and Commerce Select Committees and has

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[293] Interview with W. Laban, February 2007
[294] Interview with W. Laban February 2007.

previously been Deputy Chair of the Foreign Affairs and Trade Select Committee and sat on the Finance and Expenditure Select Committee, the Law and Order Select Committee, the Government Administration and Social Services Select Committees, the Special Select Committee for the Employment Relations Bill as well as chairing the Caucus Justice Committee. In 2007, Laban was appointed Minister of Pacific Island Affairs, the second Pacific Island person to be appointed to this position, and Associate Minister of Trade. She retained the portfolios of Associate Minister for Social Development and Employment and Associate Minister for Economic Development.

> When I entered Parliament there was a lot of pressure on me to
> be involved in the social services, because most of my working
> life had been in that area, and in Pacific Island Affairs, because
> I was a Pacific Islander. I decided that I did not want to work in
> the 'soft', areas that were easy for me.[295]

Laban stated that this is why she has pursued areas such as Finance and Foreign Affairs, so as not to be typecast in to "feminine" roles. She also noted that her Pacific Island heritage allowed her to succeed in Parliament by dressing elegantly, never responding to the 'dirty side of politics' and spending time in the community listening to the needs of the people.[296] In 2008, Laban announced that she had been diagnosed with treatable breast cancer and used the opportunity to encourage Pacific women to undergo regular mammograms. She publicly said that "Pacific women are still very private about their bodies and don't like talking about women's things ... but it's important that they talk about this issue."[297]

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[295] W. Laban, (2006) Speech given to the New Zealand Federation of Graduate Women, Wellington, 9 October 2006.
[296] W. Laban, (2006) Speech given to the New Zealand Federation of Graduate Women, Wellington, 9 October 2006.
[297] T. Watkins (2008) "MP Winnie Laban lifts the veil on cancer" *The Dominion Post*, http://www.stuff.co.nz/4387309a20475.html, accessed 6 February 2008.

Anae Arthur Anae

Arthur Anae was born in Fiji and is of Samoan, English and Chinese heritage. Prior to entering politics, Anae ran a taxi business and owned a travel agency. He has stated that "[p]eople forget I came from the grass roots, from nothing. People think I was born a rich kid, they don't realise that I have earned it. Grey Lynn used to be the Mangere and Otara and I worked bloody hard, sometimes I had three part-time jobs at once."[298]

Anae has the chiefly title of Anae, making his full title Anae Arthur Anae, although he rarely uses it.

> Taito Phillip Field went into Parliament and he used his title, so did Luamanuvao Winnie Laban and now Mark Gosche. But I never used mine. I don't use it because I don't believe I need to capitalise on a title. I actually have three titles Anae, Lupematasila and Lima, but I don't use them. People respect you for the work you do, not your title. I don't have to shove it down people's throats to respect me for the titles I carry; respect me for the work I do and support my dreams and aspirations for the need of Pacific People and other small minority groups. They need leadership and someone who will stand up for them.[299]

Anae was the first Pacific MP of the National Party. He first entered Parliament as a list MP in 1996 but in the general election of 1999, missed out on returning to Parliament. In 2000 Don McKinnon resigned from Parliament and Anae replaced him. During his time in Parliament he introduced the portability of pensions for Pacific people, and Samoan language

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[298] Interview with A. Anae September 2007.
[299] Interview with A. Anae September 2007.

in schools. Anae fought for the immigration quotas for Tonga, Kiribati, Tuvalu and Fiji, as well as a national Pacific radio network, later provided by the Labour Party. At the 2002 elections, Anae was placed in a low ranking (number 28) on the party list and was not returned to Parliament. This angered many Pacific Islanders, who believed that National was failing to acknowledge or support Pacific Island communities in New Zealand. Anae himself stated that:

> My position on the party list doesn't affect me personally, but it's a direct insult to the Pacific community - to be put back there while they seem to think that the Asian and Māori communities matter and we didn't…They didn't deserve the vote of the Pacific community with that kind of attitude to it, and I know they didn't get it.[300]

Since leaving Parliament, Anae has had extensive involvement on a number of boards, trusts and committees and is still very involved in public life today. He is currently a Manukau City Councillor and a member of the Counties Manukau District Health Board where he chairs the Pacific Health Advisory Committee. He ran for Mayor of Manukau City in 2007 and was third overall. He has not ruled out a return to politics.

Charles Chauvel

Charles Chauvel is of Tahitian descent and is the first Pacific gay MP in Parliament. Chauvel is well versed in his Tahitian heritage and his family is still involved in local politics. "The family is quite interesting, they're all active in local politics; my second cousin is Oscar Temaru who was briefly the president, the pro-independence anti-nuclear activist."[301]

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[300] H. Tunnah (2002) "National must change or turn into dinosaur" *New Zealand Herald* http://www.nzherald.co.nz/feature/story.cfm?c_id=774&objectid=2347261 accessed June 25 2007.
[301] Interview with C. Chauvel, July 2007.

Chauvel's father came to New Zealand from Tahiti in the late 1940s so that he could be educated in English and was one of the first Pacific Islanders in New Zealand to graduate with a law degree. Chauvel notes that his father "graduated in '58 and managed to get around our white New Zealand immigration policy to get residency, so he was part of that really early part of the Pacific wave of immigration to New Zealand."[302]

Chauvel had a comfortable middle class upbringing in provincial New Zealand, aware of his Pacific heritage through regular trips back to visit family in Tahiti throughout his childhood. He claimed:

> The sense of identity I have of being Tahitian comes from those voyages back to Tahiti with family rather than from having been raised as a part of a larger community living in this country. Nor has it ever been based on membership of a big Pacific church…I find many attitudes in common in talking with many other New Zealand-born Pacific people – respect for culture and family; but not excessive dependence on them; also a desire to achieve respect and independence in a new home on my own merits.[303]

Chauvel was admitted to the New Zealand bar and was involved in the areas of regulatory/commercial, public and employment law. In 1995, the National Government appointed him a member of the Board of the Public Health Commission, after he had served as a Trustee of the New Zealand AIDS Foundation from 1990. He has been a member of the

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[302] Interview with C. Chauvel, July 2007.

[303] Spasifik Magazine (2007) *Interview with Charles Chauvel,* http://www.spasifik.co.nz/politics_2may07charleschuavel, accessed 27 May 2007.

Wellington District Law Society's Constitutional Matters Committee and of its Employment Law Committee, as well as of the Auckland District Law Society's Public Issues Committee. In 2000, at the age of 30, Chauvel was elected a partner in the Minter Ellison Legal Group, one of the world's 25 largest law firms and between April 2004 and December 2005 he served as a member of the New Zealand board of Minter Ellison. Chauvel was Deputy Presiding Member of the New Zealand Lotteries Commission and he served as a director of New Zealand's largest electricity generation company, Meridian Energy Ltd.

Chauvel joined the New Zealand Labour Party at the age of 15 in 1985. He chaired the Princes Street Branch of the Party and was President of the Auckland University Labour Club. In 1988, he was elected President of Young Labour, and between 1989 and 1991 he served on the governing body of the Party, the New Zealand Council. In 1990 he was a member of the Party's Policy Council, and the Party's candidate in the general election of that year for the seat of Maramarua. He has been a member of the Party in the Rongotai electorate since moving to Wellington in 1993. He held place number 44 on Labour's Party List in the 2005 General Election, and stood as the Party's candidate in the Ohariu-Belmont electorate, but was defeated by Peter Dunne. After Jim Sutton retired from politics, Chauvel entered the House as Labour's newest MP in 2006.

In 2007, he was appointed to chair the backbench committee "Families, Young and Old", as well as working as the Secretary of the Pacific Islands Caucus, Convenor of the Rainbow Caucus and being part of Caucus' Resources Committee. He was also elected Chair of Parliament's Finance and Expenditure Committee and asked to work as Parliamentary Private Secretary (PPS) to the Attorney-General, Michael Cullen. In late 2007, Chauvel announced that he would stand as the Party's candidate in the Ohariu Electorate, in order to increase his personal vote and that of the Labour Party.

Chauvel believed that Labour is the party that supports and delivers economic benefits to PI people in New Zealand and notes Labour's commitment to "sending Pacific people to Parliament and then putting them in positions of influence."[304] Being the only Pacific MP of Tahitian heritage, Chauvel acknowledged the obvious differences between himself and the other Pacific MPs:

> I don't feel any great cultural estrangement from the rest of Polynesian culture in New Zealand…Probably the big difference is because of that different colonial history, there isn't a big Tahitian population here so I can't claim to be directly representative of a particular ethnic group within the Pacific population in New Zealand, but in a way, that's been a bit of an advantage…I think Pacific communities in New Zealand like the diversity of representation.[305]

Su'a William Sio

Samoan by birth, William Sio holds the matai title of Su'a from the village of Matatufu, of the district called Lotofaga on the island of Upolu. He belongs to the extended family headed by the High Chief Aupito, a Matai title currently held by William's father. Sio was born in the village of Satapuala, where his mother, younger brother and family members are now buried. His parents came to New Zealand in 1969 in search of education and employment opportunities for their family. Sio became involved in politics in the 1980's; helping the Pacific elders who were involved with the Labour Party Council and eventually became a chair of a Samoan branch of the Labour Party. He campaigned for Taito Phillip Field but was disappointed when Field was defeated in the 1990 general election. He became involved with

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[304] Spasifik Magazine (2007) *Interview with Charles Chauvel.*
[305] Interview with C. Chauvel, July 2007.

trade unions and worked with people around the country, while maintaining his links with the Labour Party. Sio left New Zealand in 1992 for Samoa where he stayed for eight years. During this time, he worked for the Ombudsman's Office, worked with trade unions and helped organise private sector workers.

Su'a returned in 2000 after the death of his mother, and decided to settle back in Otara. He continued his involvement with the Labour Party, who supported him to become a Manukau City Councillor for the Otara Ward in 2001 and in 2007 he became Deputy Mayor of Manukau City. Sio worked with Vui Mark Gosche and Winnie Laban to develop the Pacific Sector Council and he sits on Labour's Council as the Pacific Vice-President. In 2004, he put his name forward for the Labour Party list, and was ranked at number 48 at the 2005 general election. In October 2007, it was announced that he would enter Parliament, replacing retiring MP Dianne Yates and in December of the same year, Sio was declared the Labour Party candidate for the seat of Mangere.

On April 1 2008, Sio was sworn in as Labour's newest MP and the sixth Pacific Island MP to enter Parliament. In his maiden speech, Sio noted:

> I particularly want to acknowledge all the Pacific members in
> this House. I thank you for your pioneering efforts, for opening
> the doors and paving the way for me and future generations
> who will follow.[306]

He spoke of his journey back to Samoa to receive the blessings of village elders before he entered Parliament and the importance of his family. Sio and his wife Jean have 7 children and he stressed the importance for the youth of New Zealand to "take up their rightful

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[306] Sio (2008) "Maiden Speech".

leadership roles in the future."[307] Sio also acknowledged how he saw his role as an MP and the values that he hoped to bring to the House:

> I was raised by my extended family to believe that leadership is about serving people. That holding public office is the highest level of serving your fellow human beings, a stewardship given by the people. One ought to treat it with respect, care and the dignity it deserves. I pray that I will be able to make a contribution to this House which upholds the dignity and mana of this place. To leave a legacy that my family, my friends, and my community, and especially my children are proud of.[308]

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[307] Sio (2008) "Maiden Speech".
[308] Sio (2008) "Maiden Speech".

Appendix 2 - Timeline of the Phillip Field Case: September 2005 to April 2008[309]

* Sept 12, 2005 - Television New Zealand reports that Mr Field hired a Thai man who was facing deportation to work on his house in Samoa. Mr Field asked then Associate Immigration Minister Damien O'Connor to review the situation, and New Zealand work permits were granted to the man and his wife. Mr Field said there was no connection between the two events.

* Sept 20, 2005 - Prime Minister Helen Clark announces a Queen's Counsel will conduct an inquiry into the allegations against Mr Field. National accuses the Prime Minister of delaying an investigation because of the election. Mr Field, who strongly denies any wrongdoing, is told to "take a break" from his ministerial duties.

* Sept 21, 2005 - Noel Ingram, QC, is appointed to conduct the inquiry and asked to report back by October 4.

* Oct 4, 2005 - The first deadline comes and goes with Miss Clark now saying it will take as long as it takes.

* Oct 20, 2005 - Labour reveals its Cabinet line-up but Mr Field is not given a position.

* Dec 13, 2005 - A builder who blew the whistle on the original alleged conflict of interest pulls out of the inquiry because it won't pay his legal fees. Over the coming months more accusations are made against Mr Field including a claim he bought a house from a struggling constituent and then on-sold it for a large profit.

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[309] NZPA (2007) "Taito Phillip Field case: Timeline" *New Zealand Herald*, http://www.nzherald.co.nz/section/1/story.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10441517, accessed 7 February 2008.

* June 6, 2006 - As speculation mounts about the report, Mr Field refuses to say whether he is going to stay with the Labour Party, but Miss Clark says she has "no reason to doubt" the MP's membership.

* July 18, 2006 - Report released. Mr Field says the report exonerates and vindicates him. Opposition parties say it shows Mr Field is corrupt, misled the inquiry and is not fit to be an MP.

* July 22, 2006 - There are reports Mr Field has threatened to leave Labour if he does not get his ministerial portfolios back. Miss Clark says Mr Field's errors of judgment rule that out, but says he remains a loyal party member.

* July 31, 2006 - Police confirm they are investigating a complaint against Mr Field.

* August 30, 2006 - Mr Field issues a statement saying he is innocent, wishes to remain as a Labour MP and challenges his accusers to go to the police.

* August 31, 2006 - Police announce they will investigate all allegations. Mr Field agrees to go on leave until that is completed.

* February 13, 2007 - Labour's hierarchy cuts Mr Field loose after interviews on both TV networks suggesting he might stand for Parliament as an independent if he failed to win Labour selection.

* February, 16 2007 - Mr Field resigns from the Labour Party after being expelled from the party and says he will return to Parliament as an independent.

* March 7, 2007 - Police hand their file to Crown lawyers.

* April 15, 2007 - Mr Field says he is in the process of setting up his own political party focused on family values.

* May 24, 2007 - Police announce they will pursue 14 charges of bribery against Mr Field.

* October 5, 2007 - Chief High Court Judge Justice Tony Randerson authorises a public prosecution, saying it would be in the public interest.

* October 17, 2007 - A High Court Judge grants an interim stay of proceedings against Mr Field while an appeal is heard against the decision to allow police to prosecute.

* November 23, 2007 - Police lay 40 charges against the MP - 15 charges of bribery and 25 of obstructing or perverting the course of justice.

* February 5, 2008 – Field and his company TP Field Developments, pleads guilty to illegal building on a Papatoetoe house and are fined more than $20,000.

* April 7, 2008 – Field appears in the Manukau District Court today for the start of the depositions hearing into 40 charges he faces. The hearing was postponed until April 14, 2008.

* April 14, 2008 – The hearing recommences. The hearing is expected to take three to four weeks, and around 50 witnesses will be called.

Appendix 3 – Criteria for the Royal Commission on the Electoral System

The Royal Commission on Electoral Change was instructed to inquire into, investigate and report upon:

1) Whether any changes to the law and practice governing the conduct of Parliamentary representation is necessary or desirable

2) Whether the existing system of Parliamentary representation (whereby in respect of each electoral the candidate with the highest number of votes is elected as the Member of Parliament for that district) should continue or whether all or a specified number or proportion of Members of Parliament should be elected under an alternative system or alternative systems, such as proportional representation or preferential voting.

3) Whether the numbers of Members of Parliament should be increased, and if so, how many additional Members of Parliament there should be

4) Whether the existing formulae and procedures for determining the number and boundaries of electoral districts should be changed, and, in particular, -

   a) Whether the re-distribution of electoral districts should be based on total population or adult population

   b) Whether the allowance of five percent by which the population of an electoral district may vary from the quota should be changed

   c) Whether the membership and functions of the Representation Commission and the time limits and procedures governing its functions should be changed

   d) The feasibility of some form of appeal from decisions of the Representation Commission

5) The nature and basis of Māori representation in Parliament

6) The term of Parliament

7) To what extent referenda should be used to determine controversial issues, the appropriateness of provisions governing the conduct of referenda, and whether referenda should be legislatively binding

8) Whether the present limits on election expenses are appropriate and whether any limits on such expenses should be extended to political parties and to the amount of individual or total donations candidates or parties receive and whether such expenses should be defrayed wholly or in part by State grants and the conditions, if any, which should apply to such grants

9) Any other question relating to the electoral system which you may see fit to inquire into, investigate and report upon. [310]

Criteria for Judging Voting Systems

The Commission developed ten criteria to use in order to judge the various electoral systems. Those criteria were:

(a) Fairness between political parties.

When they vote at elections, voters are primarily choosing between alternative party Governments. In the interests of fairness and equality, therefore, the number of seats gained by a political party should be proportional to the number of voters who support that party.

(b) Effective representation of minority and special interest groups.

The voting system should ensure that parties, candidates and MPs are responsive to significant groups and interests. To facilitate this, membership of the House should not only be proportional to the level of party support but should also reflect other significant

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[310] *Towards a Better Democracy* (1986) p.xiii

characteristics of the electorate, such as gender, ethnicity, socio-economic class, locality and age.

(c) Effective Māori representation.

In view of their particular historical, Treaty and socio-economic status, Māori and the Māori point of view should be fairly and effectively represented in Parliament.

(d) Political integration.

While the electoral system should ensure that the opinions of diverse groups and interests are represented it should at the same time encourage all groups to respect other points of view and to take into account the good of the community as a whole.

(e) Effective representation of constituents.

An important function of individual MPs is to act on behalf of constituents who need help in their dealings with the Government or its agencies. The voting system should therefore encourage close links and accountability between individual MPs and their constituents.

(f) Effective voter participation.

If individual citizens are to play a full and active part in the electoral process, the voting system should provide them with mechanisms and procedures which they can readily understand. At the same time, the power to make and unmake governments should be in the hands of the people at an election and the votes of all electors should be of equal weight in influencing election results.

(g) Effective government.

The electoral system should allow Governments in New Zealand to meet their responsibilities. Governments should have the ability to act decisively when that is appropriate and there should be reasonable continuity and stability both within and between Governments.

(h) Effective Parliament.

As well as providing a Government, members of the House have a number of other important Parliamentary functions. These include providing a forum for the promotion of alternative Governments and policies, enacting legislation, authorising the raising of taxes and the expenditure of public money, scrutinising the actions and policies of the executive, and supplying a focus for individual and group aspirations and grievances. The voting system should provide a House which is capable of exercising these functions as effectively as possible.

(i) Effective parties.

The voting system should recognise and facilitate the essential role political parties play in modern representative democracies in, for example, formulating and articulating policies and providing representatives for the people.

(j) Legitimacy.

Members of the community should be able to endorse the voting system and its procedures as fair and reasonable and to accept its decisions, even when they themselves prefer other alternatives.[311]

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[311] The New Zealand Electoral Commission *Royal Commission criteria for judging voting systems* http://www.elections.org.nz/rc-voting-system-judging-criteria.html accessed 1 December 2007

Appendix 4 – Interview Information

Information Sheet

Researcher: Helena Cook, Political Science and International Relations Programme, Victoria University of Wellington.

Background Info
I am a Masters student at Victoria University of Wellington. For my thesis topic, I am working on a study of Pacific Island political representation in New Zealand. This will include a study of past and present Pacific Island MPs in the New Zealand Parliament, an analysis of the nature of representation and the role of MPs, and an evaluation of the use of Pacific Island networks by MPs to connect with and represent their communities.

Purpose of Interview
The information gathered will be reported in a published thesis, and for academic conferences and publications. The general findings may be the topic of wider media dissemination.

It is proposed that you will be identified in the research paper, unless you wish to remain anonymous. If you do not wish to be identified, material will be presented in a manner which protects your anonymity.

Informed Consent
The purpose of the consent form is to ensure that you understand the information provided and have made an informed decision about the nature of the questions and how the information provided will be used.

Nature of the Questions
I would like the interview to be semi-structured, covering:
- How and why you became an MP
- Who you represent as an MP
- As a Pacific Island MP, how is serving as a Parliamentarian influenced by wider processes of community, church, and social interaction? What are these processes, how do they operate and why do they matter?
- How you communicate with your constituents and how they communicate with you

I hope to tape this interview; you will be given the opportunity to validate the transcriptions. The tapes and the transcripts will be kept in safe custody and handled in a way which protects your confidentiality.

Who will have access to the tapes?
- The researcher: Helena Cook
- The supervisor: Professor Elizabeth McLeay

Upon completion of the thesis, expected to be in February 2008, all tapes and transcriptions will be destroyed.

The thesis will be submitted for marking to the department of Political Science and a copy will be available to the public at the University of Victoria library.

Interview Schedule – Pacific Island MPs

Background of MP
- Pacific links
- Entry into politics
- Motivation for entering politics

The Role of an MP
- The process of becoming an MP
- The differences between the duties of a list MP and an electorate MP

Representation
- Which groups MPs feel they represent in Parliament
- Legitimacy from Pacific Island communities
- MMP and Pacific Island representation

Pacific Island Networks
- Examples
- Connecting and affecting communities and constituents
- The importance of Pacific Island leaders and voices

Observation Protocol Sheet

Observation of Pacific Island MPs
By Helena Cook
MA student, Political Science and International Relations Programme
Victoria University of Wellington

Protocol

1. I will respect the confidentiality of the proceedings.
2. I will neither quote by name nor refer to the views of the MPs or their staff in speeches, articles or publications resulting from the research without first obtaining the permission of the people cited.
3. I will ensure that all relevant material (including notes) is kept in a safe place.
4. All proceedings will be destroyed at the completion of the project (estimated to be February 2008).
5. A transcript of any interview will be submitted to the interviewee for scrutiny for factual errors and matters relating to confidentiality. Matters of interpretation and judgement are the responsibility of the author.

Signed:

Date:

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