

Demography, Diaspora and Diplomacy: New Zealand's Asian Challenges

ANDREW BUTCHER *

Abstract

This policy note takes a long-term view of the challenges New Zealand may face in its relationship with Asia, both domestically and internationally. Drawing on research commissioned by the Asia New Zealand Foundation, the paper discusses three main areas. First, demographic changes present challenges for New Zealand's bicultural relations, social policy, how we measure and understand ethnicity and issues of national identity. Second, New Zealand has one of the largest diaspora populations in the world, but this is largely ignored in policy especially with respect to Asia. Third, possible diplomatic challenges are outlined, including increased pressure on off-shore diplomatic posts by diaspora and tourist populations, diplomatic incidents, and the implications of shifting regional power arrangements in the Asia-Pacific region.

Introduction

In surveying a growing 'Asian New Zealand' population and New Zealand's future in Asia, this article considers three themes: demographic changes, diaspora opportunities and diplomatic challenges.

This paper follows Statistics New Zealand in identifying the Asian region as the part of the world that extends from Pakistan in the west to Indonesia in the east. It includes South Asia but excludes West Asia (the Middle East), Russia and its former states, and some countries that are on the Pacific Rim (such as the United States, Australia and New Zealand, which are all considered part of a broad 'Asia-Pacific area in some forums such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the East Asia Summit).

* Director, Policy and Research, Asia New Zealand Foundation: AButcher@asianz.org.nz

Asian peoples are usually defined in two ways: people born in the countries of Asia, or people who identify with one or more Asian ethnicities. Generally, this article refers to those in the second category, who are of Asian ethnicity (whether New Zealand-born or overseas-born).

Statistical projections suggest that 'Asian New Zealanders', i.e. people born in New Zealand who identify with an Asian ethnicity, will be a growing population in New Zealand over the next few decades (Bedford and Ho, 2008). This raises questions such as how this group might be presented in the New Zealand media, which tends to resort to the lowest common denominator in their reportage? What connections they will have with other ethnic groups? What role might they play politically? How might they distinguish themselves and be distinguished by others from migrant populations from Asia? What about those who share Asian-Pacific ethnicities, such as New Zealand's current Governor-General (at the time of writing) Sir Anand Satyanand, who is of Indo-Fijian ethnicity? These questions are significant for New Zealand in these first decades of the 21st century. They are unique to New Zealand's history, central to New Zealand's identity, crucial for the measure of New Zealand's various ethnicities and necessary to both ask and answer to understand New Zealand's place in the world.

New Zealand's place in the world is represented not just geographically as a series of islands in the South Pacific, but also through the dispersed nature of its population, its diaspora. One estimate puts New Zealand's diaspora population – that is, the population of New Zealand citizens and permanent residents who live outside New Zealand - as one of the highest in the world, at one-fifth (one million people) of its total population (refer to Gamlen, 2011 for a discussion on definitions of diaspora; Bedford, 2001). New Zealanders overseas predominately live in Australia, the United Kingdom or the United States of America. However, an increasing number are living in Asia, particularly if a broader definition of diaspora is used, which encompasses returned migrants and students alongside New Zealand-born citizens and permanent residents.

Scholarly literature is divided on the meaning of diaspora and, like other well-worn academic terms, it risks meaning all things to all people. Inasmuch as there is a common understanding, 'diaspora' is taken to include an ongoing orientation towards a homeland and the maintenance of a group identity over time (Gamlen, 2011 page 5). However, there is no significant,

large-scale research measuring New Zealand's diaspora populations, so while we may subscribe to a common understanding there is no way (yet) in which we can be assured we are using it correctly. In this field, for New Zealand, we have to make do with a certain amount of interference, supposition and speculation.

Regardless of the precise figures, increasing numbers of New Zealanders abroad (as both diaspora and tourist populations) can put increased strain on New Zealand's diplomatic posts, particularly in instances of natural disasters, terrorist attacks or self-inflicted troubles (Blue Ribbon Panel Report, 2009).

The ubiquity and ease of mass communication can also inflame diplomatic headaches, as was experienced after controversial comments towards the Governor General of New Zealand were made on air by a former Television New Zealand broadcaster Paul Henry in early 2011. Incidents of these kinds may occur both off-shore and in New Zealand. For example, as seen in 2008 when it hosted the Olympic Games, China can use its own diaspora – i.e. its overseas ethnically Chinese population (including those in New Zealand), to rally to its nationalist causes (Butcher, 2009a; Ayson & Taylor, 2008). In 2008, this took the form of counter-protests to anti-China rallies held in many Western capitals. These protests and counter-protests then become part of the complex and shifting bilateral relationship between New Zealand and China, amplified by the significant minority of ethnically Chinese New Zealanders descent.

To further complicate these bilateral relationships, the changing regional power shifts in Asia may require some fancy diplomatic foot-work as New Zealand seeks to negotiate trade and other deals with countries who are not traditional allies or strategic partners, such as the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Canada (see White, 2009; 2010 for discussion of the same in the Australian context and the New Zealand Government's Defence White Paper, 2010, for discussion for the New Zealand context). Political disruption, natural disasters, fragile states, climate change and 'rogue states' all further contribute to a fraught region of which New Zealand is a part, not just by virtue of its geography as a Pacific Rim country, but also because of its own significant Asian population.

Demographic Changes

The 2006 Census recorded 354,552 persons of Asian ethnicity living in New Zealand, 9.2 percent of the total usually resident population, up from 6.6 percent in 2001. Population projections prepared by Statistics New Zealand (medium series) suggest that the numbers of people of Asian ethnicity could reach 790,000 by 2026, and that this growth will be driven in large part by net migration (Statistics New Zealand, 2010). Figures 1 and 2 show age sex structure of the Asian population against the total New Zealand population (Figure 1) and Maori (Figure 2) across the period 1986 to 2026 (see also Friesen 2008a, 2008b, 2009a, 2009b; Bedford and Ho (2008)). New Zealand's Asian population is projected to eventually exceed that of Maori.

Several implications arise from these demographic projections. The relative growth among New Zealand's Asian population compared with Maori presents some challenges to New Zealand's bicultural framework. Some commentators have raised concerns about the implications of a growing Asian population on bicultural relations between the Crown and Maori, the understanding and goodwill around the Treaty of Waitangi and related claims and the secure place of Maori as tangata whenua. Twelve years ago Fleras and Spoonley (1999) set out a challenge that Aotearoa New Zealand needed to "rethink [its] core institutions and values in a way that now encompasses the pluralistic nature of contemporary New Zealand" (p.252) and that

At the core is a distinction between the circumstances and rights of indigenous peoples and those of immigrants and their descendants, whether they are part of a majority or minority ethnic group (p.253).

With a projected Asian population that may equal or exceed New Zealand's Maori population, the need for a distinction between tangata whenua (indigenous New Zealanders) and tauwiwi (foreigners, or non-indigenous New Zealanders) seems all the more salient.

Figure 1: Population structure Total and Asian 1986 – 2026

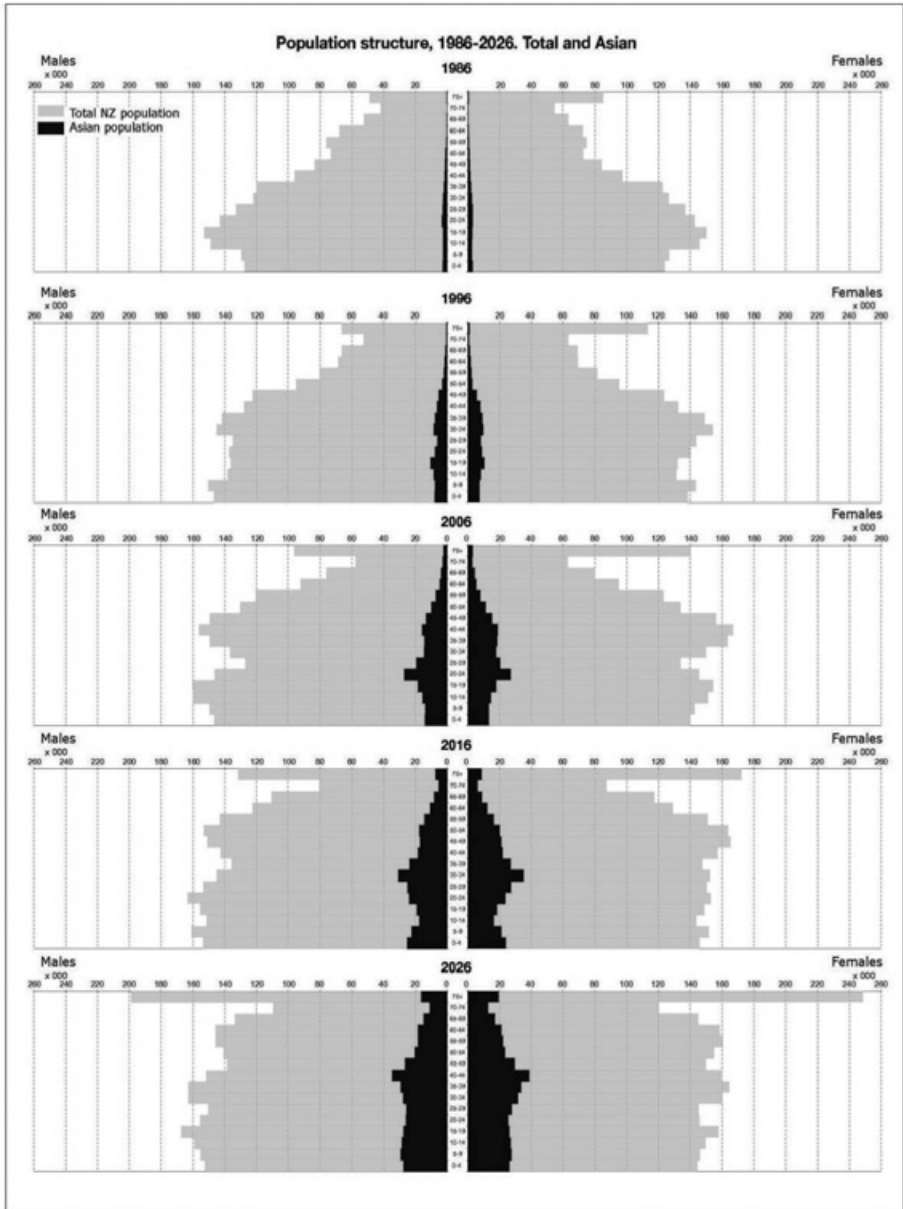
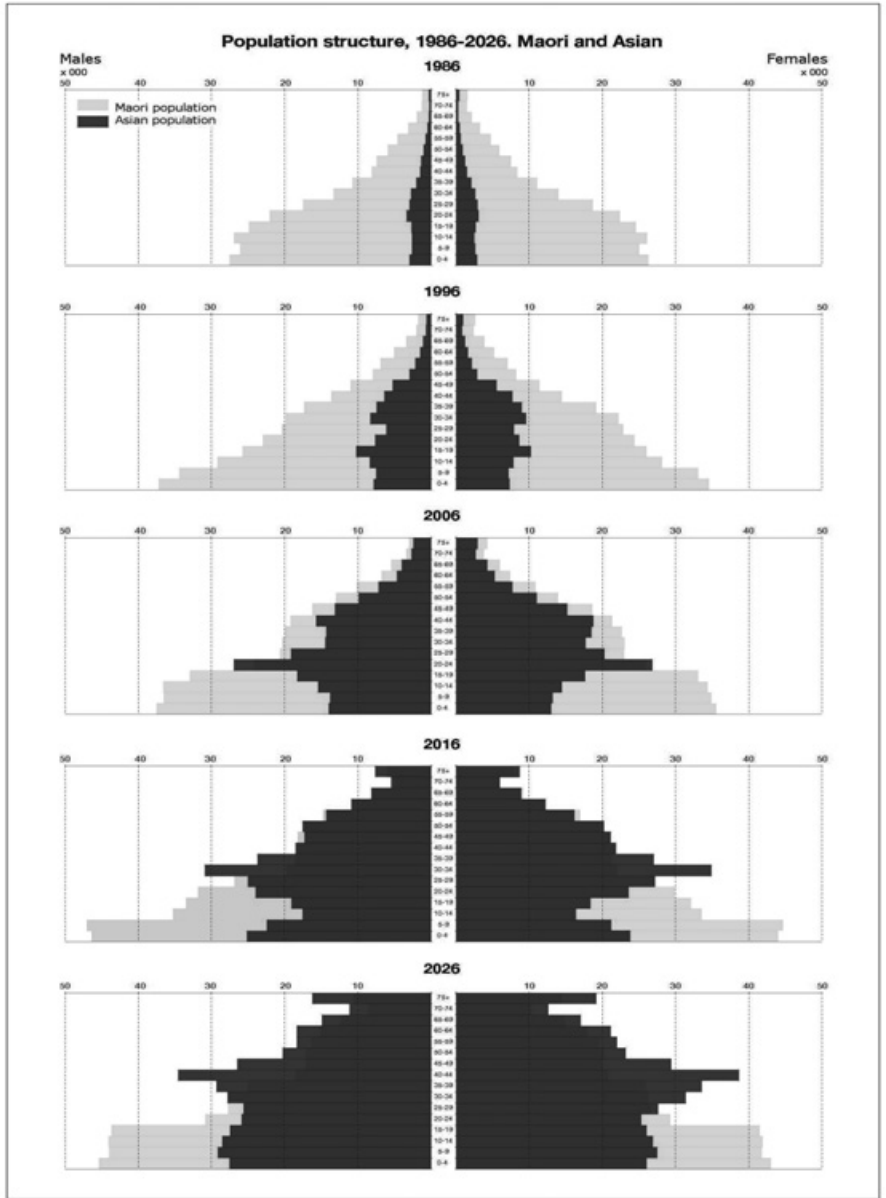


Figure 2: Population structure Maori and Asian 1986 – 2026



The context of Fleras and Spoonley's comments, made in 1999, was very different twelve years ago to now. As they noted, there was at that time a sympathetic Treaty Negotiations Minister (Sir Douglas Graham), significant steps had been taken to address Maori grievances and a bicultural framework was being deeply and successfully embedded in New Zealand discourse and governance. It is argued here not that those successes have unravelled, but rather that they have stalled. New Zealand's arrangement with Maori might be unique amongst similar settler societies (Pearson, 2001), as is its relatively high proportion of Asian immigrants, especially in Auckland (Spoonley and Butcher, 2010), but that does not isolate it from strong anti-immigrant rhetoric (e.g. Lynch, 2011; see also Butcher & Spoonley, 2011). Some of this anti-immigration rhetoric in New Zealand is from Maori commentators (see Walker, 2004b; also see Spoonley, 2010), but certainly not all.

Alongside the government-imposed deadline for Treaty settlements, a subterranean argument to do away with Maori seats in Parliament, led initially by former National Party leader (and now Act Party leader) Dr Don Brash (Pearson, 2004; Walker, 2004a), a successful omission of Maori seats in the new Auckland Council (Spoonley, 2009; n.d.) and a recession that is negatively impacting Maori (Department of Labour, 2009), the projected increase in numbers of Asian residents may unsettle some.

Of course, the issue of Asian immigrants is not as clear-cut as the anti-immigration rhetoric might suggest. As Bedford and Ho (2008) note, increasing numbers of Asian peoples in New Zealand will identify with more than one ethnicity, including Maori. As Ip (2008, 2009) has shown, Maori-Asian relationships have a long and intimate history. But this history and ethnic mix does not in itself deal to the concerns highlighted here, nor does it necessarily ameliorate animosity by Maori toward Asian migrants. Should the economy recover to pre-recession levels, should Maori seats in Parliament be kept as sacrosanct, should the social and political needs of Maori be successfully and sympathetically addressed, then we might share the optimism with which Fleras and Spoonley ended their 1999 book. But none of those possibilities is guaranteed and a very different future could occur instead. Whichever of these alternative futures eventuates, however, the needs of New Zealand's tangata whenua over those of Asian and other immigrants cannot be ignored.

Second, the increase in Asian populations may have significant public and social policy implications. Across all spheres of policy – justice, welfare, health, tax, the labour market, immigration, education, retirement – an increase in Asian populations could place a strain on systems that: (a) are largely well-equipped for the needs of European, Maori and Pacific peoples, but not necessarily for Asian peoples and (b) are based on assumptions about an individual's adherence to a particular rule of law, understanding of judicial and political processes, health needs and previous experiences of health-care, prior educational knowledge, and expectations around retirement age, savings and where people may live in retirement.

Much of New Zealand's social policy has been concerned with the various outcomes of Maori and Pacific peoples in particular across a range of policy frameworks. Significant steps have been made in developing culturally sensitive policies and practices that both respect the unique place of Maori in New Zealand and address their social needs. The needs of Asian immigrants to New Zealand have not been ignored, least of all in health, but the public policy debate – across all social policy areas and within a broader narrative of social policy for a rapidly ethnically diversifying nation – is largely piecemeal and reactive. It is not that Asian migrants and peoples generally should be treated as a “special case” and isolated from other social and ethnic groups in New Zealand, nor is it that they should be understood as homogenous and therefore “treatable” in a universal way. Rather, they should be seen as an important and growing part of New Zealand society and therefore as valuable contributors to and a topic for discussions in public policy. The public policy implications of Asian peoples in New Zealand need to extend beyond discourses of trade and diplomacy.

Third, increasing numbers of New Zealanders identifying with more than one ethnicity (Bedford and Ho, 2008) presents a challenge to how we measure and understand ethnicity. A great deal of work has been undertaken by Paul Callister and his colleagues (e.g. see Callister et al., 2007; Callister et al., 2008; Callister & Didham, 2009; Brown et al., 2010) around the implications of changing ethnicities on the collection, measurement and reporting of Census data.

Fourth, related to issues of what it means to be a New Zealander, these demographic changes also provoke questions of New Zealand's national identity. Asia:NZ has commissioned a series of reports looking at New Zealand's place in Asia (Cook; 2010; Sato, 2011; Panda and Jha, forthcoming;

Singh, forthcoming). While these reports largely take a political and diplomatic perspective, the issue of New Zealand's changing demography and increased Asian populations will inevitably shape New Zealand's understanding of its place in the Asia-Pacific region and thus its national identity as presented externally. Indeed, New Zealand's large Pacific populations, alongside its geographical proximity to Pacific Island nations, means it serves a significant role in that region (Cook, 2010, p.9). However, New Zealand's role in Asia for the same reasons is not as clearly defined. Rather, it is New Zealand's small size, population and thus (limited) strategic weight that means New Zealand is often excluded from any significant engagement with Asia, particularly vis-à-vis Australia (Cook, 2010).

But while New Zealand's total population might be comparatively small, the proportion of its Asian population is not. Its largest city, Auckland, for example, is already a 'super-diverse' city, alongside Vancouver, Sydney and London; one-third of Aucklanders' are born overseas. New Zealand has proportionately more Asians in its population than does Australia (Spoonley and Butcher, 2010). We can draw on Canada and Australia for conceptual frameworks, but New Zealand's response to the question of its national identity and place in the world will be determined by its unique circumstances, in particular the relationship between the Crown and Maori, and the significant minority Asian population. The growing political weight of New Zealand's Asian populations can be seen in the number of Members of Parliament of Asian ethnicity (one of whom, Pansy Wong was, until late-2010, New Zealand's first Cabinet Minister of Asian ethnicity).² Prospective parliamentary candidates are being eagerly courted by the major political parties ahead of the 2011 General Election.³ That, at one level, is a positive effect.

Diaspora Opportunities and Challenges

The second major theme to consider is that of the opportunities and challenges of diaspora, in this case New Zealand citizens or permanent residents who live outside New Zealand. New Zealanders living in Asia have been variously described as "untapped resources" (Ho, Ip & Lewin, 2010), "future potential", and "invisible" (Didham 2010).

Given New Zealand's increasing Asian populations, many of whom will be first or second-generation migrants, we can expect that Asian New

Zealanders will constitute a growing part of New Zealand's diaspora population generally and in Asia specifically. In that respect, as Bedford and Ho (2008) note, young Asian New Zealanders are no different to other young New Zealanders in wanting to have their 'overseas experience'.

There is still far too little work on quantitatively measuring or tracking New Zealand's diaspora populations, and here is patchy quantitative data available on New Zealanders living overseas. New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade hold limited data, as do other government agencies with an international component. A survey in 2006 by the organisation Kiwi Expats Abroad (KEA) (Kiwi Expats Abroad, 2006) provided some insights though is limited in its methodology. One methodological problem, that much of what we know about New Zealanders in Asia is through self-reporting, will continue to be a hindrance to understanding – let alone developing any policy around – New Zealand's diaspora populations.

The KEA survey, for example, was undertaken online with participants volunteering themselves to participate. There was no set sample frame. This survey did not capture those who did not: know about the survey, have online access or have the time or inclination to participate. Additionally, the sample was biased toward those who lived in Australia and the United Kingdom and who were actively engaged with New Zealand. That in itself may be a finding, of course, but that would be inferring too much of those who did not participate in this survey. Poor survey design aside, this survey illustrates the greater challenge of adequately and robustly capturing data about New Zealand's diaspora abroad.

While organisations like KEA engage with New Zealand's diaspora populations there is little, if any, systematic or strategic government or policy debate on this issue in New Zealand. The extent to which engaging with New Zealand's diaspora populations is off the radar seems to contradict the current government ambitions about a 'New Zealand Inc' approach offshore. With no responsible government ministry charged with considering New Zealand's diaspora, it is liable to continue as something of a political football, kicked around in debates about the 'brain-drain' and 'catching up with Australia' rather than in any more substantive or meaningful way (Bedford, 2000; Cook, 2010).

Diplomatic Challenges

New Zealand's growing Asian population and growing numbers of New Zealanders living in Asian countries sometimes present diplomatic challenges. Relations with China are one example.

As was seen in 2008 in the lead-up to the Beijing Olympics and the controversy about the torch relay, the Chinese government is able to encourage its citizens overseas, including students, to rally to its support (Butcher, 2009a). Beijing had expected that the Olympic torch relay, which has preceded most other Olympics, would be a fitting prelude to the 29th Olympiad. However, the passage of the torch was heavily disrupted by demonstrations in the early portions of its relay, notably in London, San Francisco, Paris and Seoul, even Wellington and Auckland, though the torch was never intended to come to New Zealand. The protests weren't only remarkable for what were being protested against (various causes, including China's human rights record) and the scale of those protests, but that there were also counter-protests by Chinese diaspora populations in these cities (Ayson and Taylor, 2008, pp.5-6). The torch relay provided a lightning rod for those with a range of grievances against China to gather and express those grievances publicly. Many of the protestors saw this as the opportunity to take China to task in a way that international leaders were neglecting to do. However, the relay also provided a show of China's power and willingness to respond aggressively to global criticism of its internal issues. If anything, these protests against China and especially the counter-protests gave further credence and legitimacy to a growing ambivalence toward China.

We should expect to see more of this, as China grows in economic and political might. The lightning rod could be any number of other factors about which China feels strongly and wants to assert its national position and strengthen nationalism generally.

In Asia:NZ's annual survey in 2010, respondents attributed their negative feelings toward China to China's interest in acquiring the large portion of dairy farms owned by the Crafar family, leading to the Prime Minister to say that New Zealanders do not want to be "tenants on their own land" (cited in Hickey, 2010). The anti-China sentiment expressed by media and politicians through this episode of the farm purchase was rarely explicitly racist, though was understood to be about Asians – and Chinese –

in particular. In this way, politicians could claim “plausible deniability” if challenged they their rhetoric was racist; they followed a method frequently used by Winston Peters (Liu and Mills, 2006; Spoonley and Butcher, 2010).

The irony of this particular debate, however, was that there are significant American and Australian investments and other financial interests in New Zealand’s agricultural sector other than Chinese and yet no one was suggesting that New Zealand should prevent these countries or people of those nationalities from buying up New Zealand land. As New Zealand Herald columnist Bernard Hickey (2010) asked:

Why is it worse than, say, the Australian banks owning 91 percent of our financial system or an Australian retailer owning one of our two grocery chains, Progressive, or Australian media companies owning our three biggest media companies, APN, Fairfax and Mediaworks?

Ultimately, the Overseas Investment Office declined to allow the sale of these farms to the Chinese consortium bidding for them (Wilkinson and Williamson, 2010; Land Information New Zealand), though there was a prospective new bid from a different Chinese-based company for the same farms in April 2011 (Scherer, 2011). This issue of foreign (and especially Chinese) investment mirrors similar debates in Australia (Shearer, 2009; O’Sullivan, 2010) and in the Pacific (Hanson & Fifita, 2011).

Second, as a report by the Lowy Institute for International Policy in Sydney on Australia’s diplomatic deficit illustrates, an increasing number and more vocal diaspora can put strain on diplomatic posts abroad (Blue Ribbon Panel Report, 2009). This can happen either through New Zealand citizens and permanent residents getting themselves in trouble in Asia (or elsewhere) and expecting the embassy or high commission to at least help, if not bail, them out. For example, as seen in demands by New Zealand tourists in Thailand at the time of protests that closed the international airport (TVNZ, Dec 1, 2008) and in India following the 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai (New Zealand Herald, Tuesday April 12, 2008). Or it can happen, regrettably, through natural disasters, which has already been an experience for the New Zealand government, notably through the Boxing Day tsunami in 2008 or through terrorist attacks, as has twice happened in recent years in Bali. None of these can be controlled, but diplomatic offices are expected to help out their citizenry. Given what we expect will be an increasing New Zealand diaspora in Asia, and the increased likelihood of

natural disasters or terrorist events in that region in which New Zealanders might be caught up, there are going to be significant pressures on New Zealand's diplomatic staff abroad. To that end, greater resourcing of its off-shore posts might be required, which will be a challenge at a time where the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Murray McCully, is making budgetary cuts and other reorganisation to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (McCully, 2011).

Third, the issue might not just be one of New Zealand diplomats coming to the aid of their fellow citizens. It might also be New Zealand diplomats apologising on behalf of its government to other countries for events that happened in New Zealand, as occurred in October 2010 following comments made on air by Paul Henry, at the time a Television New Zealand breakfast television host. Henry asked the Prime Minister on air whether the next Governor-General of New Zealand would 'look and sound like a New Zealander', directly referencing the Indo-Fijian ethnicity of the then Governor-General Sir Anand Satyanand. We could assume that had Henry worked for a private broadcaster, rather than the government-owned TVNZ, his ridiculing comments may not have created as many international waves, nor required a diplomatic apology. Regardless, that an apology was required at all suggests that a combination of New Zealand's large and influential Indian community, and technology that enabled the television clip to be (re) broadcast around the world, meant that unlike earlier similar media events (such as the 'Inv-Asian' articles in Auckland community newspapers, about the large-scale Asian immigration to Auckland's Eastern suburbs (Booth & Martin, 1993) and the North & South cover article by Deborah Coddington titled 'Asian Angst: Is it time to send some back?' about apparent criminal behaviour by Asian immigrants and students (Coddington 2006), Henry's comments could not just be treated as an isolated or domestic issue. New Zealand's relationship with one of the largest and increasingly important countries in the world was potentially put in jeopardy. Of course, the negative coverage of the New Delhi Commonwealth Games, which went well beyond Henry's comments, added to the context, and may also have been a factor in a decrease of warmth by New Zealanders toward India in 2010 (Asia New Zealand Foundation, 2011).

Another example, familiar to Australia, is the diplomatic leg-work that had to go into mending relations between it and India after what was

perceived as racist and offensive treatment of Indian students in Australia. Lowy Institute's Michael Wesley (2009) refers to these students as 'poisoned alumni'. The diplomatic fall-out may well extend beyond just a few weeks or months. One interlocutor remarked to the author that the bilateral relationship between India and Australia had been set back ten years because of Australia's perceived ill-treatment of Indian students. With a tight focus on the revenue-generating aspects of export education policies it is easy to neglect the long-term aspects of how New Zealand's alumni might both view and treat New Zealand in the future and, indeed, if recent media coverage is anything to go by, New Zealand might share the unfortunate experiences of Australia with respect to its own international students (Editorial, 2010; Laxon, 2010).

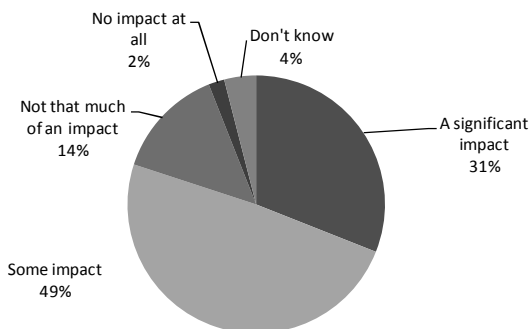
Fourth, these diplomatic challenges are also likely to increase because of the political shifts in the Asian region. For example, China has a rapidly growing economy and with that is asserting political weight. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which consists of the ten countries of Southeast Asia, is one of the older regional groupings, but is also asserting its centrality to the region (especially over against suggestions for diplomatic regional 'architecture' by the then Rudd and Hotoyama governments in Australia and Japan respectively). In Southeast Asia, Indonesia is one of the strongest economies as well as being the fourth largest country in the world by population, with the largest Muslim population in the world. (Inexplicably, Indonesia still remains absent from public and official consciousness in New Zealand (Asia:NZ, 2009; New Zealand Government, 2010; Butcher, 2010)). Japan is the third largest economy in the world, slipping from second largest in 2010. Its economy and domestic politics are not in the best shape and it is losing some of the influence it used to have in the region (Sato, 2011), all of which was compounded by the devastating earthquake of March 2011. Then, there's the pariah state, North Korea and its bellicose ways; India, the largest democracy in the world; and Australia, whose previously foreign-focused Prime Minister is now its foreign minister while its new Prime Minister is domestically-focused as she tries to maintain stable government.

All of these countries are mentioned by way of highlighting the fluctuations of the broad Asian region and to remind us that we are not immune from the consequences of these fluctuations. As economies grow they seek to extend their influence, strengthen their hand, and move from a

peaceful rise to a more assertive one. It is in New Zealand's interests that it has a stable neighbourhood because without stability in the Asian region, New Zealand's trade suffers, as does its ability to plan and predict (cf. New Zealand Government, 2009). The risk of terrorism increases and so does the likelihood that New Zealanders will be called to contribute either militarily or as peace-keepers in the Asia-Pacific region. The strategic outlook is not that bright and, in an understated way, the recent New Zealand Defence White Paper (New Zealand Government, 2009) reminds us that the next 25 years will not be like the last 25 years (which might not be saying much in itself, but is probably more accurate than not in the current climate).

For the first time in its annual survey, Asia:NZ asked in 2010 "how much of an impact do you think conflicts, threats and instability in Asia could have on New Zealand?" and, as represented in Figure 3 below, 80% of New Zealanders think it will be some or a significant impact.

Figure 3: How much of an impact do you think conflicts, threats or instability in Asia could have on New Zealand? (n=1,000)



Source: Asia:NZ 'New Zealanders Perceptions of Asia and Asian peoples in 2010' survey.

The consequences of political and regional shifts will inevitably provoke migration, which might present challenges to national security, as porous borders in much of the region combine with the ease of travel generally. The movement of people might be the most ubiquitous form of globalisation, but that does not mean it is universally a welcome trend. There are some within immigration departments and intelligence agencies who see immigration in terms not of economic growth, but national security and therefore are inclined toward tighter borders rather than open doors.

Some of these regional changes will be brought about by climate change-related events. Climate change and the South Pacific is the focus of a recent book by the Institute of Policy Studies (Burson, 2010) and undoubtedly climate change events in that region will impact New Zealand. But impacts further afield, in Asia, will also impact us including, perhaps, through increased migration to New Zealand as a result of climate change-events and natural disasters or political instability brought about by climate change.

Conclusion

Demographics, diaspora and diplomacy are all connected. Demographic changes present challenges for New Zealand's national identity and its public policy. An increasing diaspora population in Asia presents opportunities for engagement in that region, but it also presents challenges in the face of terrorism, natural disasters and self-inflicted troubles. Both of these add to several diplomatic challenges that New Zealand will face in the near and medium-term future, all underlined by shifting and more assertive powers in the Asian region. These three themes cannot be considered in isolation, as too often occurs. New Zealand's future in Asia will be partly driven by its geographical proximity to the region, which will be further strengthened as New Zealand loosens its historical ties to England. But geography alone will not be the cause of future engagement. With 2011 as a General Election year, we could assume that such anti-immigration rhetoric will increase, particularly if New Zealand First tries to re-enter Parliament, as we can reasonably suppose they might. New Zealand's significant and increasing minority of Asian populations will also feature strongly in New Zealand's future engagement with Asia. These Asian populations will variously engage politically with their countries of origin as well as New Zealand, will have the 'overseas experience' as many young New Zealanders already do, and will shape, in profound and yet undetermined ways, how New Zealand as a nation relates to the Asian region and its peoples within its own borders.

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Notes

1. Henry was employed by the state-owned broadcaster Television New Zealand (TVNZ) as host of their popular breakfast show and was well-known for his controversial and provocative comments. In a separate incident, Henry made fun of the surname of an Indian Commonwealth Games official, Shelia Dikshit. Both of these broadcasts were re-played frequently on New Zealand and international media (including in India), and online. In response to both these broadcasts, TVNZ received a large number of complaints from the public and companies who had booked advertisements during the breakfast show. After an initial weak apology “[Paul Henry is] prepared to say the things we quietly think but are scared to say out loud” (cited in Johnston, 2010), TVNZ put Henry on leave before he then subsequently resigned, under duress. Both these incidents, one explicitly and the other implicitly directed toward Indians, also prompted the then New Zealand High Commissioner to New Delhi to offer a diplomatic apology to the Indian government. Henry and TVNZ were subsequently criticised and fined by New Zealand’s Broadcasting Standards Authority (BSA, 2011).

In April 2011 Henry was employed as a broadcaster/presenter by Television New Zealand’s main competitor, Mediaworks, which owns the RadioLIVE stations and TV3.

2. In December 2010, Wong was forced to resign from Parliament as a result of an expenses and conflict-of-interest scandal which involved her husband’s business interests.
3. The Labour Party, which released its party list on Monday April 11, 2011, has two sitting Asian Members of Parliament within the top twenty-two, and a third Asian at number 44 (of 45). It is reasonable to assume that Rajen Prasad, MP (at number 20) and Raymond Huo, MP (at number 21) will be back in Parliament after the November 2011 General Election. The Green Party, which was the only other political party to have released its list for the 2011 election at the time of writing had no Asian candidates standing for Parliament.

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