



Working Paper No. 9

Declining Government Performance? Why Citizens Don't Trust Government



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ISBN 0-478-08992-9
May 2000



Working Paper No. 9

Declining Government Performance? Why Citizens Don't Trust Government

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February 2000

Summary

In 1964, 75% of the American public believed they could trust their government to do the right thing most of the time – by 1995 only 15% did so. New Zealand studies reflect a similar trend. In 1985, 8.5% of New Zealanders had a great deal of confidence in their government. By 1998, this had fallen to 2.5%.

It seems reasonable to assume that this decline in public trust mirrors a decline in government performance. However, a 1997 study by Derek Bok found quite the opposite: government performance and quality of life generally have improved dramatically over the past 30 years.

This study replicates Bok's US research in the New Zealand environment. It concludes that overall trends are similar - as in the US, trust in the New Zealand government is not related to government performance. Given this conclusion, the paper ends by speculating on the possible causes of declining trust.

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Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
PART 1: IS DECLINING TRUST LINKED TO DECLINING GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE?	4
WHAT DO WE MEAN BY ‘TRUST IN GOVERNMENT’?	4
EVIDENCE OF INCREASING MISTRUST	4
MEASURING THE PERFORMANCE OF GOVERNMENT: THE US STUDY	5
IS THE NEW ZEALAND SITUATION THE SAME?	6
METHODOLOGY	6
RESULTS	7
OVERALL TRENDS IN NEW ZEALAND ARE SIMILAR TO THOSE IN THE US	7
POLICY TRENDS IN KEY POLICY AREAS IN NEW ZEALAND ARE SIMILAR TO THOSE IN THE US	9
<i>Prosperity</i>	9
<i>Quality of Life</i>	10
<i>Opportunity</i>	10
<i>Personal Security</i>	12
<i>Values</i>	13
CONCLUSIONS	14
LIMITATIONS	15
<i>Objectivity</i>	15
<i>Weighting</i>	15
<i>Relevance</i>	15
<i>Statistics</i>	15
PART 2: WHY THEN DON’T CITIZENS TRUST GOVERNMENT?	16
DOES A DECLINE IN TRUST MATTER?	16
POSSIBLE CAUSES OF DECLINE IN TRUST IN NEW ZEALAND	16
<i>Blame the Economy?</i>	16
<i>Competing with our Neighbours?</i>	17
<i>Greater Expectations?</i>	17
<i>Standing Apart?</i>	18
<i>Dishonest Government?</i>	18
<i>Instant, Graphic and Personal – the Role of the Media</i>	19
<i>Addressing the Problem</i>	20
REFERENCES	22
APPENDIX 1: THE 1990S COMPARED WITH THE 1960S	23
A. <i>Prosperity</i>	23
B. <i>Quality of Life</i>	25
C. <i>Opportunity</i>	27
D. <i>Personal security</i>	29
E. <i>Values</i>	31
APPENDIX 2: NEW ZEALAND RESULTS	32

Introduction

In a democratic society, government exists to make decisions for and on behalf of its citizens. It seems reasonable that citizens trust their government to act in good faith, and to strive for continual progress, particularly in those areas where it can have an influence.

Recent evidence from the US, however, suggests that citizens are increasingly cynical about government. This realisation has spawned numerous theories and studies, often based on economic woes and growing public cynicism. The majority of these studies assume that the citizens judging government's performance are doing so based on a good understanding of the facts.

One study, however, suggests that citizens may lose confidence in government for reasons that bear no relation to the quality of its work. To test this hypothesis, the study's author measured the performance of the US government over the past thirty years. He found that, in general, the performance of government had improved. Yet levels of trust over the same period had declined.

In the light of similar downward trends in the confidence of New Zealand citizens in their government, this paper explores the extent to which the study applies to the New Zealand situation.

Part 1: Is Declining Trust Linked to Declining Government Performance?

- summarises the original study, and outlines the methodology that was used in applying it to the New Zealand context
- details the findings of the New Zealand research, and makes comparisons with the US situation.

Part 2: Why Then Don't People Trust Government?

- speculates on what the possible causes of a decline in trust might be in the New Zealand context
- supports the paper with a detailed appendix of data and sources.

Part 1: Is Declining Trust Linked to Declining Government Performance?

What do we mean by 'Trust in Government'?

Trust in government is the level of confidence citizens have in their government (both politicians and public officials) to 'do the right thing', to act appropriately and honestly on behalf of the public. It is generally measured by polls, which provide one-off snapshots that are comparable over time.

Evidence of Increasing Mistrust

Confidence in the US government has declined and American citizens have a diminishing regard for its performance. In 1964, 75% of the American public trusted the Government to do the right thing most of the time. By 1995, confidence in the Federal Government had fallen to 15%.

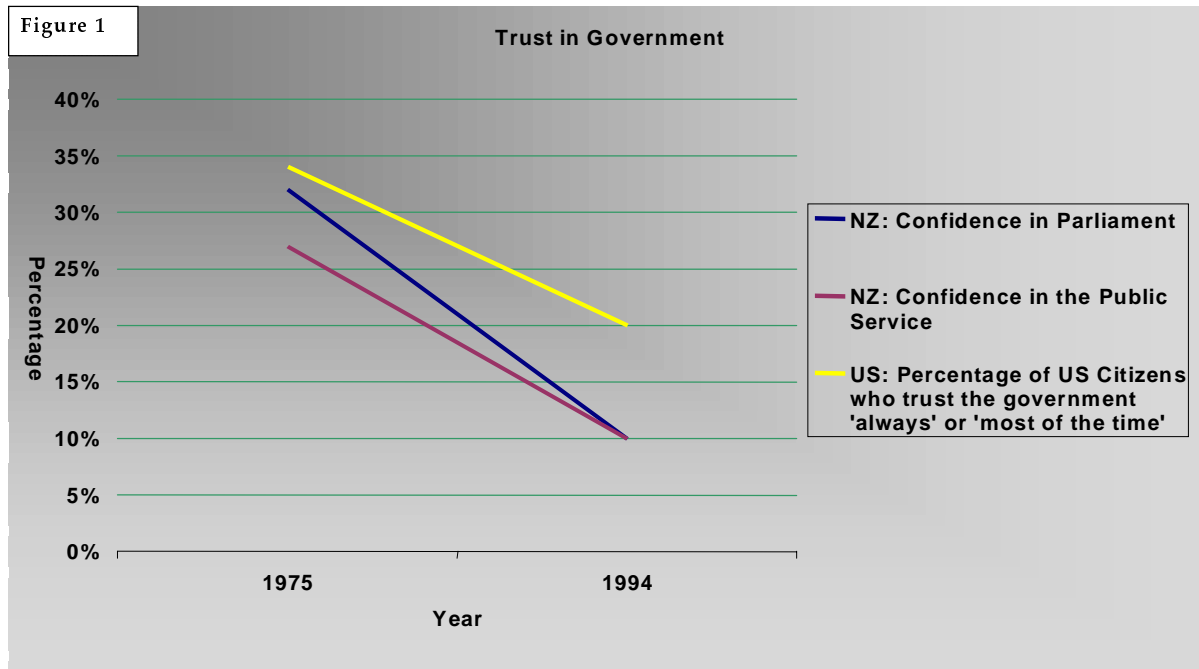
Nye, Zelikow and King (1999) report these dramatic results in their study of the decline in trust in the US government. They note that the government is not alone, and declines of smaller magnitudes have occurred in all major US institutions, including universities, corporations and journalists. They also note that this decline is not solely a US phenomenon, virtually all Western European governments show a decline in trust in institutions generally, and in government in particular.

Recent evidence suggests that confidence in the New Zealand government has also fallen. Perry & Webster (1999) tracked the steep decline in the public's trust and confidence in political institutions since the mid-1980s, and they contrast an anxious present with a more trusting past.

For example, in 1985, 8.6% of New Zealanders had "a great deal" of confidence in the government. By 1998 that figure had fallen to 2.5%. The number of people who were "not at all" confident in the good intentions of their government doubled from 11.1% in 1985 to 21.8% in 1998 (Perry & Webster, 1999).

Figure 1, below, compares trends in the US and in New Zealand.¹

¹ Source: New Zealand data from State Services Commission's Briefing to the Incoming Government, 1996; US data from Nye, Zelikow & King, 1999.



Theories abound about the reasons for this decline, including declining economic performance, declining social cohesion, government inefficiency and growing cynicism. Study into the issue in the US, however, suggests that citizens may lose confidence in government for reasons that are not related to the quality of its policies or the work of its officials (Bok, 1997). Bok suggests that expectations may have increased, government may have decided to perform more difficult and controversial tasks, or people may be in error about the facts.

Measuring the Performance of Government: The US Study

To analyse this situation, Bok undertook a comparison of data for the 1960s against that for the 1990s in areas that relate to the basic goals of Americans. Bok studied progress over time in various policy fields such as economic prosperity, quality of life, opportunities and respect for values, by dividing each into a series of measurable indicators. These indicators ranged from economic indicators (such as controlling inflation) and environmental indicators (such as levels of air pollution) to indicators of equality and discrimination (by race or gender). The exercise aimed to contrast the negative perceptions of US citizens with an objective review of performance.

By analysing the trends shown by a total of 72 indicators, Bok arrived at what he describes as “crude but nonetheless useful judgements” about the US government’s performance over the past thirty to forty years (Bok, 1997, p. 65).

Bok found, for example, that in the US gross GDP has almost tripled in real dollars since 1960, and unemployment and inflation have come down to levels only slightly above those of the early 1960s. Opportunities for Americans have increased as rates of college attendance have grown and discrimination against women and minorities has diminished. Americans have become more secure through wider coverage of social security and stricter safeguards for consumers. Quality of life has risen through higher rates of home ownership, cleaner air and water. Despite these improvements, Americans retained a high degree of scepticism about government.

Is the New Zealand Situation the Same?

Given the similarity in trends about trust in government between the US and New Zealand, this paper summarises an attempt to determine whether the situation in New Zealand is comparable to that in the US.

The paper tests two hypotheses:

1. that the overall trend of government performance in New Zealand is similar to that in the US; and
2. that trends in the key policy areas identified in Bok's study are similar in New Zealand.

Methodology

It is reasonable to assume that the goals selected by Bok are transferable to the New Zealand situation. For example, it was assumed that New Zealanders are concerned with personal prosperity, the general prosperity of their country, and that they judge quality of life with reference to affordability of housing, and the level of pollution in their environment. Therefore, the New Zealand study aimed to replicate the US study as closely as possible. This involved collecting New Zealand statistics on the 72 indicators of progress used in the US study.

However, the limited availability of data (particularly data for the 1960s), and societal differences made this difficult. (More information on limitations is provided later in the paper.)

In summary:

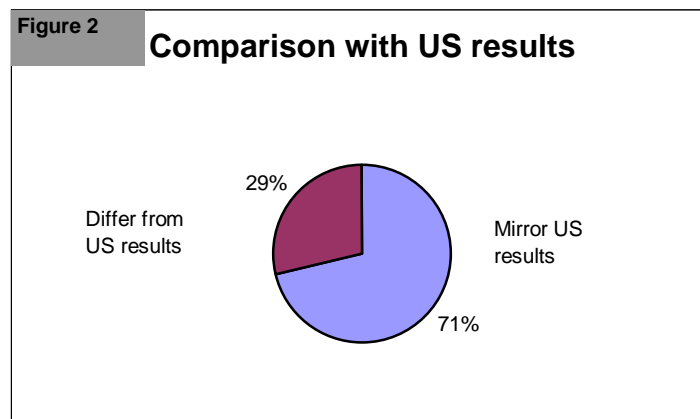
- it was possible to replicate 35 (of a total of 72) of the US indicators precisely
- for a further 13, proxies or estimations have been used
- for 24 indicators data was either not available or was incomplete (most often because of unavailability of early data).

This provides a replication rate of 67% of the US data. **Appendix 1** details the New Zealand results, including sources and gaps, alongside the US findings. **Appendix 2** summarises the New Zealand specific data.

Results

Overall Trends in New Zealand are Similar to those in the US

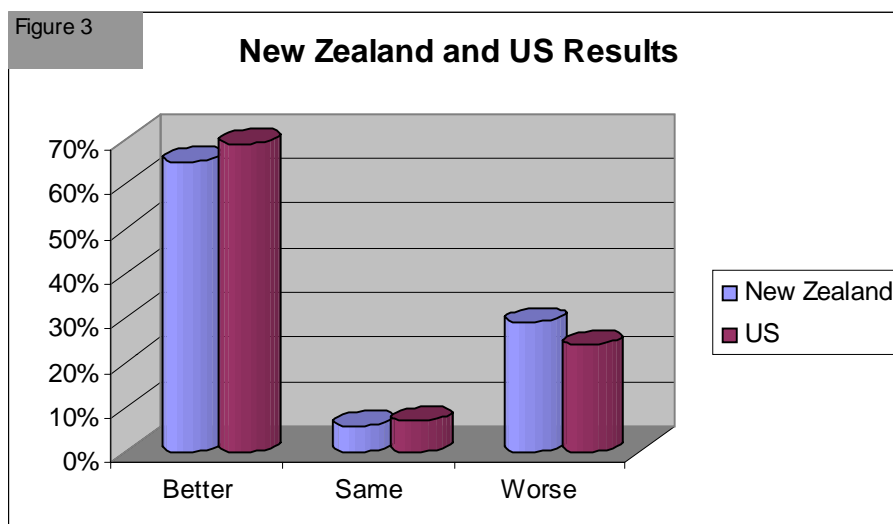
The picture painted by the New Zealand data was broadly similar to that in the US. Of those indicators that were replicated, 71% of results exactly mirrored the findings of the US, in terms of whether the situation had got better, worse, or had remained about the same.



Of the 29% of indicators where there were discrepancies between the US and New Zealand results, New Zealand indicators showed a decline in contrast to US improvements in just over half (a total of 16.5% of all comparable indicators).

Most of the indicators in which results differed were cases in which it was not possible to exactly replicate the statistics used in the original study. This was particularly true of those that declined in New Zealand where the US study found improvements. For example, while the US study was able to compare measures of technical quality of health over time, and found an improvement, this information was not available in New Zealand. Rates of heart disease and cancer were used as proxies, and showed a less positive improvement over time.

However, the overall pattern of results for New Zealand was very similar to that in the US. Of all the available indicators for New Zealand, 65% showed an improvement (compared with 69% in the US), and 27% showed a decline (compared with 24% in the US). As in the US study, those areas that improved most included the economy, levels of pollution, and education achievements.



Declining Government Performance? Why Citizens Don't Trust Government

The areas of improvement are those in which the government can wield some influence. In parallel with US findings, areas of decline (such as crime rates, births out of wedlock, and other cases of personal irresponsibility) are mostly situations in which the ability of the government to affect the desired results is especially tenuous and uncertain.

The objective review of government performance over a range of areas in New Zealand thus showed that, as in the US, government has made progress in a majority of areas over the period from the 1960s to the 1990s. As in the US study, this raises questions about the reasons for the parallel decline in trust, and appears to lend some credence to the argument that a decline in confidence is unrelated to government performance. This point is highlighted by the fact that in New Zealand, citizens' trust in other areas, such as in the police, in public companies and in the democratic process, has also declined.

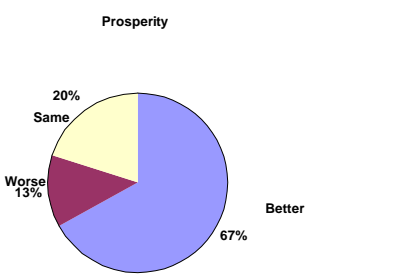
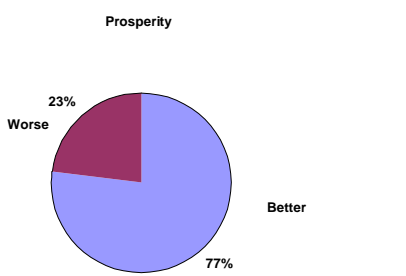
Policy Trends in Key Policy Areas in New Zealand are Similar to Those in the US

The overall picture of results from the New Zealand study has striking similarities with that derived from the US study. However, it is possible for this aggregate data to mask discrepancies at a more detailed level. To test this, the following part of the paper breaks down the findings of both studies into the five key policy areas of prosperity, quality of life, opportunity, personal security and values. The nature of each policy area, alongside a discussion of the US and NZ results, is detailed below. (See Appendix 1 for detailed results).

The sets of results show similarities in several areas, particularly in areas where progress has been particularly good (such as the economy and R&D) and those where it has been particularly limited (such as crime and personal responsibility).

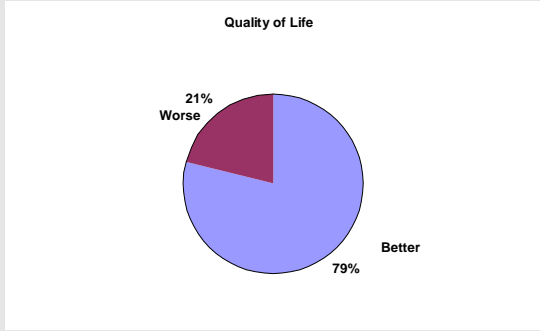
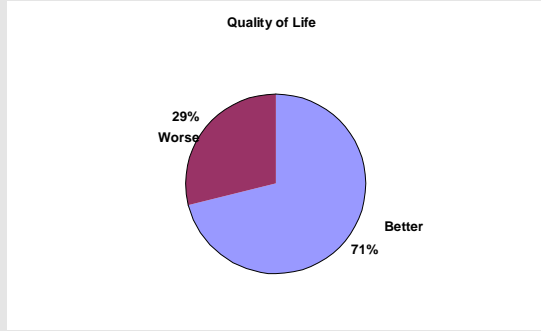
Prosperity

The measure of prosperity is comprised of a number of factors, including economic indicators (such as income and inflation), research and technology, education (including educational and university achievements) and labour market policy.

United States	New Zealand														
<p>Figure 4</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Data for Figure 4: Prosperity in the US</caption> <tr><th>Category</th><th>Percentage</th></tr> <tr><td>Better</td><td>67%</td></tr> <tr><td>Same</td><td>20%</td></tr> <tr><td>Worse</td><td>13%</td></tr> </table>	Category	Percentage	Better	67%	Same	20%	Worse	13%	<p>Figure 5</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Data for Figure 5: Prosperity in New Zealand</caption> <tr><th>Category</th><th>Percentage</th></tr> <tr><td>Better</td><td>77%</td></tr> <tr><td>Worse</td><td>23%</td></tr> </table>	Category	Percentage	Better	77%	Worse	23%
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<p>In the US:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 67% of prosperity indicators improved • gross GDP has almost tripled in real dollars since 1960 • unemployment and inflation have come down to levels only slightly above those of the early 1960s • 20% of indicators stayed about the same, including those for student achievement in reading and maths. 	<p>In New Zealand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 77% of indicators improved • GDP per capita increased by over 27% • expenditure on R&D has increased tenfold • more than 3 times the percentage of the population have secondary qualifications in the 1990s compared with the 1960s • however, unemployment rates rose, and the percentage of the workforce trained by the employer has fallen. 														

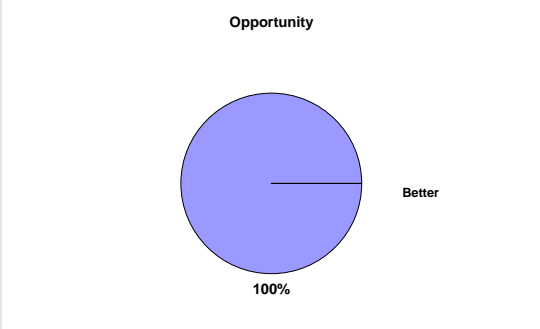
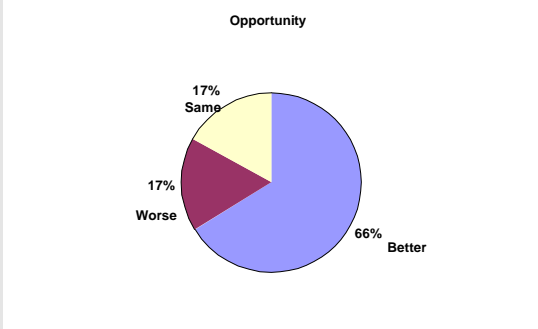
Quality of Life

Quality of life indicators are based on the assumption that a clean environment, pleasant neighbourhoods, and vibrant programmes in the arts affect people's life quality. The measures of quality of life thus include affordability of housing and home ownership rates, and levels of air and water pollution.

United States	New Zealand												
<p>Figure 6</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Quality of Life - United States</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Better</td> <td>79%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Worse</td> <td>21%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Percentage	Better	79%	Worse	21%	<p>Figure 7</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Quality of Life - New Zealand</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Better</td> <td>71%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Worse</td> <td>29%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Percentage	Better	71%	Worse	29%
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Worse	21%												
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Worse	29%												
<p>In the US:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 79% of quality of life indicators had improved • Americans enjoy higher rates of home ownership, more affordable housing and better quality homes • a greater percentage of Americans live in their neighbourhood of choice today than in the 1960s • air and water are cleaner today • there are more arts organisations, and more funding for the arts (both public and private). 	<p>In New Zealand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 71% of indicators improved • particular improvements are evident in pollution levels and home ownership rates • nearly 5% more New Zealanders own their own homes in 1996 compared with 1966, with, on average, fewer people per dwelling • air and water pollution levels have fallen over the last 30 years, with a decrease in the percentage of the population served by unsafe water systems since 1960 • however, information on the arts was unavailable for New Zealand. 												

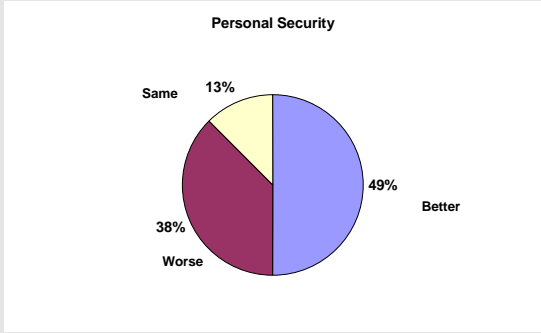
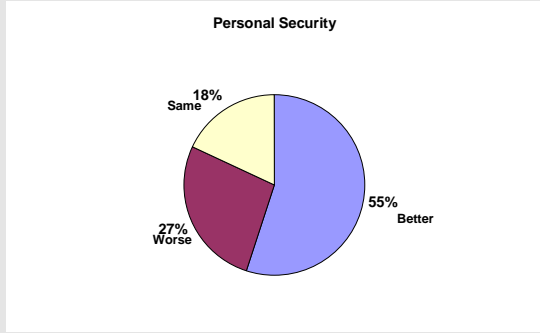
Opportunity

Bok's study based opportunity indicators on the notion that Americans' goals include having reasonable opportunities for everyone to succeed according to his or her abilities and efforts. Such measures are also relevant in New Zealand, and the indicators used in this study include children's well-being (such as the availability of daycare, parental leave policies and vaccination rates) and racial equality (measured by voting rights, discrimination and equality in areas such as education and employment).

United States	New Zealand
<p>Figure 8</p>  <p>A pie chart titled 'Opportunity' showing a single blue slice representing 100% of the data, labeled 'Better'.</p>	<p>Figure 9</p>  <p>A pie chart titled 'Opportunity' showing three slices: a large blue slice for 'Better' (66%), a yellow slice for 'Same' (17%), and a maroon slice for 'Worse' (17%).</p>
<p>In the US:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all measures of opportunity in the US had improved over the past thirty years • opportunities for Americans have increased as rates of college attendance have grown • discrimination against women and minorities has diminished in all areas measured, including housing, employment and education. 	<p>In New Zealand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • results were less dramatic in this area, but a vast majority of indicators (66%) showed an improvement • New Zealanders have greater opportunities today than they did thirty years ago, due to legal attention to discrimination and equality of access to employment and education • Acts such as the Bill of Rights Act 1990 and the Human Rights Act 1993 guarantee minimum rights and freedom from discrimination • the well being of children has improved dramatically over the past thirty years • the rate of infant mortality has fallen by almost two thirds • the percentage of children vaccinated against childhood diseases has increased by 21% • improvements in parental leave policies and better access to daycare • however, the percentage of children in poverty has increased, and • the quality of education for Māori has remained about the same.

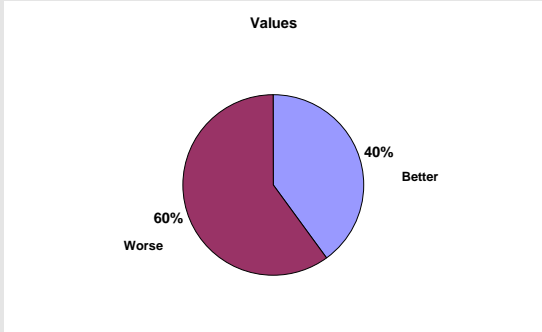
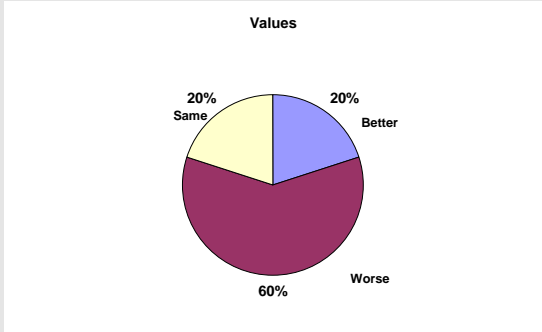
Personal Security

Personal security indicators cover a variety of issues that affect the lives of citizens. For example, health care (including health quality and life expectancy), job security (union representation and protection from arbitrary discharge), crime rates and provisions for the elderly.

United States	New Zealand																
<p>Figure 10</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Personal Security - United States</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Better</td> <td>49%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Worse</td> <td>38%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Same</td> <td>13%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Percentage	Better	49%	Worse	38%	Same	13%	<p>Figure 11</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Personal Security - New Zealand</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Better</td> <td>55%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Worse</td> <td>27%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Same</td> <td>18%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Percentage	Better	55%	Worse	27%	Same	18%
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<p>In the US:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Americans have become more secure through wider coverage of Social Security, the advent of Medicare and Medicaid, and stricter safeguards for consumers important improvements have been made in the technical quality of health of citizens life expectancy has increased the cost of health (as a percent of GDP) has fallen the bulk of the indicators that have declined since the 1960s are those relating to crime rates, success in solving crime and fear for personal safety. 	<p>In New Zealand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> as in the US, life expectancy has increased although in NZ government spending on health has increased during the period from 1960 to 1990 mirroring the US results are the worsening crime rates and declining clearance rate for crimes in New Zealand the incidence of crime has more than tripled, with a parallel reduction in the crime clearance rate from 55% to 41% provisions for the elderly have improved retirement income has increased by 3% of the net average wage, and more elderly are receiving government superannuation. 																

Values

The measure of respect for values is comprised of a number of factors including the respect for basic values (such as the degree of freedom guaranteed by law) and concern for the legitimate interests of others (community service, and provisions for the poor and disadvantaged).

United States	New Zealand
<p>Figure 12</p>  <p>A pie chart titled "Values" for the United States. The chart is divided into two segments: a larger dark red segment representing "Worse" at 60%, and a smaller light blue segment representing "Better" at 40%.</p>	<p>Figure 13</p>  <p>A pie chart titled "Values" for New Zealand. The chart is divided into three segments: a dark red segment representing "Worse" at 60%, a light blue segment representing "Better" at 20%, and a yellow segment representing "Same" at 20%.</p>
<p>In the US:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% of values indicators had declined since the 1960s • numbers of people obeying the law (measured by crime rates) has decreased • less income is given to charities • more Americans cheat on exams • Bok notes that where performance has declined (such as crime, births out-of-wedlock, and other cases of personal irresponsibility), most are situations in which the ability of the government to affect the desired results is especially tenuous and uncertain. 	<p>In New Zealand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% of values indicators had declined • a further 20% have remained about the same over the past 3 decades • this is the area of least improvement in both New Zealand and the US • as in the US, obeying the law indicators has fallen, and more children are born out-of-wedlock • While these are areas in which government's influence is tenuous, the public still expects the government to have a role • In the 1999 Values survey in New Zealand, 60% of respondents believed that central government had a responsibility to help reduce the differences between rich and poor.

Trends in the key policy areas assessed in the US study seem to be broadly replicated in New Zealand, with particular similarities in the measures of prosperity, quality of life and personal security. Measures of opportunity were less positive (all US indicators showed an improvement), but a clear majority of New Zealand indicators in this area did improve.

However, the similarities were less marked than those between the US and New Zealand's overall results. This reflects several factors. First, it reflects differences in the data. In particular, that some indicators were impossible to replicate (such as those on the arts). Second, it reflects differing governmental priorities (such as the US government's emphasis on lessening poverty, which has not been given the same emphasis in New Zealand). Third, the situation reflects the inability of a simple statistic to tell the whole story (see limitations below).

The study proves the hypothesis that trends in Bok's key policy areas are similar in New Zealand at a general level. But important (and not always negative) differences are evident between policy trends in the US and New Zealand over the past thirty years.

Conclusions

As Bok notes in his conclusions about the US situation, any attempts to measure the effectiveness of governments are necessarily crude. However, his study paints a general picture of improvement in American society, and results in New Zealand are remarkably similar.

The aspect of Bok's findings that proved less positive was that which compared the US to developments in other countries (Britain, Germany, France, Canada, Japan and Sweden). While in isolation the US government had a good record, this was less notable when the US results were compared with those in several other countries. It has not been possible to replicate this international dimension of the study for New Zealand, due to a lack of access to the original data. Consequently, the New Zealand study is more limited in the conclusions it can draw.

However, the study points to two conclusions.

1. The general picture of improving government performance, in contrast to declining levels of trust in government is remarkably similar in New Zealand to that presented in Bok's study of the US.
2. The New Zealand situation is thus in line with Bok's general hypothesis, that mistrust is unrelated to government performance.

This 'conclusion', however, does little to conclude the issue. Rather, it (perhaps necessarily) raises more questions than it can answer. Why don't citizens trust government, especially in New Zealand where the government has put much effort into making its work open and transparent? Is it because citizens are generally unaware of objective measures of government performance (with an instrumental role played by the media)? Or, is government doing the wrong things? This study highlights the complexity of this issue, and leads into Part 2 of the paper, which speculates on these questions.

Limitations

The aim of the study was to paint a broad picture of how government's performance has changed over time in some key areas. The study is not scientific, nor is it perfect. Limitations include:

Objectivity

The selection of some indicators over others makes the study subjective. The study assumes that there is consensus on what government is there to do, and that all areas are of equal importance. This is not true in reality.

Weighting

The study does not take into account the relative importance of indicators. For example, the number of patents issued to citizens has improved over the past three decades, while unemployment rates have increased dramatically. It is not clear that these indicators are of equal importance to citizens. It is possible that citizens' confidence in government is more likely to be affected by changes in the unemployment rate.

Relevance

The relevance of some indicators is questionable. For example, the link between the number of children born out of wedlock and the performance of government is not clear.

Statistics

Using single statistics has inherent difficulties. The comparison of an isolated statistic can distort trends, as it fails to tell the whole story.

In some cases, data was simply not available. Statistics in some areas were not kept in the 1960s, in other cases, some information exists but data for the 1960s is not directly comparable to that available for the 1990s. In some cases where it was impossible to directly replicate data, proxies have been used (for example, data on affordability for renters is not available, but there is comparable information on the real cost of housing).

In other instances, data has been tailored to the New Zealand situation (for example, Quality of Education for Blacks has been substituted with measures of educational outcomes for Māori).

Part 2: Why Then Don't Citizens Trust Government?

The first part of this paper has established that the decline in trust in the New Zealand government over the past thirty years may not be directly related to government performance, if performance is measured objectively. If government performance is improving, why do increasing numbers of people lack confidence in government? To date, little work has been done in this area in New Zealand.

Does a Decline in Trust Matter?

Some degree of cynicism is healthy, and the alternative of high levels of blind faith in government is probably neither possible nor desirable. However, the consistent decline in trust in a democratically elected government such as that in New Zealand, and the comparable decline in overseas jurisdictions, suggests a worsening trend that requires attention. At the extreme, lack of trust may affect the willingness of the public to pay taxes or to comply with the law. It may affect people's willingness to work for government, with repercussions for the quality of government personnel. All of these factors have important implications for society.

The causes of the decline in trust are probably multiple. They are likely to differ for different citizens depending on such variables as their level of interaction with government, their awareness of government activities and on their ability to understand government's work in a way that goes beyond the things government does that immediately affect them.

In New Zealand, interest in the issue has been fuelled by recent well-publicised cases of scandal in government agencies (for example, the Jeff Chapman case, and payouts to public servants). The goal of restoring trust has been flagged by the 1999 Coalition government as one of its key government goals to guide public sector policy and performance.

This paper draws together some speculative thoughts about possible causes of the decline in trust in government in New Zealand. In particular, the paper outlines some of the causes that have been put forward in the US context, and attempts to apply them to the New Zealand situation. It also develops some uniquely New Zealand factors. The paper concludes with some ideas on what might be done to address the issue of declining confidence in government.

Possible Causes of Decline in Trust in New Zealand

Blame the Economy?

Economic theories are often cited in attempts to capture the possible causes of a decline in trust in government. Theories about the US (in Nye et al. 1997) suggest that economic slowdown may be to blame for the declining trust in government. Governments take the credit when economic performance is strong, and they take the blame when it is weak.

However, timing flaws this theory. The greatest fall in confidence in the US occurred from 1964 to 1974, when economic growth was fastest, and the recession of the early 1980s was accompanied by a rise in confidence in government.

In New Zealand, there has been a steady decline in trust in government over the past thirty years. Conversely, economic performance (as measured by GDP per capita) has generally

increased steadily since the 1960s. Moreover, there is a question over the strength of the link between economic growth and people's perceptions of government. Hamilton (1998)'s research in Australia, for example, suggests a weak correlation between a country's income and perceived wellbeing.

The theory does not seem to hold up well in New Zealand. It is also difficult to unravel the influence of economic causes. For example, do people care about overall performance, or is disparity more important?

Competing with our Neighbours?

Global competition (the view that global markets such as cheap Asian labour have led to a depression of wages in advanced countries such as the US) is cited as a possible cause by Nye et al. (1997). Again, the theory appears to be flawed. Trade accounts for only ten percent of the US economy and the slowdown in wages has also occurred in the other 90 percent.

In New Zealand, the theory may have some credence and fears of global competition may be an issue for New Zealanders. The trend towards locating the production of goods in Asia has increased over the past decade. Factory closures, due to the relatively high costs of domestic labour, and stories about cheap production of goods in Asia may have affected public confidence. There may also be a more general fear of being a small country lost in the moves towards a more global world. General lack of confidence about New Zealand's role in the world may spill over into a lack of confidence in government.

While such factors certainly have an effect on people's confidence and security, whether it translates into a mistrust of government is more questionable. It may, however, make restoring trust more difficult.

Greater Expectations?

Speculation about the causes of the decline in confidence in the US government includes allegations that citizens' expectations of what government can and should deliver have increased. Nye et al. (1997) claim that public demands for rights have increased. There used to be basic human rights, about which people were in broad agreement, today people claim a right to everything from a pension to a vacation. Similarly, Haque (1999) suggests that there has been a recent and increasing expansion of people's entitlements or rights, and in particular of individual's social rights to welfare and security.

In New Zealand, expectations are difficult to measure. The first part of this paper has shown that personal freedom has probably increased over the past three decades under legislation such as the Bill of Rights Act and the Human Rights Act. It also shows that spending on health and access to education has improved since the 1960s. It is difficult to know whether people's expectations have increased or changed. Certainly in some areas, such as the entitlement to a free education to tertiary level, have been at the heart of many debates in New Zealand, with a marked shift towards user pays in health and tertiary education. At the same time, however, government spending in these areas has increased in relative terms.

It is difficult to determine what exactly citizens expect from government, both in terms of quantity and quality, and government spending is only part of the issue.

Moreover, there are likely to be differences in the expectations of different generations of New Zealanders. For example, older citizens who grew up under a generous welfare state, may have higher expectations than younger citizens less used to an all-providing government.

For New Zealanders, the critical factor may not be that expectations have increased over time, but that expectations of government performance have changed to reflect an increased awareness of what overseas governments are doing. This in part reflects the greater availability of information about comparable jurisdictions (through media such as the internet). This theory is also likely to contain a degree of 'the grass is always greener', exacerbated by news media coverage (see below).

Expectations may also be bolstered to unrealistic levels by political claims, and in particular by pre-election promises, which are not always met once a party is in government. Failure to meet promises is likely to cause frustration and declining confidence in elected officials.

It seems likely that increased, changed or relative expectations have some effect on people's expectations of government. In turn, whether or not government measures up is likely to impact on levels of trust in government.

Standing Apart?

Some US authors attribute the lack of trust in government to the absence of a 'unifying cause' to bond society together. Such causes in the past are World War II and the cold war, and also time under skilled and popular leaders. Times of leadership by 'poor leaders' (such as Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon) are correlated with dips in confidence (for instance, after America's involvement in Vietnam and Watergate) (Nye et al., 1997). However, such events fail to explain the duration of the decline in trust since the 1960s.

In New Zealand, detailed time data on trust trends is not available. The best available data (as cited in Part I of this paper) simply shows a constant decline in confidence since the 1970s. Hence, it is not possible to track dips or peaks associated with political events or terms of leadership. However, the general idea about national unity appears to have some plausibility.

While recent years have been free from such dramatic events as a national war effort, there may be something in the 'united country' theory more generally. In times of 'united' causes, that a majority of citizens feel passionate about, along with a strong indication that government is acting in line with this feeling trust in government may be higher. Speculatively, such causes in New Zealand may include times such as the nation's stance against nuclear testing and arguably even sporting achievements.

Conversely, confidence may fall if government is perceived to be doing a good job, but in the wrong areas.

Dishonest Government?

Trust in government may be affected by public perceptions of the integrity of those working in public organisations, including both elected officials and public servants. These perceptions have certainly changed over time in New Zealand. New Zealand was ranked third in the 1999 Corruption Perceptions Index (Transparency International, 1999). However, studies by Perry and Webster (1999) in 1998 found that over 10% of New Zealanders believed that most, or almost all, public officials are engaged in bribe taking or corruption.

Corruption and dishonesty are difficult to measure, and may have increased over recent years. What has certainly increased is media attention to scandal, and a public belief (well founded or otherwise) that politicians have become more corrupt. As Nye et al. (1997) note, the 'dignity' of government has deteriorated in the public's mind, and trust in institutions is closely correlated with the public's perception of ethical behaviour by government. This is intensified by media glare.

In New Zealand, changes to the way in which New Zealand Government runs and reports to the public over the past 15 years have included a focus on accountability and openness of government business to the public. This period, which has seen developments such as the introduction of the Official Information Act and the Privacy Act, has not seen any abatement in the decline in trust in government. In fact this trend has continually worsened. Moreover, some government functions have moved outside of a smaller core government, creating public officials who are not necessarily imbued with the old public service ethos. This has manifested itself in recent scandals involving board decisions, and public servant payouts.

The reasons for this can only be speculative. It is possible that now people have greater access to government information they are aware of things that were previously hidden (such as public early retirement deals, in place of quiet, in-house movements of staff out of difficult situations).

Instant, Graphic and Personal – the Role of the Media

Finally, trust in government may be affected by the source of information to citizens about government. The media, and television in particular, is likely to play a large part in shaping citizens' views about government, about how it works and about how well it is doing.

The press has become an unaccountable part of the political process, with the press and TV news becoming more negative, more journalist-centred, and more focused on conflict than substance (Nye et al., 1997). Television has become the key information link between government and citizen, and is, for many people, their only source of information about government. This factor is likely to have had a significant influence both on what people know about government, and on their views about (and consequently trust in) government. The scale of this influence may adversely affect confidence in government's performance for three reasons.

First, news about government is subject to the interpretation of the reporter. A news story is often generated quickly, and may not be subject to critical analysis of the surrounding facts. The reporter can report some stories in either a negative or a positive light. Economic news, for instance, may be reported as 'sound bites' of short-term 'bad news', or can be placed in a longer-term context, which might well be 'good news'. The way that such stories are presented lies largely in the hands of the reporter, and people often only read the headlines, and not the more in-depth reporting on the 'inside pages'. Moreover, the limited choice of newspapers in New Zealand limits people's access to a range of views.

Second, television news focuses on the graphic and the dramatic. Those stories likely to make headlines are horror stories about horrific events, such as violent crime. For example, much media attention during 1998 in New Zealand focused on several cases of home invasion, including a murder. Public concern was so great that the issue led to a referendum on sentencing for the perpetrators of such crimes. However, the wider picture shows total recorded crime falling by 3% over the year 1998 to 1999.

Third, television news in particular is dominated by the need for instant information, which may preclude a more thorough analysis of the facts. News is provided in snapshots, often without context and often without 'roundness' of views.

Schick (1999) speculates about the role of the media in declining trust, and he cites it (along with education) as a key driver in building credibility and in decreasing mistrust. Both are powerful generators of societal values, and the measure of trust is deep rooted in the structure of prevalent values. When these values favour immediate goals and selfish values, shortsighted choices will prevail.

The role of the media, which has changed news coverage to be more instant and graphic, is likely to have had an effect on the New Zealand public's perceptions of government. When these images are largely negative, focused on personal or scandalous issues, the influence on levels of trust is inevitable.

Addressing the Problem

Whatever the causes, steps are needed to halt, if not reverse, the decline in confidence in the New Zealand government. The means to do this exist at three levels:

Determining the causes is the first step. This will be a combination of academic efforts, international research (such as recent work by the OECD) and work by the government. The 1999 coalition government has already indicated its commitment to working to restore trust in government. This will require undertaking a detailed analysis of the reasons for the decline.

The government can also ensure the quality of its own media releases and the provision of sound information to the public. All political parties can avoid raising the expectations of the public beyond an achievable level in their political (especially pre-election) promises and claims.

Ensuring open government is the next step. Making government more open has been a deliberate move in New Zealand over the past decade. That this has failed to influence the decline in trust in government may be because people know more about *what* is happening without always understanding *why*. Filling this information gap is likely to influence trust, and is a role in which government and the media have a responsibility.

In the future, government information may be more freely available through electronic means. Developments in technology (such as government Internet interfaces) permit easy and comprehensive access to government documents to all citizens. While this is likely to expose further examples of 'wrongdoing', it can also promote greater understanding about government and government processes, and provide confidence that public interest in such events is being considered.

An important part of this may be informing citizens about the trade-offs that are involved in political decision-making.

Encouraging citizen participation is a further aspect of open government. The benefits are two-way. Effective government needs popular support and participation. Citizens have more confidence in government if they feel part of the political process (hence, they are more trusting of local than national politicians). Citizens who are involved are likely to have reduced misperceptions and are better able to form their own opinions, independently of the media.

Declining Government Performance? Why Citizens Don't Trust Government

Citizen participation can be enhanced by measures for greater involvement (again, perhaps facilitated in the future by electronic means). Greater involvement has the potential for citizens to have more say in the issues that government addresses. Trust is likely to grow when people believe government is working constructively on the issues that they care about (Berresford, 2000).

Citizens who understand how government works, that it works with limited resources (and in some cases limited influence), and who feel that they are a valued part of democratic processes are likely to be more trusting of their government.

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Appendix 1: The 1990s Compared with the 1960s

New Zealand Statistics and Sources

Policy area	1960s (figures for 1966 where possible)	1990s (figures for 1996 where possible)	Result Improved	About the same	Worse
A. Prosperity					
1. The Economy					
a. Per capita income	1966: GDP per capita, 1165.9	1996: GDP per capita, 1599.61 ²	NZ (US)		
c. Controlling inflation	CPI: 1966: 86.38 1974: CPI excluding interest & GST: 10.1 (annual % change)	1996 1085.00 1998: CPI excluding interest & GST: 1.9 (annual % change) ³	NZ	(US)	
d. Minimising unemployment	1960: 312 ⁴ 1966: total unemployment rate: 1.0%	1997: 140628 1996: total employment rate: 9.8% ⁵			NZ (US)
e. Net investment in plant and equipment as a percent of GDP	Spending on development of industry: 1960: 6.6%	1989: 4.6% ⁶	(US)		NZ
2. Research & Technology					
a. Number of scientists and engineers per 100,000 people	Not included as an occupational group in early statistics. 1956: Numbers in professional and technical occupations 6.6% ⁷	1991-4: 37 Scientists and technicians per 10,000 of labour force ⁸ 1986: Numbers in professional and technical occupations 13.3% ⁹	(US) NZ		

² Source: Reserve Bank of New Zealand

³ Source: Reserve Bank of New Zealand. Inflation as measured by the CPI fell in the seventies, and steadily in the eighties to reach the inflation target (3%) by the end of 1991. Brash, D.T. (1999) *Inflation Targeting: An Alternative Way of Achieving Price Stability* Wellington Reserve Bank of New Zealand

⁴ Total unemployed. Source New Zealand Official Yearbook 1966; New Zealand Official Yearbook 1996

⁵ Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1997

⁶ Figures on net investment in plant and equipment as a percent of GDP not available. Spending on development of industry used instead. Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1990

⁷ Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1990

⁸ Source: the State of New Zealand's Environment 1997 (Ministry for the Environment: Wellington)

⁹ Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1990

Declining Government Performance? Why Citizens Don't Trust Government

Policy area	1960s (figures for 1966 where possible)	1990s (figures for 1996 where possible)	Result Improved	About the same	Worse
c. Number of patents issued to New Zealanders	1964-65 3447 applications for patents ¹⁰	1995 4503 applications for patents ¹¹	NZ (US)		
d. Share of GDP devoted to R&D	1972: GERD ¹² 60.1	1994: 1.02% of GDP on R&D ¹³ 1991: GERD 643.5 ¹⁴	NZ (US)		
e. Share of world-wide high-tech exports	Overall exports: 1965: \$282.95 per head of mean population	1989: \$3621.55 per head of mean population ¹⁵	NZ		(US)
3. Education					
a. Percent graduating high school	1966: 8.6% of population over 15 years had secondary qualifications	1986: 25.9% of population over 15 years had secondary qualifications ¹⁶	NZ (US)		
b. Percent graduating university	1964 1,905 degree graduates from NZ universities ¹⁷	1993 19,391 graduates from NZ universities ¹⁸	NZ (US)		
c. Student achievement (reading)	Figures not available (including literacy rates)			(US)	
d. Student achievement (math and science)	Not available	1996: Average national score in TIMSS survey (maths) 508 ¹⁹		(US)	

¹⁰ Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1966

¹¹ Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1996

¹² Gross Expenditure on R & D

¹³ Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1997

¹⁴ Source: Ministry of Research, Science and Technology

¹⁵ Figures not available on share of world-wide high-tech exports. Overall exports per head of mean population used instead. Source New Zealand Official Yearbook 1990

¹⁶ Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1990

¹⁷ Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1966

¹⁸ Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1996

¹⁹ Source: The State of New Zealand's Environment 1997 (Ministry for the Environment: Wellington)

Declining Government Performance? Why Citizens Don't Trust Government

Policy area	1960s (figures for 1966 where possible)	1990s (figures for 1996 where possible)	Result Improved	About the same	Worse
4. Labour Market Policy					
a. Percent of workforce trained by employer	1966: 8,143 trade certificates issued ²⁰	1989: 2,785 trade certificates issued ²¹	(US)		NZ
b. Range of vocational courses available in high school and college	1965: 15 vocational courses available ²²	1995: 18 vocational courses available ²³	NZ (US)		
c. Amount of government-sponsored training	1965: Total enrolments in technical education: 79,811 ²⁴	1995: Total enrolments at Polytechnic: 94,389 ²⁵	NZ (US)		
B. Quality of Life					
1. Housing					
a. Percentage of dwellings with serious defects	1966: average 3.8 persons per dwelling ²⁶	1986: average 3 persons per dwelling	NZ (US)		
b. Percentage of population owning home	1966 69% homes owned ²⁷	1996 73.51% homes owned ²⁸	NZ (US)		
c. Affordability for renters	Real cost of housing 1966: House Price Index 900 ²⁹	1989: House Price Index 990 ³⁰			NZ (US)

²⁰ New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings 1966 (Dept. of Statistics, Wellington)

²¹ Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1990

²² Vocational courses were counted from the total list of subjects (included eg. dairying, shorthand, bookkeeping). Source: Education Statistics of New Zealand 1966 (Dept. of Education, Wellington)

²³ Vocational courses were counted from the total list of subjects (included eg. typing, shorthand, agriculture). Source: Education Statistics of New Zealand 1996 (Ministry of Education, Wellington)

²⁴ Source: Education Statistics of New Zealand 1966 (Dept. of Education, Wellington)

²⁵ Source: Education Statistics of New Zealand 1996 (Ministry of Education, Wellington)

²⁶ Number of persons per dwelling used instead of percentage of dwellings with serious defects which is unavailable

²⁷ Total owned homes (includes 27.7% owned without mortgage, 41.3% owned with mortgage). Source: New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings 1966: Summary Results

²⁸ Source: 1996 Census of Population and Dwellings: National Summary

²⁹ Cost of housing used as a proxy. Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1990

³⁰ Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1990

Declining Government Performance? Why Citizens Don't Trust Government

Policy area	1960s (figures for 1966 where possible)	1990s (figures for 1996 where possible)	Result Improved	About the same	Worse
2. Neighbourhoods					
a. Concentration of poverty in urban neighbourhoods	N/A	N/A			(US)
b. Degree of segregation by race	N/A	N/A	(US)		
c. Percent of population living in a neighbourhood of choice (city, suburb, exurb)	1965-80 Annual growth rate of urban population 1.5	1980-94 Annual growth rate of urban population 1.1 ³¹ 1984: 83% satisfied with their neighbourhood ³²	NZ (US)		
d. Fear of crime ³³	1960: just under 1000	1988: just over 600 1984: 32% expressed fear of walking alone at night in their neighbourhood ³⁴			NZ (US)
3. Environment					
a. Amount of air pollution	1966: Mt Albert: 26.0 Penrose: 62.9	1995: Mt Albert: 17.3 Penrose: 31.7 ³⁵	NZ (US)		
b. Amount of water pollution	1960: when the Board of Health began grading water supplies and "many" supplies were found to be suspect	1994: 8% of the population were served by unsafe water supply systems. This number has been reduced by the 1995 Drinking Water Standards ³⁶	NZ (US)		

³¹ Growth of urban population used as a proxy. Source: UNICEF (1996) *The State of the World's Children 1996* (<http://www.unicef.org>)

³² Source: *Report on the Social Indicators Survey 1980-81* (Department of Statistics, 1984)

³³ Statistics on Fear of Crime unavailable; population per police officer used instead. Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1990

³⁴ Source: *Report on the Social Indicators Survey 1980-81* (Department of Statistics, 1984)

³⁵ Annual average suspended particulates in two Auckland suburbs (in $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$); Source: Air Quality, Climate Change and the Ozone Layer (Wellington, Statistics New Zealand, 1998)

³⁶ Source: *The State of New Zealand's Environment 1997* Wellington, Ministry for the Environment (1997)

Declining Government Performance? Why Citizens Don't Trust Government

Policy area	1960s (figures for 1966 where possible)	1990s (figures for 1996 where possible)	Result Improved	About the same	Worse
c. Percentage of drinking water purified	N/A	1990-95 % of population with access to safe water: 97% ³⁷	(US)		
4. The Arts					
a. Number of arts organisations	Figures not available		(US)		
b. Size of audience for plays, concerts etc.	Figures not available		(US)		
c. Public and private funding for arts (other than ticket sales)	Figures not available		(US)		
d. Consumer spending on arts (as percent of disposable income)	Not available	1996 NZ Households spent \$1.9 billion on cultural goods and services ³⁸	(US)		
C. Opportunity					
1. Children's Well-Being					
a. Rate of infant mortality	1964 19.1 (per 1,000 live births) ³⁹	1997 6.7 (per 1,000 live births) ⁴⁰	NZ (US)		
b. Availability of day care	1965: numbers on rolls for play centres and kindergartens: 27,729 ⁴¹	1995: numbers on rolls for play centres and kindergartens: 66,316 ⁴²	NZ (US)		
c. Extent of prenatal care	1983-94: 99% of births attended by trained health personnel	1990-96: 99% of births attended by trained health personnel ⁴³	(US)	NZ	
d. Percent of children in poverty	No. of children whose parents divorced 1981-98: 1979: 8,000	1998: 9,100 ⁴⁴	(US)		NZ

³⁷ Source: UNICEF (1996) *The State of the World's Children 1996* UNICEF (<http://www.unicef.org>)

³⁸ This was 9.1% more than in 1995. Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1997

³⁹ Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1966

⁴⁰ Source: New Zealand in Profile 1997 (Statistics New Zealand)

⁴¹ Source: Education Statistics of New Zealand 1966 (Dept. of Education, Wellington)

⁴² Source: Education Statistics of New Zealand 1996 (Ministry of Education, Wellington)

⁴³ Source: UNICEF (1996) *The State of the World's Children 1996* UNICEF (<http://www.unicef.org>)

⁴⁴ Source: Social Policy Agency (1999) *Social Environment Scan* Wellington, Dept. of Social Welfare. The Christchurch Health and Development study found that, as a group, children reared in one-parent families have higher levels of exposure to social and economic disadvantage, family dysfunction, stress and impaired or compromised parenting and child-rearing.

Declining Government Performance? Why Citizens Don't Trust Government

<i>Policy area</i>	<i>1960s (figures for 1966 where possible)</i>	<i>1990s (figures for 1996 where possible)</i>	<i>Result Improved</i>	<i>About the same</i>	<i>Worse</i>
e. Parental leave policy	1987 Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act prescribes minimum parental leave entitlements		NZ (US)		
f. Percent of infants vaccinated	1977: 63% of children immunised by 12 months (DPT3)	1994: 84% of children immunised by 12 months (DPT3) ⁴⁵	NZ (US)		
2. Racial equality					
a. Voting rights	The New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 assures every New Zealand citizen who is of or over the age of 18 years the right to vote		NZ (US)		
b. Housing discrimination	The Human Rights Act 1993 guarantees freedom from discrimination in land, housing or other accommodation		NZ (US)		
c. Segregation in schools	N/A	N/A	(US)		
d. Quality of education for Maori	1977: no. of Maori with no qualifications 68.5% (c.f. 30% of non-Maori) 1977: 14.4% of Maori left school with a 6 th or 7 th form qualification ⁴⁶	1997: 37.7% (c.f. 11% of non-Maori) 1997: 40.2%	(US)	NZ	
3. Equality of opportunity					
a. Access to primary education	1970: apparent intake rate 239.3 ⁴⁷	1996: apparent intake rate 109.3	(US)		NZ
b. Access to universities	N/A	N/A	(US)		
c. Extent of racial discrimination in employment	Human Rights Act 1993 guarantees freedom from sexual or racial harassment in employment		NZ (US)		
d. Extent of gender discrimination in employment			NZ (US)		
e. Overall equality of opportunity	Information not available		(US)		

⁴⁵ Figures unavailable prior to 1977. Source: World Health Organization

⁴⁶ However, comparable improvements by non-Maori have meant that the disparity has remained unchanged. In 1997 the disparity was 32.1 percentage points, compared to 31.6 percentage points in 1997. Source: *Progress Towards Closing Social and Economic Gaps between Maori and Non-Maori: A Report to the Minister of Maori Affairs* Wellington, Ministry of Maori Development, 1998

⁴⁷ Apparent intake rate indicates the general level of access to primary education, used by UNESCO to show the level of access to primary education. Source: UNESCO statistics database (<http://unesco.org/>)

Declining Government Performance? Why Citizens Don't Trust Government

Policy area	1960s (figures for 1966 where possible)	1990s (figures for 1996 where possible)	Result Improved	About the same	Worse
D. Personal security					
1. Health care					
a. Technical quality	1960: rates per 100,000 population: Cancer: 140 Heart disease: 305 Cerebrovascular: 105	1986: rates per 100,000 population: Cancer: 195 Heart disease: 280 Cerebrovascular: 90 ⁴⁸	(US)	NZ	
b. Life expectancy	1966 M: 68.44 F: 73.75 ⁴⁹	1996 M: 74 F: 80 ⁵⁰	NZ (US)		
c. Percentage of population covered by health insurance	1965-6: 149,468 life insurance policies ⁵¹ Health insurance figures not available for 1960s	1985-6 195,334 life insurance policies ⁵² 1981: 35% of adults covered by medical insurance ⁵³	NZ (US)		
d. Cost (percent of GDP)	1960: 6.7% of government spending was on health ⁵⁴	1989: 13.6% of government spending was on health ⁵⁵ 1996, 5.4% of GDP ⁵⁶	NZ		(US)
2. Job security					
a. Percent of workforce with some form of legally sanctioned representation	1966 42% of workforce members of trade unions ⁵⁷	1994 23.4% of workforce members of trade unions ⁵⁸			NZ (US)

⁴⁸ Statistics on quality of health are not available. Key indicators for cancer, heart disease and cerebrovascular disease used instead. Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1990

⁴⁹ Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1966

⁵⁰ Source: New Zealand in Profile 1999 (Statistics New Zealand) 1996 Data

⁵¹ Life Insurance used instead of health insurance. Source: Insurance Statistics 1969-70 (Wellington, Dept. of Statistics, 1970)

⁵² Source: Insurance Statistics (Wellington, Dept. of Statistics)

⁵³ Source: *Report on the Social Indicators Survey 1980-81* Wellington, Dept. of Statistics

⁵⁴ Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1990

⁵⁵ Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1990

⁵⁶ Source: New Zealand in Profile 1999 (Statistics New Zealand) 1996 Data

Declining Government Performance? Why Citizens Don't Trust Government

Policy area	1960s (figures for 1966 where possible)	1990s (figures for 1996 where possible)	Result Improved	About the same	Worse
b. Protection from arbitrary discharge	The Employment Contracts Act 1991 ensures that all employment contracts contain an effective procedure for the settlement of disputes ⁵⁹		NZ	(US?)	
c. Retraining and other help in case of layoffs	N/A	N/A	(US)		
d. Unemployment insurance (percent of unemployed receiving)					(US)
e. Incidence of job-related illness and injury	1965 53,418 total industrial accidents (including fatalities) ⁶⁰	1992 31,590 industrial accidents ⁶¹	NZ	(US)	
3. Violent Crime					
a. Incidence (per 100,000 people) ⁶²	1965 132,311 crimes reported	1995 506,359 crimes reported			NZ (US)
b. Success in solving crime (clearance rate)	1965 73,294 crimes cleared (55%) ⁶³	1995 211,956 crimes cleared (41%) ⁶⁴			NZ (US)
c. Fear for personal safety					(US)
4. Old Age					
a. Retirement income	1972: pension for married couple represented around 65% of the net average wage ⁶⁵	1992: pension for a married couple: 68% of the net average wage ⁶⁶	NZ (US)		

⁵⁷ Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1990

⁵⁸ Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1996 (NB original source VUW Industrial Relations Centre Working Paper *Unions and Union Membership in New Zealand* Working Paper 2/95

⁵⁹ Employment Contracts Act 1991

⁶⁰ Source: Report on the Industrial Accidents Statistics of New Zealand for the Year 1965 (Wellington, Dept. of Statistics)

⁶¹ Source: Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific 1997 (Geneva, United Nations, 1998)

⁶² Figures are for total crimes (rather than only violent crimes) reported in New Zealand

⁶³ Source: New Zealand Police in New Zealand Official Yearbook 1996

⁶⁴ Source: New Zealand Police in New Zealand Official Yearbook 1996

⁶⁵ Office of the Retirement Commissioner: History of Retirement Income Policies (<http://www.retirement.org.nz>)

⁶⁶ Office of the Retirement Commissioner: History of Retirement Income Policies.

Declining Government Performance? Why Citizens Don't Trust Government

Policy area	1960s (figures for 1966 where possible)	1990s (figures for 1996 where possible)	Result Improved	About the same	Worse
b. Percent living in poverty	N/A	N/A	(US)		
c. Percent covered by insurance	1965: 214,659 people receiving NZ super	1996: 459,901 people receiving NZ super ⁶⁷	NZ (US)		
d. Financial assistance for long-term care	N/A	N/A	(US)		
E. Values					
1. Personal Freedom					
a. Degree of freedom guaranteed by law	The New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 guarantees freedom of thought, expression, etc. These rights were not comprehensively covered by previous statute ⁶⁸		NZ (US)		
2. Personal Responsibility					
a. Obeying the law (extent of crime)	1965 total convictions: 183,036	1988 total convictions: 420,347			NZ (US)
b. Percentage of children born out of wedlock	1961 0.05% of all live births ⁶⁹	1992 37% of all live births ⁷⁰			NZ (US)
c. Percent of income given to charity	N/A	N/A			(US)
d. Community service	N/A	N/A			(US)
e. Percentage of eligibles voting	1966 Voter turnout 85.99% ⁷¹	1993 86% (approx.) enrolled voters voting at general election ⁷²		NZ	(US)
f. Cheating on exams	N/A	N/A			(US)
3. Providing for Poor and Disadvantaged					
a. Incidence of Poverty	1984: 5% living in poverty	1996: 9% living in poverty ⁷³	(US)		NZ
b. Severity of Poverty (aggregate poverty gap as a percentage of GDP)	N/A	N/A	(US)		
c. Effectiveness of government transfer programmes	N/A	N/A	(US)		

⁶⁷ Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1998

⁶⁸ New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990

⁶⁹ 3,332 ex-nuptial births out of total 65,476 live births. Source New Zealand Official Yearbook 1966

⁷⁰ Source New Zealand Official Yearbook 1996

⁷¹ Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1990

⁷² Figures from graph, so approximations only. Source: New Zealand Official Yearbook 1996 (from Dept. of Justice)

⁷³ Data collected from 1984 onwards only. Source: Stephens, R. (1999?) Poverty in Aotearoa/New Zealand: The Social Impact of Reform Unpublished paper

Appendix 2: New Zealand Results

POLICY AREA	Improved	About the same	Worse
A Prosperity			
1. <i>The Economy</i>			
a. GDP per capita	✓		
b. Controlling inflation	✓		
c. Minimising unemployment			✓
d. Spending on development of industry			✓
2. <i>Research and Technology</i>			
a. Numbers in professional and technical occupations	✓		
b. Number of patents issued to New Zealanders	✓		
c. Gross expenditure on R&D	✓		
d. Overall exports	✓		
3. <i>Education</i>			
a. Population with secondary qualification	✓		
b. Numbers of graduates	✓		
4. <i>Labour Market Policy</i>			
a. Number of trade certificates issued			✓
b. Range of vocational courses available in high school and college	✓		
c. Enrolments in technical education	✓		
B Quality of Life			
1. <i>Housing</i>			
a. Average number of persons per dwelling	✓		
b. Percentage of population owning home	✓		
c. Real cost of housing			✓
2. <i>Neighbourhoods</i>			
a. Growth of urban population	✓		
b. Population per police officer			✓
3. <i>Environment</i>			
a. Amount of air pollution	✓		
b. Amount of water pollution	✓		

Declining Government Performance? Why Citizens Don't Trust Government

POLICY AREA	Improved	About the same	Worse
C Opportunity			
1. Children's well-being a. Rate of infant mortality b. Availability of daycare c. Births attended by trained personnel d. Numbers of children with divorced parents e. Parental leave policy f. Percent of infants vaccinated	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	 ✓	 ✓
2. Racial equality a. Voting rights b. Housing discrimination c. Quality of education for Māori	✓ ✓	 ✓	
3. Equality of opportunity a. Access to primary education b. Extent of racial discrimination in employment c. Extent of gender discrimination in employment	 ✓ ✓		 ✓
D Personal Security			
1. Health care a. Rates of cancer, heart disease, cerebrovascular disease b. Life expectancy c. Percentage of population covered by life insurance d. Government spending on health	 ✓ ✓ ✓	 ✓	
2. Job security a. Percent of workforce with some form of legally sanctioned representation b. Protection from arbitrary discharge c. Incidence of job-related injury	 ✓ ✓		 ✓
3. Violent crime a. Incidence b. Success in solving crime (clearance rate)			 ✓ ✓
4. Old Age a. Retirement income b. Percent covered by insurance	✓ ✓		
E Values			

Declining Government Performance? Why Citizens Don't Trust Government

POLICY AREA	<i>Improved</i>	<i>About the same</i>	<i>Worse</i>
1. <i>Personal freedom</i> a. Degree of freedom guaranteed by law	✓		
2. <i>Personal Responsibility</i> a. Obeying the law (extent of crime) b. Percentage of children born out of wedlock c. Percentage of eligibles voting		✓	✓ ✓
3. <i>Providing for poor and disadvantaged</i> a. Incidence of poverty			✓